

Springtime Risotto

Fresh asparagus and peas say Spring! Enjoy them in a creamy, velvety dish of risotto. Short on time? Use a slow cooker. Makes a delicious side dish to chicken or fish, or meatless meal with a side salad. 4 abundant servings.

Easy Ingredients

- 5 tablespoons Villa Graziella Organic extra virgin olive oil + extra for coating & drizzling.
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 12 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth, if possible organic.
- 3 cups Arborio rice
- 4 fresh garlic cloves, minced.
- 1-pound fresh asparagus, washed & dried. Compost the short, woody ends.
- 1 cup fresh spring peas. Frozen, thawed & drained ok too.
- 2/3 cup grated Parmesan Reggiano cheese & extra to sprinkle.
- Zest of ½ fresh lemon + extra to taste.
- 1 each teaspoon sea salt and freshly cracked pepper + extra to taste.

Simple Directions

1. Evenly coat a 6-quart slow cooker with olive oil.
2. In a large pot, bring 11 cups broth to a boil. Cover & remove from the heat.
3. In a large nonstick skillet or pan, heat 4 tablespoons olive oil over medium low heat. Add the rice, stir until edges become translucent with a nutty fragrance, about 4-minutes. Add the minced garlic, sauté 1 minute until fragrant & golden, not brown. Wipe skillet clean.
4. Transfer rice mixture to the slow cooker. Slowly pour in the broth, add ½ teaspoon each sea salt & pepper. Stir and cover, cook on high, until rice is tender, about 1 ½ hours.
5. As the rice cooks, slice asparagus into 2-inch pieces.
6. Heat 3 tablespoons butter over medium-low heat in the skillet. Add the asparagus pieces, remaining ½ each teaspoon sea salt & pepper. Stir and sauté until pieces are crisp and tender. Add the peas to skillet, stir and sauté about 3 minutes.
7. Heat remaining cup of broth in the large pot over medium heat, add the cheese and stir.
8. Add the vegetable mixture to the slow cooker and lower heat. Then add the broth & cheese mixture stirring slowly to fully combine. Top with lemon zest, season to taste with salt, pepper.
9. Transfer to individual bowls or a serving dish.
10. Drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle with cheese, serve & enjoy!

Helpful Hints:

- Short grain, starchier than regular rice, Arborio rice is perfect for risotto. It absorbs large amounts of liquid, resulting in a creamy, hearty texture.
- Sautéing rice in olive oil before slow cooking brings out its' nutty flavor.
- Do not over stir cooked rice causing it to become mushy. After adding the stock, gently stir to incorporate the liquid and keep rice from sticking.
- Add cooked chicken, shrimp, or sautéed mushrooms in step 8.
- Store in a tightly covered container up to 2 days. Reheat in a covered pan over low heat before serving for next day lunch. Risotto does not freeze well.