

The Best Basic Risotto

Carol Clark's

Makes 4 servings

4 $\frac{1}{2}$ C chicken or vegetable broth
2 T butter
1 T extra-virgin olive oil (once around the pan)
1 small to medium onion, chopped
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Arborio rice
 $\frac{1}{2}$ C grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Mushrooms

Place chicken or vegetable broth in a sauce pan and simmer.

In deep skillet, melt butter into olive oil over medium to medium-high heat. Add onions and sauté 3 minutes. Then add Arborio and sauté 2 minutes more. Add broth a few ladles at a time over the next 18 minutes, stirring it into the rice each time the liquid has been fully absorbed. Stir in the cheese and season with salt and pepper to taste. At the end add mushrooms.

What's Risotto Anyways?

Risotto is the rice dish of northern Italy. In the north of Italy, up around the Piedmont, Milan, Lombardy, and the area of Venice, rice rules the day.



Rice came to Italy sometime in the 10th century, probably brought to Sicily by Arab conquerors. The north of Italy took to rice farming four to five hundred years later, in an era when plague and famine were making simple survival difficult. The area has remained the premier rice growing and rice eating areas of Italy to this day. In the same way that people in the rest of Italy put plates of piping hot pasta on the table at every main meal, so too do northerners resort to rice.

And more often than not, rice in northern Italy means risotto.

Premise: Risotto is to rice what pasta is to wheat.

An incredibly delicious, relatively simple way to take the natural goodness of the grain to truly great heights by making it the vehicle for all sorts of exceptional ingredients. The result is a dish with a rare combination of grandeur and down to earth goodness that few others can match.

