



Royal
Botanic Garden
Edinburgh

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A colourful supper

This bright pink risotto is sure to cheer up a dull day. Risotto has a reputation for being difficult and requiring hours of work. By following this recipe, hopefully you will realise it's easier than you think. Yes, it requires a bit of attention and frequent stirring, but personally I find it a very relaxing dish to cook. It is worth getting everything prepared before you start, the first time you make it anyway.

This recipe uses pre-cooked beetroot which is easy to find and lasts for ages in the fridge. Be sure to buy the ones not in vinegar. If you have fresh beetroot instead, roast them for around an hour at 180 degrees until a knife meets little resistance (like baking a potato). Allow to cool a little then the skins should easily slip off.

Beetroot risotto



Serves 2

- 150g arborio risotto rice
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tsp butter (optional)
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 stalks of celery, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 large pre-cooked beetroots (see recipe introduction), peeled and diced
- 1 litre hot vegetable stock- made with 1 stock cube
- 50ml white wine (optional)
- 50g feta cheese, diced
- Handful of walnuts or pumpkin seeds
- Parmesan cheese, to grate

You will need a medium heavy-bottomed saucepan with a lid, a chopping board, a sharp knife, a wooden spoon, a ladle

1. Heat the oil and butter (if using) in a medium saucepan.
2. Add the onion, celery and garlic and cook gently for around 10 minutes until the onions are translucent.
3. Turn the heat up a little and add the rice to the pan. Stir for a few minutes so the rice is hot and sizzling.
4. Add the wine (if using) and stir as the rice absorbs the liquid (skip this step if not using wine).
5. Add a ladleful of hot stock to the pan and stir until the rice has absorbed the liquid.
6. Add the diced beetroot to the rice.
7. Continue adding stock and stirring until the rice is cooked through and creamy. This should take around 15-20 minutes.
8. Turn off the heat and add the feta to the risotto and a good grating of parmesan. Put a lid on and leave for five minutes.
9. Heat a small frying pan and gently toast the seeds or nuts.
10. Serve the risotto with some toasted nuts or seeds, a little extra parmesan and some salad if you like. It's also lovely with a handful of baby spinach wilted into it.

@Ailsa Sheldon April 2020