

Risotto Primavera

from Cooking School Italian

Ingredients:

1.5 litres vegetable stock

575g spring vegetables, chopped into attractive small bite sized pieces

225g broad beans, briefly boiled and cooled, skins removed (optional)

1 onion, finely chopped

2-4 cloves garlic, finely chopped

350g medium grain rice

4 spring onions, cut into 2.5cm lengths (optional)

4 tbsp butter, olive oil, or a mixture

½ teaspoons salt

60g parmesan cheese

4 tablespoons snipped or shredded fennel tops, fresh chives, basil, parsley, or other fresh herbs

What to do:

1. Bring the stock to the boil in a saucepan, then reduce the heat and keep simmering gently over a low heat while you are cooking the risotto.
2. Heat 2 tablespoons of the butter in a large frying pan over a high heat until hot. Add the vegetables and stir-fry for 3-4 minutes, until they are bright and just beginning to soften. Set aside.
3. Heat the remaining butter in a large, heavy-based saucepan over a medium heat. Add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally, for 3 minutes, or until it begins to soften. Stir in the garlic and cook, while stirring, for 30 seconds.
4. Reduce the heat, add the rice, and mix to coat in oil. Cook, stirring constantly, for 2-3 minutes, or until the grains are translucent.
5. Gradually add the hot stock, a ladleful at a time. Stir constantly and add more liquid as the rice absorbs each addition. Cook for 20 minutes, or until all but 2 tablespoons of the liquid has been absorbed and the rice is creamy but still firm to the bite.
6. Stir in the stir-fried vegetables and spring onions if using, with the remaining stock. Cook for 2 minutes, stirring frequently, then season to taste with salt and pepper. Stir in the butter, parmesan cheese, and herbs. Remove the saucepan from the heat. Transfer the risotto to serving dishes and serve immediately.

Tip: if you'd like to cook this more quickly, get started on steps 3, 4, and 5 and cook the rice at the same time you're preparing and cooking the vegetables in another pan.