

Risotto con Zucca Gialla e Zafferano

(Saffron and Pumpkin Risotto)

A Family Farm in Tuscany

Serves 12 – 14 as a side dish

4 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
½ cup red onion diced
3 cups pumpkin or butternut squash, peeled and cubed
Sea salt and black pepper to taste
1 tsp minced fresh rosemary
1 quart hot water
1 quart vegetable broth
4 cups Arborio rice
½ tsp saffron
1 tbsp unsalted butter
Grated parmesan cheese

For the pumpkin:

- Heat the olive oil in a heavy bottomed, 14-inch sauté pan over medium heat.
- When oil is hot, add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until onion is wilted and transparent, about 5 minutes.
- Add the pumpkin or squash and season with salt and pepper, cooking for 20 minutes.
- **NOTE:** *If the pumpkin or squash starts to stick to the pot, add some of the hot water.*
- Add the rosemary and sauté until the pumpkin/squash begins to soften.

While the pumpkin mixture is cooking:

- Combine 1 cup of the water (reserve the remaining 3 cups water and keep hot) with the quart of vegetable broth and saffron in a heavy-bottomed, 3 quart saucepan.
- Cook over medium heat about 10 minutes.
- Set aside and keep warm.

For the risotto:

- Add the rice to the pumpkin mixture and sauté for 2 – 3 minutes.
- Add one third of the vegetable broth mixture, reduce heat to medium, and cook, stirring, until rice absorbs the broth.
- Add 1 cup of the water, and cook, stirring, until it is absorbed.
- Continue to add broth and water alternately, cooking and stirring, allowing the rice to absorb the liquid between each addition.
- **NOTE:** *When the rice becomes creamy, add the broth and water sparingly, or the rice will become mushy.*
- Cook until rice is creamy but still al dente, about 25 – 30 minutes total.
- Stir in butter and scatter a little Parmesan cheese over the top, if desired, but don't add so much cheese that it overpowers the delicious taste of the saffron.