

Creamy Risotto

Ingredients:

9 cups Chicken stock plus more if needed
1 pinch Saffron threads optional, see Notes
9 tbsp Butter, softened, divided
1½ med Onion, finely chopped
3 cloves Garlic, finely chopped
2¾ cups Risotto Rice, see Notes
1 cup dry white Wine or water
2 cups freshly grated Parmesan Cheese, room temperature, divided
1½ tsp Salt plus more to taste
Freshly cracked black Pepper, to taste

Directions:

In large saucepan, bring chicken stock to boil, then reduce to low simmer. Transfer 1 ladle of stock to small bowl.

Add saffron threads and set aside while saffron infuses.

Meanwhile, melt 4 tbsp butter in second saucepan over high heat.

Once butter begins to foam, add onions and cook 2 minutes, stirring frequently. After 2 minutes, add garlic and cook 1 additional minute.

Note: cook only until onions and garlic are softened, not browned!

Add rice to saucepan with onions and stir until grains begin to swell and burst. Add white wine to deglaze pan, being sure to scrape any browned or stuck bits from bottom of saucepan.

Let simmer until liquid is mostly reduced.

Once liquid is mostly reduced, stir in 1 to 2 ladles of stock, all of saffron-infused stock, salt, and pepper to taste.

Stir constantly over low heat until liquid has been fully absorbed.

Continue adding stock in small increments, letting the rice absorb the liquid completely before adding more.

Stir constantly and taste frequently, until all stock has been added and absorbed.

After about 20 to 25 minutes, rice should be just tender (not mushy!) and risotto should be golden and creamy.

Remove saucepan from heat.

Stir in ⅔ cup of parmesan cheese and remaining 1 tbsp butter.

Mix until butter has melted completely.

Taste and season as needed, then transfer to serving plates or bowls, top with remaining parmesan cheese, and serve hot.

Notes:

Saffron: The saffron is optional, but highly, highly encouraged! It gives the risotto a rich flavor and a gorgeous golden color. A "pinch" of saffron threads could be anywhere from 5 threads to 50, just depending on your personal tastes. A little goes a long way, so I recommend using 5-10 to avoid overpowering the rest of the dish.

Risotto Rice: Arborio rice is the most common rice for risotto, but you could also use a short-grain sticky rice.

Also, don't rinse the rice before cooking it, you want that starch to make the risotto creamy.

Make sure the chicken broth stays warm the whole time.

If you add cool broth to the rice, you'll stop the cooking process with each ladle.