



Risotto For All Seasons

Winter

The cooking method and recipes in this class are an adaptation from the original recipes of the “**Maestro della Cucina**” and “**Rice Ambassador to the World**” **Gabriele Ferron**, featuring his Vialone Nao and Carnaroli rice produced in Verona in his family owned *Riseria* since 1650.

In the true **ONTALIA** philosophy “**Italian Roots in Local Soil**” the recipes are only a guideline. I encourage you to substitute ingredients, where is possible with what’s in season locally. As an example there is no compromise to substitute Parmigiano Reggiano let’s say with Thunder Oak aged Gouda, canned organic Ontario tomatoes in winter time...what is good and tempting at the market today...

The emphasis of the risotto class is to learn how make risotto using Ferron’s with rice, following his easy to make method, with as little ingredients as possible: minimalist approach. Understanding and achieving the purity of taste the final texture and bite of the risotto. Dispelling myths.

Rice is the common name of *ORYZA SATIVA* a graminaceous plant. Rice comes originally from Asia where it as been cultivated since antiquity. It was brought into Europe by Arabian in the 8th century in Spain. It was brought in Naples in the 15th century by the Aragons and then used in Tuscany and Veneto. Today the biggest cultivations are mostly in the Piempnte region, Veneto and some in the southern regions.

VIALONE NANO VERONESE I.G.P.

The variety 'Vialone Nano' obtained experimentally in rice cultivations in Vercelli by means of cross-fertilization of the type 'Nano' and 'Vialone', has been cultivated since 1937 and was introduced in the province of Verona in 1945. Of the 24 varieties of the rice cultivated in Italy it is the second senior, preceded only by the Balilla type. The Vialone Nano has found its natural habitat in the lands of the Verona area known for the sweetness and purity of the waters, typical of this land. Vialone Nano is smaller in size that carnaroli. Cooks faster . Releases more starch and absorbs condiments better. Makes a creamier risotto.

CARNAROLI

Bigger grain, longer cooking time and less starch release than Vialone Nano, resulting in a granular firmer texture where each grain is separate and still fluffy. Suitable for seafood condiments. Carnaroli rice keeps its shape better than other forms of rice during the slow cooking required for making risotto.

Basic rice cooking method using Ferron rice.

4 substantial servings of 100 gr. /person. For a multicourse meal, scale down to 50 g. per person. Use Vialone Nano or Carnaroli.

Ingredients

- Use a heavy bottom saucepan, add 1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil
- 400 gr. (2 cups) of rice (do not rinse)
- 1000 ml. (4 cups) of hot broth (vegetable, chicken or beef as per condiment suggestion)

(Two to one formula: one cup of rice two cups of broth plus some might be needed after the fifteen minutes cooking undisturbed.)

Directions

- Heat oil at medium heat, add rice, stir to toast.
- Add hot broth, stir and cover. Cook at low heat for 15 minutes*. No stirring.
- Add your prepared choice of condiment, together with the butter and cheese according to the condiment recipe.
- Stir and cover for about one minute*.
- Remove from heat stir gently and serve.

*know your stove. Especially the one with electric plates or coils as they keep heat a long time. Check and insure that heat is low. The broth should bubble gently. Taste for doneness and prolong cooking and adding broth till rice is to your liking. Also the “al dente” myth resulted in having too many undercooked risotto dishes. The final stage of risotto is called *mantecatura (creamed)*. You will be able to achieve a creamy risotto by just gently stir the rice after the initial 15 minutes cooking undisturbed and still retain a granular texture that is lost when the rice is continuously stirred releasing too much starch.

You have a choice by adding more broth by making *risotto all onda*, a looser and more delicate and moist style that will wave on the plate when is shaken. This is perfect for *Risi & Bisi* (rice and peas) a loose risotto that lays flat on your dish, that you can eat with the spoon.

The method of adding garlic and or onions for the toasting can be done where the condiment is simple: Basil, parmigiano, black pepper, saffron. If you really want to do the ceremonial wine addition at the end of toasting make sure the wine is warm, otherwise it will shock the rice and result in a mediocre texture. Adding wine to the condiments is a better choice.

Condiments

4 servings for all condiments.

Risotto con la Zucca (Squash- Pumpkin Risotto) use chicken or vegetable broth.

Ingredients

- 200 gr. of diced squash*
- ½ onion 30 gr.
- 1 clove of garlic
- 40 g. Olive oil
- 30 g. of butter*
- 60 gr. of grated parmigiano
- Minced parsley
- Salt and pepper
- Red wine

*use different types as available at the market. Butter nut squash is extremely sweet.

Directions

- Sauté finely minced onion and garlic till golden, add diced squash and salt & pepper to taste.
- Add diced squash salt and pepper to taste and a small glass of red wine. Cook till soft.
- Purée the squash. Put aside some whole pieces.*
- Add to the rice at 13 minutes not the required 15
- Mix and cook for 2 minute more.
- Finish with the required butter and cheese and a pinch of minced parsley
- Garnish as you like.

*use the potato masher and mash the squash in the pan. You could grill some diced and some decorative cookie cutters shape squash in the oven and use to decorate finished dish.

Risotto All' Isolana (Riesling Sausage) use beef or chicken broth

This is a variation of Ferron's recipe using coarsely cut pork loin sautéed in wine. I am substituting the pork loin with my Riesling infused Sausages sausages .

Ingredients

- 2 links Angelo Bean Riesling Sausage (250 gr. Out of the casing)
- 60 gr. Butter
- 60 gr. Grated parmiggiano
- Ground cinnamon
- 2 sprigs of rosemary
- Riesling

Directions

- Sautee at low heat the sprig of rosemary in half the butter.
- Remove the rosemary and add the sausage meat
- Raise the heat, add little glass of wine and cook till meat is well done.
- Add sausage ragu to risotto at the 15 minute mark
- Add butter, cheese and a little cinnamon powder
- Stir gently
- Serve with a little sprig of rosemary
- The sausages are already seasoned with salt and pepper. Taste and add salt and pepper if needed.

Verdura Pastellata alla Farina di Riso (Ferron's recipe for Vegetables in Beer Batter)

Serves four.

Ingredients

- 1 bottle of very cold beer
- 150 gr. of rice flour
- 1 egg white
- Salt
- Vegetable oil
- One large onion sliced into 5 mm rings – 200 gr. Oyster mushrooms cut into 5 mm thick strips– 1 large zucchini and eggplant cut into 6 cm long slices x 5 mm thick*.

*add any other vegetable as you like. Leeks are amazing! Use a mandolin if you have one.

Directions

- Mix and stir the beer and flour into a thick paste. (add flour if needed)
- Refrigerate the batter for one hour
- Beat the egg white until whipped and fold gently in the batter until well combined. Add 1 tsp salt.
- Heat vegetable oil to 170 degrees C in deep fryer or pan.
- Dip vegetables in the batter, and fry one layer at a time until golden.
- Place on paper towel lined platter
- Salt to taste
- Serve immediately

Crepes di Riso al Cioccolato. (Nutella Rice Flour Crepes)

Yield about 12-15 crepes

Ingredients

- 1 cup rice flour
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 egg
- 1 1/2 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- Nutella.
- Cocoa powder and berries.

Directions

- In a medium sized mixing bowl, whisk the eggs with the salt and vegetable oil.
- Add milk, whisk. Slowly add the flour in a continuous stream as you whisk the mixture till smooth.
- Let mixture rest for ½ hour
- Pour, using a ¼ cup measure into a medium sized, hot, non stick (or greased) skillet.
- Turn skillet to thin, evenly distribute batter in a circle.
- Cook for about 30 seconds per side.
- Spread with Nutella and fold in four.
- Sprinkle some coco powder and decorate with a fruit or berry of your choice or whipped cream and serve.
- Variation for sweet crêpes: add sugar, vanilla extract or the liquor of your choice. Substitute the vegetable oil with melted butter.

<http://realrisotto.com/real-risotto-basics>

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