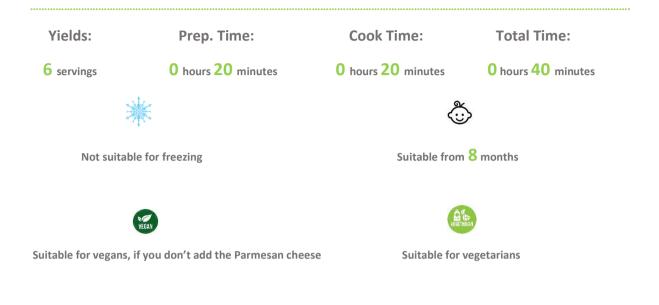
RISOTTO WITH CARAMELISED BABY TOMATOES, TOMATOES, BASIL & LEMON



This risotto is fresh and light, great for a hot summer's day, especially when you've been swimming in the sea and don't feel like eating something too heavy. Accompanied with a salad, it's a wonderful meal, not necessarily too quick to

cook (as risotto takes its own sweet time to be prepared!), but well worth the wait!



INGREDIENTS

- 325g Arborio rice
- 4-6 spring onions/scallions
- 250g baby tomatoes, sliced
- 2 large tomatoes, cubed
- Zest of one lemon
- Basil leaves, a good handful, torn apart, not chopped, as you don't want the leaves to oxidise and turn brown
- 80g butter
- 1L vegetable stock (might need a little less, but have a litre just in case you need more)
- 3 Tbsp white wine (skip the wine if cooking for a baby)
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 150g grated Parmesan cheese (I prefer Parmigiano Reggiano)
- 2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- A pinch of sugar
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- Olive oil
- Parsley, finely chopped (optional)

METHOD

- 1. Slice the baby tomatoes in half.
- 2. In a saucepan, heat some olive oil.
- 3. Add the chopped garlic, stir is a little, then add the baby tomatoes.
- 4. Add the salt, pepper and sugar and stir for a few minutes.
- 5. Add the balsamic vinegar and stir until the sauce is reduced but not dry.
- 6. Set aside, and later, mix the caramelised baby tomatoes with the rest of the risotto.
- 7. In the meantime, finely chop the spring onions and garlic.
- 8. Cut the tomatoes into cubes.
- 9. Chop the parsley and set aside.
- 10. In a saucepan, heat the vegetable stock. Keep it warm at all times.
- 11. In a deep saucepan, over a medium-high heat, melt the butter.
- 12. Add the spring onions and garlic, and stir for about a minute.
- 13. Add the rice and stir until each grain is well coated and glistening with butter. Cook for about 2 minutes.
- 14. Add the cubed tomatoes and stir until they've softened up.
- 15. Pour in the white wine and allow it to cook until it reduces.
- 16. Lower the heat to medium, and add 1-2 ladles of vegetable stock. With a wooden spoon, stir everything around.
- 17. Once the liquid has been absorbed into the rice, add some more vegetable stock.
- 18. Keep waiting and adding, waiting and adding, until the rice is *al dente*. Don't overcook, as you don't want a mushy risotto, but also make sure the rice isn't too *al dente*, as you don't want it crunchy, either. It's a fine balance, but you'll know when you've hit the magic spot!
- 19. Add the grated Parmesan, the lemon zest, basil leaves and caramelised baby tomatoes, and stir.
- 20. If you're like me, then grate a little more Parmesan on top.
- 21. Serve hot, with a side salad and a glass of chilled white wine.

Buon appetito!

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