

Asparagus Risotto

Asparagus risotto is a favorite in my house. The rich, earthy flavor of asparagus in the creamy company of Arborio rice with browned mushrooms, pieces of smoky tempeh and a touch of lemon will light up your taste buds tonight. The dish is topped off with shaved Parmesan and the umami freshness of chopped tomato.

Risotto takes a little more time to prepare, but it's Friday. Turn the evening into a fashionably late dining experience. **Preparation time: 50 minutes - Servings: 4**

Organize Your Ingredients!

Notes on Organizing

Prep and organize ingredients on small plates or in bowls so they are easy to add. When prepping asparagus, snap off and discard woody white bottoms and chop stalks into 1" pieces.

Asparagus Risotto

1 tsp. olive oil
2 C. Cremini mushrooms (sliced)

1 tsp. olive oil
1 clove garlic (smashed and chopped)
2/3 C. sweet onion (coarsely-chopped)
1 C. Arborio rice
1/2 C. white wine

1/2 cube Not Chicken Bouillon dissolved in
1 C. boiling water

3 C. low-sodium vegetable broth
2 T. lemon juice
1 bunch fresh asparagus (washed and chopped into 1" pieces. Slice tops in half lengthwise and keep separate from 1" pieces.)
3 T. shredded Parmesan
4 strips smoky tempeh

Salad and Dressing

Fixings for green salad

Il Simplico Salad Dressing:

3 T. extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 tsp. Dijon mustard
2 T. white balsamic or rice wine vinegar
3 T. low-sodium vegetable broth
pinch of salt

Garnishes

4 T. shredded or shaved Parmesan
1/2 C. chopped slicing tomato

But First,
Preheat Oven
to 400°

Let's Prepare, Cook, and Plate This!

Basic Assembly Instructions

Roast tempeh strips 4 minutes per side in a 400° oven. Let cool and chop before adding to the risotto.

Asparagus Risotto

1. Measure olive oil in a large sauté pan and heat over medium high until it shimmers. Brown mushrooms in the hot oil. Remove from heat and set aside.
2. Sauté garlic and onion in oil in a deep saucepan until onion becomes translucent. Add arborio rice and toss about 1 minute. Add wine and boil 1 more minute. Leave burner set at medium-high. Add the Bouillon Broth. Stir until broth nearly cooks away.
3. Begin adding low-sodium vegetable broth 1/2 C. at a time. Each time, stir until liquid nearly cooks away. Then add more broth.
4. When you get down to the last 1/2 C. of vegetable broth, mix it with the lemon juice.
5. Before adding the last of the broth, add the chopped asparagus stems.
6. Continue stirring until most of the liquid is absorbed. Add split asparagus tops, browned mushrooms, Parmesan and chopped tempeh. Stir about 5-minutes. Cover and remove from heat.

Salads and Dressing

Assemble side salads on individual plates.

Il Semplice Dressing:

Place all salad dressing ingredients in a small jar with a tight-fitting lid and shake well.

Plate the Meal

1. Serve about 1-1/2 C. risotto per diner in the center of a serving plate or a flat pasta bowl. I often pack the finished risotto into a large ladle or a small bowl before turning it out onto serving plates.
2. Garnish servings with 1 T. shredded or shaved Parmesan and about 1/4 C. chopped tomato per plate.
3. Serve salads and dressing on the side.

What I've Learned from this Recipe

When using asparagus in dishes like risotto, I often buy bundles of asparagus with larger stalks. The cut pieces cook perfectly in the risotto. When using smaller steamed asparagus spears, the asparagus can get too soft.

Let us know what you think, and ask any questions you may have! chezdon@plate6.com