

Asparagus risotto

Asparagus has arrived! The arrival of this superb vegetable heralds the beginning of summer and all those wonderful fruits and vegetables we will be able to harvest soon.

As the asparagus season only lasts until midsummer day - it's worth making a real pig of yourself and adding it to every meal you cook. Start by serving it steamed or boiled with lashings of butter, then begin enjoying it in fancy recipes such as asparagus risotto.

For 4 people you will need:

- One bundle of freshly harvested asparagus
- One bunch of spring onions, trim med and chopped fine
- 2oz (50g) butter
- 13 oz (400g) risotto rice
- 250 ml dry white wine
- 500 ml hot chicken stock
- Small bunch fresh parsley - chopped fine
- 2oz (50g) grated Parmesan cheese
- Salt and freshly ground black peppercorns to season.

Method:

- Begin by preparing the asparagus. After washing it briefly in cold running water, cut the tips so that they are 3cm long and slice the rest of the spears diagonally into thin slices, stopping when you get to the woody bit at the end.
- Poach the tips in boiling salted water for a few moments until almost cooked, remove and set to one side.
- Using a large frying pan in which you have placed the butter, gently cook the spring onion and uncooked asparagus pieces until almost soft but not brown, then toss in the rice, also the chopped parsley.
- Stir continually until the butter is absorbed and the rice begins to stick to the bottom, then pour in the wine and continue stirring.
- When the wine has been absorbed, add a ladle of chicken stock, stir and when the dish looks dry, add another ladle of stock. Continue doing this until you have used up all the stock, adding a little boiling water at the end if the rice is not fully cooked.
- Season, then stir in half the Parmesan cheese and the cooked asparagus tips.
- Dish up, scattering the rest of the Parmesan cheese and a twist of grated black peppercorns on top.