



Want to know the secret behind a perfectly creamy risotto? Use a wooden spoon and make sure that you stir the risotto often, especially toward the end of the cooking time. This brings out the starch in the rice, which is what makes it so creamy. Stir in the peas and basil just before serving; otherwise, they'll lose their fantastic green color. This risotto is a treat with meat, fish, poultry, and good sausage.

Summer Risotto with Asparagus and Basil

4 portions ♦ About 30 minutes

- 1 shallot, peeled
- 1 clove of garlic
- 1 bunch of green asparagus
- 1½ tablespoons butter
- 1¼ cups arborio rice
- 1½ cups dry white wine
- 3½ cups chicken stock
- ¾ cup frozen green peas, thawed
- ¾ cup chopped basil
- ¾–1¼ cups coarsely grated Parmesan
- Salt and coarsely ground black pepper

Finely chop the shallot and the garlic. If necessary, break off the tough part of the asparagus and cut the rest into ¾-inch pieces, reserving the tips. Heat a large saucepan with the butter and sauté the onion and garlic until soft. Add the rice and let it sauté for a short while. Add the white wine and let the rice boil in it, stirring it now and then. Add a little stock and simmer on low heat. Stir often and add the stock a little at a time until the rice is soft.

Add the asparagus pieces and let them cook while stirring continuously for 2–3 minutes. Coarsely chop the peas and add them, together with the basil and asparagus tips, when the risotto is soft and creamy. Stir in the Parmesan cheese and season with salt and pepper. Serve right away.

