

Mushroom Risotto with Ramps

For the Risotto

2½ cups Arborio or Carnaroli Rice
6 cups chicken stock
1 medium onion
1 medium shallot
½ cup white wine
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
½ cup grated Parmigiano
Salt and pepper to taste

For the Mushrooms

1 pound mixed mushrooms
1 ounce dried porcini mushrooms
2 garlic cloves
2 medium shallots
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 cups water
2 teaspoons of fresh thyme
Salt and pepper to taste

For the Ramps

2 bunches of ramps
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
Salt and pepper to taste

To Prepare the Ramps

Wash the ramps thoroughly, and dry on paper towels. There may be much hidden dirt in the leaves. Roughly chop and gently sauté them in a frying pan, just until tender. Season with salt and pepper. Scrape into a bowl, and set aside.

To Prepare the Mushrooms

Soak the dried porcini mushrooms in 2 cups of hot water for at least 15 minutes. Drain the liquid from the porcini, using a sieve. Reserve the liquid. Pat dry the piece of porcini, then roughly chop them. Set aside.

Wash and dry the fresh mushrooms. I use a combination of Cremini and Shitakes. If you can find morels or chanterelles, those are even better. Slice into bite-sized pieces.

Mince the shallots and the garlic. Using the same pan in which you cooked the ramps, sauté the fresh mushrooms in the hot butter and olive oil until lightly browned. Don't cook too many at once, or they'll just steam. Near the end of the cooking add the shallots and garlic to the pan and cook a minute or two longer. Scrape the mushrooms into a bowl and reserve.

Sauté the chopped porcini mushrooms for a couple of minutes in the same sauté pan. Scrape them into the fresh mushrooms. Season to taste with salt, pepper, and fresh thyme. Set aside.

To Prepare the Risotto

Place the chicken stock in a large pot. Bring to the simmer, then add the reserved porcini liquid, pouring it through a strainer lined with damp paper towels, to be certain to remove any dirt or residue. Continue to simmer.

In a large, heavy kettle, cook the onion and shallots together in 2 tablespoons of butter and 2 tablespoons of oil until softened and turning golden. Add the rice to the onions and shallots, stirring to thoroughly coat the rice. Continue to cook for 2 to 3 minutes until the edges of the grains become translucent and the rice is toasted.

Pour in the wine and stir well until it is evaporated. Begin adding the simmering stock $\frac{1}{2}$ cup at a time, stirring constantly until each addition has nearly evaporated. Continue this until most of the stock has been incorporated.

Many recipes say this should take 16 to 20 minutes. I find it takes me closer to 35-40 minutes to get the rice to the degree of tenderness I like. When it reaches that done point, stir in the last of the stock, but don't let it evaporate so the rice remains creamy. Taste for seasoning.

Remove the kettle from the heat, and stir in the remaining 2 tablespoons of the butter and the Parmigiano. Again taste for seasoning, and fold in the mushrooms and finally the ramps.

Serve in bowls with extra Parmigiano on the side.