

Beetroot & Herb Risotto

Season: Autumn

Serves: 30 tastes in the classroom
or 6 at home

Fresh from the garden: bay leaves, beetroot, celery, dandelion leaves, dill, onions, parsley, purslane, thyme

Recipe source: Desley Insall, Kitchen Specialist, Collingwood College, Victoria

This risotto is made with a vegetable stock and risotto rice of your choosing (see note below). The beetroot is added at the end to keep its vibrant purple colour.

Equipment:

metric measuring jug, scales and spoons
salad spinner
2 clean tea towels
chopping board
knives – 1 cook's, 1 small
vegetable peeler
food processor with grater attachment
1 medium-sized pot with lid
bowls – 1 large, 2 medium, 1 small
1 large heavy-based saucepan
wooden spoon
soup ladle (or large serving spoon)
4 platters
4 serving spoons

Ingredients:

1½–2 L vegetable or chicken stock
2 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
1–2 celery sticks, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
350 g risotto rice
2–4 bay leaves
6 sprigs thyme
1 handful of parsley, finely chopped
1 handful of dill, finely chopped
dandelion leaves, up to a handful finely chopped
purslane (optional), up to a handful, finely chopped
3–4 medium beetroot, peeled and grated (or cut into 3 cm cubes and pre-baked with olive oil in a medium oven)
salt and pepper, to taste
natural yoghurt, for serving
chives, as a garnish



What to do:

1. Prepare all of the ingredients based on the instructions in the ingredients list.
2. Pour the stock into a medium-sized pot, put a lid on it and heat it to just under boiling point. Take the stock off the heat and set aside in a large bowl.
3. Heat the heavy-based saucepan, pour in the olive oil, then add the onion, celery and garlic. Stir-fry for 2–3 minutes, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon.
4. Add the rice and stir for 1 minute. Then add the bay leaves and thyme.



5. Take a ladleful of the hot stock. Pour the stock into the rice gradually while stirring the rice so the rice absorbs the stock.
6. Keep adding the hot stock to the rice gradually, as you stir.
7. Cook the risotto until the rice is al dente (cooked through but firm to bite).
8. Add the herbs, greens and beetroot to the risotto. Stir them in and cook for another 5 minutes. Remove the saucepan from the heat.
9. Season the risotto with salt and pepper to taste, and let it sit for 2–5 minutes before dividing between the platters and serving.
10. Serve with yoghurt and chives.

Note: Rice for risotto is usually a specific kind of grain, such as Arborio, Carnarola or Vialone Nano. These are short- to medium-grain rice varieties that will gradually release starch and absorb moisture as you stir and cook the grains in the hot liquid. The final result is a risotto with a thick sauce made creamy by the starch, and rice grains that have a small, dense kernel that you can feel in your mouth.

