

Wild Garlic and Asparagus Risotto

This bright green risotto is full of the joys of spring. If you can't find wild garlic it also works with a nice home-made, garlicky basil pesto. Feel free to substitute shelled broad beans for the Edamame and broccoli for the peas – in fact any green vegetable you happen to most like.



DETAILS

- Prep Time: 10 minutes (pesto) & 10 minutes (risotto)
- Cook Time: 20 minutes
- Total Time: 40 minutes
- Serves: 3-4 as a main course

INGREDIENTS

For the pesto

- 150g wild garlic
- 75g Parmesan cheese
- 50g toasted pine nuts
- extra virgin olive oil
- lemon juice (to taste)
- salt & pepper

For the risotto

- 1 medium onion or 2 echalion shallots, finely chopped
- 25 ml olive oil
- 25g butter
- 250g risotto rice
- 75ml vermouth (or white wine)
- 800ml vegetable stock
- 8 spears asparagus
- 100g frozen Edamame beans (de-frosted)

- 100g frozen peas (de-frosted)
- 3 tbsp wild garlic pesto
- handful of grated Parmesan
- black pepper

To serve

- 50 g toasted pine nuts
- grated Parmesan
- extra virgin olive oil

METHOD

Begin by making the pesto. Blitz the wild garlic in a food processor until finely chopped (you may need to do this in two blasts, pushing the leaves down in between). Add the pine nuts and Parmesan and blitz again. With the blades still running pour in enough extra virgin olive oil to give you a loose but not too runny pesto consistency. Switch off the processor and add a squeeze of lemon juice (to taste) and a twist of black pepper. You will have more pesto than you need for this recipe and the rest can be kept in the fridge for up to a week.

Prepare the asparagus: cut off c. 5cm of tip & finely slice the middle section into discs; set both aside. Put the woody ends in a pan with the stock & bring to the boil. Turn down to a low heat to keep warm.

In a wide, heavy based pan sweat the onion or shallot in the oil and butter until softened. Add the rice and stir for 2 minutes before adding the vermouth or white wine. When it is absorbed turn the heat down a little and begin to add the stock, a ladleful at a time (make sure you don't add any of the woody asparagus ends, they're just there to flavour the stock). Keep slowly adding the stock, stirring until each addition is absorbed before adding the next. After about 15 minutes you should have a small amount of stock left.

At this point add the asparagus tips and discs, the Edamame beans and the peas to the risotto, along with the remaining stock. Stir everything together before putting on a tight fitting lid and leaving to cook gently for another 5-7 minutes. The aim is for both the asparagus and the rice to retain a bit of bite.

Remove the pan from the heat and stir through the wild garlic pesto and a handful of Parmesan. Season with a twist of black pepper. Serve in warm bowls, topped with a generous drizzle of extra virgin olive oil and a scattering of pine nuts and Parmesan.

