



SECOND-HELPINGS

Homemade food made with passion

Fennel & Lemon Risotto

Serves 4 (generously)

Ingredients

1 largish bulb of Fennel
1.2 litres vegetable stock
1 large lemon, zest and juice
1 tbs olive oil
50gm butter
1 onion, finely chopped
1 celery stick, chopped
350gm arborio risotto rice
150ml white wine
60gm pecorino, finely grated

Trim the fennel, reserving the green fronds for decoration. Halve and finely chop one half. Shave the other half into thin strips with a vegetable peeler and put them into a bowl of iced water – these will be used to top the risotto when cooked.

Put the stock into a pan with most of the lemon zest and bring to the boil, then lower the heat to a very gentle simmer. Put a large pan on a medium heat and add the oil and half the butter. Stir in the chopped fennel, onion and celery and fry gently for 15 minutes – try not to brown.

Add the rice and stir for 2 minutes then add the wine and turn up the heat. Keep stirring until almost all the wine has been absorbed. Then slowly add the stock, a ladle full at a time – each time waiting until its absorbed before adding another. This process should take around 25 mins and the rice should be cooked. Turn off the heat. Add some seasoning, most of the lemon juice, the remaining 25gm of butter and the pecorino. Stir well and cover and leave to stand for 2 or 3 minutes.

Drain the shaved fennel leaves and dress with a little oil and the remaining lemon juice and season. Serve the risotto with the shaved fennel on top, scattered with the remaining lemon zest and the reserved fennel fronds.

This is a rather “white” looking plate of food so I like to add a few thinly sliced radishes or spring onions to the shaved fennel leaves to give it a little colour. Delicious!!