

## RECIPES

The Romans used rice solely for medicinal purposes, and the plant only began to be cultivated as a source of nutrition by the Arabs during their occupation of Sicily in the 10th century. It's likely that Venetian merchants later imported rice. Venice has a dish of rice with mutton and cinnamon called risi in cavroman: add dried apricots and raisins, close your eyes, and you could be in Tunis or Beirut.

A risotto of peas with a mint gremolata is an elegant comforting seasonal treat, one that's freshened by the herbs and lemon.

If you have some of the risotto leftover then don't waste it, turn them into arancinis.

Simply by adding a little more cheese to the rice whatever's in the fridge and place the rice in the fridge to set, then roll the rice into balls and coat with some flour, then egg wash and finally breadcrumbs, fry them till golden.

RECIPE

# ENGLISH PEA RISOTTO, PARMESAN, ROSEMARY AND MINT GREMOLATA

SERVES 4

## INGREDIENTS

300g Risotto rice  
200g fresh peas still in pods  
1 shallot  
1 clove of garlic  
1 red chilli  
2 sprigs of thyme  
2 sprigs of Rosemary  
1 sprig of mint  
30g Parmesan  
1 lemon  
30g Butter  
100ml white wine  
3 L water  
Season with salt, pepper and extra virgin olive oil

## METHOD

Make stock with washed chopped pods of peas, 1 sprig of Rosemary, 1 sprig of thyme, 4 strips of lemon zest, whole chilli and water; cook gently for 20 minutes, then season with a little salt and pass stock.

Sweat the shallots with some butter in a pan, until soft in texture.

Add the rice to shallots and sweat for 1 minute, then add the wine, cook until dry.

Add the stock then ladle by ladle and keep stirring all the time, adding the liquid until the rice is cooked and soft with a little bite.

If you run out of the stock then just use water to finish the cooking.

For the last minute of the cooking add the fresh peas, then season with Parmesan, salt, pepper and some lemon juice.

Finish with the mint gremolata.

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## MINT GREMOLATA

Chop the garlic clove, sprig of thyme, mint leaves, Rosemary needles together; add some lemon zest and a splash of olive oil.

RECIPE

## CRISPY PORK BELLY

### INGREDIENTS

1.2kg of pork belly  
1 sprig of Rosemary chopped fine  
1/2 fine zest of lemon  
4 garlic cloves crushed  
50ml white wine  
Pinch of Maldon salt, sugar and pepper

### METHOD

#### **Meat marinade**

Mix the rosemary, lemon, garlic, white wine and a splash of olive oil, sugar, pepper and a little salt.

Use this as a rub on the meat but not on the skin.

Rub the rest of the salt all along the surface of the skin and leave to marinate overnight with the skin not covered so as to dry.

Next day place the pork belly on a rack in a preheated oven at 160 degrees for 2 hours, then 220 degrees for 20 minutes more to crisp the skin.

Leave to rest and cut into pieces.

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## ROAST CHICKEN

If you wish the same marinade works wonderfully with a whole chicken, rub all over and inside and the cavity then leave to marinate overnight.

Take the chicken out of the fridge an hour before cooking, then season with salt and pepper and rub some butter on the outside.

Then place on a roasting tray in a preheated oven, 180 degrees or gas mark 4.

Cook until the crown of the chicken is ready, depending on size, roughly 20-30 minutes.

Take the legs off and put back on the roasting tray for another 15 minutes, leaving the crown to rest, then serve together, serve the roasting tray juices with the chicken.

RECIPE

## WARM CHICKPEA, COCONUT AND TOMATO

### INGREDIENTS

30g Unsalted butter  
1 shallot diced  
5g Ginger  
2 cloves of garlic crushed  
1 plum tomato diced  
1 tin of coconut  
1 tin of chickpeas  
Salt and pepper to taste

### METHOD

Sweat the shallots, ginger, garlic and tomatoes in the butter until all are soft.

Add the coconut milk, chickpeas and cook for 10 minutes.

Season with salt and pepper and verbena

RECIPE

## COUSCOUS, CUCUMBER AND RED ONION

### INGREDIENTS

300g Couscous  
50g Butter  
1/3 Cucumber diced  
1 red onion diced  
1 plum tomato diced  
80g shiitake mushrooms in 1/4  
1 sprig of coriander chopped  
300ml Water or chicken stock if available  
Salt and pepper to taste

### METHOD

Roast the shiitake mushrooms in the butter until nicely caramelised, add the water or stock and season with some salt.

Once the water comes to boil, pour over the couscous in a bowl and cover with cling film airtight. Leave to rest for 20 minutes, then stir the couscous and add cucumber, tomatoes, onion, coriander and season to taste.

Serve

RECIPE

# CHAMOMILE POACHED PEAR

INGREDIENTS

4 fresh pears  
400ml water  
150g Caster sugar  
1 Chamomile tea bag

METHOD

Wash the pears, peel them and place all the peelings in a pot with the sugar, water and chamomile.

Cut the pears in half and remove the core with a small spoon.

Place the pear halves and the cores in the sugar mixture.

Cover the pot with a lid and cook slowly until a knife moves through the pears easily.

Allow them to cool in the syrup and for best results leave to marinate overnight.

Serve chilled with a vanilla ice cream for a lovely refreshing fruit pudding.