



Beetroot & Herb Risotto

Season: Autumn/Winter/Spring

Serves: 30 tastes in the classroom
or 6 at home

Fresh from the garden: bay leaves, beetroot, celery, chives, garlic, dandelion leaves, dill, onion, parsley, purslane, thyme

Recipe source: Adapted from a recipe by 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:

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

Ingredients:

1.5 L vegetable or chicken stock
3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
1 onion, peeled and finely chopped
1–2 celery sticks, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, peeled and finely chopped
400 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. Pour the stock into the medium saucepan, put a lid on it and heat it to just under boiling point. Take the stock off the heat and set aside.
2. While the stock is heating, prepare all of the ingredients based on the instructions in the ingredients list.





3. Heat the the olive oil in the heavy-based pot, then add the onion, celery and garlic. Stir-fry for 2–3 minutes, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon.
4. Add the rice and turn up the heat, keep stirring it. After a minute it will look slightly translucent. Then add the bay leaves and thyme.
5. Add your first ladle of hot stock and stir.
6. Lower the heat and continue adding stock, stirring and allowing each ladle to be fully absorbed.
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 bowls of yoghurt and chives.

Note: Rice for risotto is usually a specific kind of grain, such as arborio, carnaroli 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.

