

Roast Vegetable & Barley Risotto with Salsa Verde



I could never be a vegetarian, I just love meat too much. I am however, having an awesome amount of fun creating new and interesting vegetarian dishes. You honestly don't need meat in this particular one and I believe it would detract from the dish if it was added. It is an extremely rich and satisfying meal, perfect for the cooler months using in-season vegetables that in my opinion are taken to new heights by roasting until they are golden and tender. Roasting vegetables brings out the sugars in the veg which intensify the flavours. It's actually a great way to get your kids to eat veggies as they are sweeter once roasted and more palatable. Anyway, I tossed these veggies through a gloriously nutty, red wine laced, barley risotto and topped the dish off with a tangy, fresh, anchovy-free salsa verde that cut right through the richness and maintained its vegetarian status. Pretty good huh?

Prep time: 30 Minutes
Medium Budget

Cooking time: 45 Minutes

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Serves 4

For the Roasted Vegetables:

1 large beetroot, peeled and cut into wedges

2 carrots, peeled, halved lengthways and cut into chunks on the diagonal

12 brussel sprouts, halved

1 large parsnip, peeled, halved lengthways and cut into chunks on the diagonal

Extra virgin olive oil for drizzling

Sea salt and cracked pepper

For the Risotto:

40gm of butter

2 tbs of olive oil

1 1/2 cups of pearl barley, rinsed and drained

1 onion, finely diced

2 cloves of garlic finely minced

2 fresh bay leaves

8 thyme sprigs, leaves removed from stalks and stalks discarded

1 1/2 cups of dry red wine

1 litre of vegetable stock

1/3 cup of freshly grated parmesan

Sea salt and cracked pepper

Parsley leaves and chopped toasted hazelnuts for garnish

Lemon wedges to serve

For the Salsa Verde:

1 cup of parsley leaves
1/2 cup of mint leaves
1 tbs of baby capers
1 tbs of dijon mustard
1 tbs of red wine vinegar
1/4 cup of Extra virgin olive oil
A squeeze of lemon juice
Sea salt and cracked pepper

Preheat the oven to 180C.

Place the vegetables in an oven tray lined with baking paper and toss with olive oil and salt and pepper. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until tender and golden.

Heat a large pan and add half of the butter and all of the olive oil.

Lightly fry the onion until soft and then add the garlic, thyme leaves and bay leaves, frying for a minute or so until aromatic. Add the barley and toss through the mixture, stirring until it is well coated in the butter and oil before adding the red wine. Allow to absorb for approximately 5 minutes, until reduced slightly and then pour in half of the stock. Stir to combine, reduce the heat to a simmer and place a tight fitting lid on. Simmer for approximately 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. After 20 minutes, remove the lid and add the stock bit by bit until it is absorbed into the barley and you have a risotto like texture. This will take about 15 minutes, the barley will be a little chewier than rice but should still be tender once cooked.

To make the salsa verde, place all of the ingredients in a small food processor, season with salt and pepper and blitz until you have a fine paste.

Just before serving, fold the roasted vegetables through the risotto with the remaining butter and parmesan cheese and season with a little salt and pepper. Stir continuously over a low heat until everything is combined and heated through.

To serve, divide the risotto between four serving plates or bowls. Spoon over a tablespoon of the salsa verde and scatter over the hazelnuts and parsley leaves. Finish with a drizzle of good extra virgin olive oil and serve with lemon wedges if you so desire.

If you have leftover Barley, you may want to cook this.....

<https://emsfoodforfriends.com.au/hungarian-beef-barley-soup-with-cheesy-paprika-bread/>