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**Chicken
Risotto**

A comforting classic with room to make it your own, this risotto starts with creamy Arborio or fragrant Basmati rice, slowly simmered in a rich stock until perfectly tender. Juicy, pan-seared chicken adds hearty flavor, but feel free to switch things up—earthy mushrooms with vegetable stock offer a delicious vegetarian option, while tender lobster in a seafood broth brings an elegant, coastal twist. Craving something more robust? Try savory beef simmered in deep, flavorful beef stock. Feel free to add a small amount of vegetables (I love cut up asparagus). Finished with a touch of Parmesan and fresh herbs, this risotto is endlessly adaptable and always satisfying.

Serves 4

Ingredients

For the Chicken

- 8 oz chicken breast or thighs, cut into 1" pieces
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp butter
- Kosher or sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

For the Risotto

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 shallot, finely chopped (*or 1 small white onion*)
- 1 large garlic clove, minced
- 1 1/2 cups Basmati or Arborio rice (*do not rinse*)
- 1/3 cup dry white wine
- 5 cups chicken stock
- 1 tsp chicken base or bouillon (*optional*)
- 10 threads saffron (*optional*)

- 1 tsp white or black pepper
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- Kosher or sea salt to taste

Instructions

1. Cook the Chicken

In a large skillet over medium heat, warm 1 tbsp olive oil and 1 tsp butter.

Add the chicken pieces, season with salt and pepper, and cook for 5–7 minutes until golden and cooked through.

Remove the chicken from the pan and set aside.

2. Start the Risotto Base

In the same skillet (or a large saucepan), heat 2 tbsp olive oil and 1 tbsp butter over medium heat.

Add the chopped shallot (or onion) and sauté for 2–3 minutes until soft and translucent.

Stir in the minced garlic and cook for another 30 seconds.

3. Toast the Rice

Add the rice to the pan and stir well to coat each grain in the oil and aromatics.

Cook for 2–3 minutes, allowing the rice to lightly toast.

Pour in the white wine and stir continuously until it's mostly absorbed.

4. Add Stock Gradually

Warm the chicken stock in a separate saucepan and keep it over low heat. If using chicken base or saffron, stir into the stock before adding to the rice.

Add the stock to the rice one ladleful at a time, stirring often.

Wait until most of the liquid is absorbed before adding more stock.

Continue this process for 20–25 minutes, or until the rice is creamy and just tender.

5. Finish the Risotto

Once the rice is cooked to your liking, stir in the cooked chicken. The finished risotto should be creamy and smooth, with the rice cooked *al dente*—tender on the outside but with a slight, pleasant bite at the center. It should never be mushy, nor should it be crunchy; instead, each grain should hold its shape and offer a delicate resistance when chewed.

Add the grated Parmesan and stir gently to melt

and combine.

Taste and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper as needed.

6. Serve

Spoon the risotto into bowls and garnish with extra Parmesan and fresh herbs if desired.

Serve immediately while hot and creamy.