



## LEEK & LEMON RISOTTO WITH SMOKED SALMON TRIMMINGS

Crafted by Clare Heal - Journalist-turned-chef based in London



Smoked salmon trimmings elevate a weeknight risotto to something decadent. Using leek instead of the more traditional onion adds a lovely sweetness and lemon cuts through the richness. We've added a crunchy lemon crumb for textural contrast.

**Serves 2-4**

### **Ingredients:**

- Smoked salmon trimmings
- 2 leeks
- 200g risotto rice (arborio or carnaroli)
- 70g butter
- 250ml white wine
- 1l vegetable stock
- Squeeze lemon
- Black pepper
- 20g butter
- 20g panko breadcrumbs
- 1 lemon, zest only
- Small bunch chives, finely chopped
- Flaky sea salt

## Method:

1. Halve the leeks lengthwise then cut the white and pale green parts into 1cm slices. Save the dark green parts for stock. (If the leeks look gritty put the pieces in a bowl of cold water, give them a swish around then let them stand for a couple of minutes before removing with your hands – don't drain through a sieve as this will only tip the grit back over the vegetable.)
2. Melt 20g of the butter in a large, heavy-bottomed pan and add the leeks along with a pinch of salt. If you didn't soak them in water add a little splash. The salt and moisture helps them soften without browning.
3. Put the stock in a separate pan and keep it warm over a low heat. Add the leek tops for extra flavour.
4. Cook the leeks on a low-medium heat until soft and translucent then add the rice and stir to coat. Raise the heat and cook for a couple more minutes. Neither the leeks nor the rice should colour but there should be no liquid surrounding them.
5. Add the wine. It should bubble and hiss. Stir and cook until it has been absorbed by the rice then start adding the stock, a couple of ladlefuls at a time. Stir each addition well and let it absorb before adding the next. Taste every now and again. The rice should be soft but with a hint of bite in the centre of each grain. The whole process shouldn't take more than about 20 minutes. You may not need all the stock or you may find that you add it all and the rice still has a chalky centre when you taste it, in which case add a little water and keep cooking.
6. If you wish to make the crumb topping, put the butter in a small frying pan over a medium heat and add the breadcrumbs. Cook, stirring regularly, until the crumbs are an even toasty brown colour then tip into a bowl. Allow to cool slightly before adding a pinch of salt and the lemon zest (a little warmth helps the aromatic oils come out). When cooled completely add the chives.
7. Once the risotto is cooked, take the pan off the heat. Cube the remaining 50g butter, add it to the risotto stir very vigorously until it has melted – this is what gives the risotto its creamy texture. Add a tiny squeeze of lemon. Be careful – a little goes a long way – and lots of freshly ground black pepper.
8. Finally, add the salmon trimmings and stir them in. They will become opaque and flaky so be gentle. Serve immediately, topping each portion with a sprinkling of lemon crumbs if desired.

## Variations:

- Using vermouth instead of the wine is an elegant touch.
- Up the greens content by adding a handful of frozen peas towards the end of cooking or stirring in some rocket leaves with the salmon trimmings and letting them wilt.

- Swap out the chives in the crumbs for dill or substitute the lemon zest for orange for something a little more unusual.