

Baked Mussel Risotto

The easiest risotto ever! You will need a heavy based sauté pan or dutch oven with a lid. This serves around 2 - 3 people, but can be easily scaled up for a larger crowd.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 rashers of bacon - finely chopped
- 1 red onion - peeled and finely chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic - peeled and crushed
- 2 celery stalks - finely diced
- Fennel - around a quarter bulb - finely chopped (optional) use the fronds to garnish
- 1 red chilli - finely sliced (optional)
- 1 cup risotto rice - Carnaroli if you can get it
- 125ml White Wine
- 2 cups of good vegetable stock - hot
- HERB GARDEN SALT and white pepper to taste
- 125 ml TOMATO VINAIGRETTE
- 12 Truss or cherry tomatoes
- 6 whole Raw prawns - any type, whiskers removed
- 1kg mussels - cleaned
- Fresh herbs - parsley, dill or basil
- Lemon Wedges and steamed greens to serve.

Commented [KH1]:

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat the oven to 200c. Place the bacon, onion, celery, (fennel if using) and a little olive oil in the pan or dutch oven, and place back in the oven for 10 minutes, no lid. Add the rice, garlic, chilli, and wine, stir well - then back into the oven for 5 minutes. This part can also be done on the stovetop if preferred.
2. Place the truss or cherry tomatoes on a baking sheet and place into the oven to blister.
3. Add the prawns to the rice – we use small school prawns simply for the flavour they impart to the stock, you can discard these after cooking. If we feel a bit luxe, we use whole large prawns which can be enjoyed with the finished dish. Pour over the hot vegetable stock, the **Tomato Vinaigrette**, season with **Herb Garden Salt** and white pepper and throw in some herbs. Parsley, dill, and thyme all work well. Basil can also be used, but add it at the end of the cook.
4. Place the lid on the pan or cover tightly with foil and cook for a further 15 minutes.
5. After 15 minutes, lay the mussels and tomatoes over the rice , replace the lid and cook for a further 5 minutes or so. The mussels should be all open by now.
6. Remove from the oven, sprinkle with more herbs and lots of lemon wedges.
7. If you used small school prawns they may be a little tough by now, so discard – their job to add a layer of flavour to the stock has been done. Larger prawns can be peeled and mixed through the risotto.
8. Parmesan is generally not used with seafood risotto, but feel free to add a knob of butter at this point to give the rice a delicious sheen.
9. Serve with steamed asparagus, zucchini or broccolini or stir through some leaves of baby spinach and basil.

10. You can really make this recipe your own by adding or removing ingredients to your personal taste.



