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Mushroom Risotto

The recipe calls for risotto rice, Italian rice varieties that are high in a particular type of starch, with grains that are shorter and fatter than most other rices: Arborio, Carnaroli and Vialone Nano are the most famous varieties. The high starch content of these rices yields a creamy texture when cooked.

Ingredients

- 2 Tbsp butter
- 2 cups flavorful mushrooms such as shiitake or oyster mushroom, cut into half-inch to inch pieces
- 2/3 cup brandy, vermouth, or dry white wine
- 5-6 cups chicken stock (use vegetable stock for vegetarian option)
- 1/3 cup of peeled and minced shallots (OR 1/3 cup of yellow or white onion, finely chopped)
- 1 3/4 cups arborio rice or other risotto rice
- 1/3 cup freshly grated Pecorino Romano cheese
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley or chives

Instructions

1. Bring stock to a simmer in a saucepan.
2. Sauté the mushrooms: Melt the butter in a wide saucepan over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms and shallots and sauté about 5 minutes (if using chanterelles, dry sauté first for a minute or two and let the mushrooms cook in their own juices before adding the butter).
3. Add rice and brandy: Add the rice and stir to combine. Add brandy, bring to a boil, and reduce liquid by half, about 3-4 minutes.
4. Add simmering stock, 1/2 cup at a time, stirring enough to keep the rice from sticking to the edges of the pan. Stir the rice almost constantly — stirring sloughs off the starch from the rice, making the creamy sauce you're looking for in a risotto. Wait until the stock is almost completely absorbed before adding the next 1/2 cup. This process will take about 25 minutes. The rice should be just cooked and slightly chewy.
5. Stir in the Pecorino (best) or Parmesan cheese and season to taste with salt and pepper. Garnish with chopped fresh parsley or chives.