



Recipe by Chef Thomas Catherall, C.M.C.

Risotto Croquettes with Smoked Ham and Wisconsin Mozzarella

Risotto:

3 cups chicken stock
1 cup water
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 small onion, minced
1 1/2 cups Italian Arborio rice
1/2 cup tomato sauce, homemade or canned
1/2 cup(about 2 ounces) grated Parmesan cheese
1 egg yolk, beaten
Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

Filling:

2 ounces smoked ham, cut into 1/4-inch dice
1/3 cup green beans or asparagus, trimmed, cut in 1/4-inch lengths, blanched
4 ounces smoked mozzarella cheese, cut into 1/4-inch dice

Croquettes:

Corn oil for deep frying
3 large eggs, beaten
2 cups fine dry breadcrumbs

1. For the risotto, bring the chicken stock and water to a boil in a saucepan on the back burner of the stove. Reduce the heat to simmer.
2. Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat.. Add the onion and sauté until soft, 5 to 10 minutes. Add the rice and continue to stir over medium heat, uncovered, 3 to 4 minutes, until the outside edge of each grain of rice is transparent and there is a tiny white dot in the interior of each grain. Add a ladle of stock (1/4 to 1/2 cup); stir. When the liquid is absorbed, add another ladleful of stock, and continue to stir. Keep the grains moist at all times. Stir frequently, adding more stock a ladleful at a time. Cook 18 to 22 minutes, until the rice is firm but tender, without a chalky center. (If necessary, add hot water if you run out of stock.) Continue cooking, stirring, until all the liquid is absorbed and the rice is very dry. Remove from the heat. Add the tomato sauce and Parmesan cheese. Mix well. Cool completely.
3. When the risotto has cooled, add the egg yolk, and mix well. Season with salt and pepper. For easier handling, chill at least 1 hour.
4. For the filling, in a small bowl, combine the ham, green beans or asparagus, and diced mozzarella.
5. To assemble the croquettes, work with half of the rice mixture at a time; keep the other half

refrigerated. Pat 2 rounded tablespoons of rice mixture to cover the palm of one hand. Place 1 tablespoon of filling in the center. Gently close your hand to envelop the filling. Using both hands, shape the mass into an oval about the size and shape of a large egg. Place the croquettes on a baking sheet and continue until you use all of the ingredients.

6. Heat 3 inches of oil to 375°F (190°C).
7. Dip the croquettes in the beaten eggs, and then roll in the breadcrumbs. Set on a baking sheet or waxed paper. Deep-fry the croquettes, a few at a time, until golden brown, about 45 seconds. Remove and drain. Serve hot, warm, or at room temperature.

Makes 24.

Recipe and photograph provided courtesy of Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board, Inc.