

Risotto with red radicchio* and Italian sausages / RISOTTO AL RADICCHIO ROSSO E SALSICCIA

I can't think of anything better than sitting eating a plate of risotto while admiring the view of the winding canals of Venice. This risotto has all the colours of Italy – green peas, creamy white rice and the sharp red of a favourite regional leaf vegetable, radicchio.

Serves 4

2 tablespoons olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
25g butter
4 sausages, skins removed
1 onion, very finely chopped
2 celery sticks, very finely chopped
400g Arborio or Carnaroli rice
100ml white wine
1.3 litres hot vegetable or chicken stock
150g frozen peas, defrosted
¼ head of radicchio, finely sliced
100g butter
80g Parmesan cheese, finely grated
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat the olive oil and butter in a large heavy based frying pan on a high heat. When hot, add the sausage meat and fry, using a wooden spoon to break up the meat into small pieces. Fry until golden brown, then transfer to a plate lined with kitchen paper using a slotted spoon. Keep warm.
2. In the same pan, cook the onion and celery for 2 minutes, then add the rice and fry for 3 minutes on a medium heat, allowing the rice to toast into the hot oil. Stir continuously with a wooden spoon. Pour the wine over the rice and continue to cook for a further minute to allow the alcohol to evaporate.
3. Add a couple of ladles of stock and bring to a simmer. Continue to cook and stir until all the stock is absorbed. At this point please stay with the saucepan because you need to keep stirring with a wooden spoon. Pour in the rest of the stock, except one ladleful, a little at a time, cooking until each addition is absorbed. It is ready when all the liquid has been absorbed and the rice is cooked but still has a slight bite. This will take 15–17 minutes (you may not need all the stock).
4. When the rice is just cooked, add the peas and radicchio. Add a final ladle of stock, stir, then remove from the heat and stir in the butter and Parmesan. Once the butter has melted, add three-quarters of the cooked and crumbled sausage meat. Season to taste.
5. Serve in warm bowls topped with the rest of the cooked sausage, a drizzle of olive oil and a little freshly ground black pepper.

