



AUBERGINE ARANCINI

Prep time: 1 hour | Cooking time: 35 minutes | Chilling time: 12 hours | Serves: 8

For the risotto:

*20g butter
15ml extra-virgin olive oil
200g aubergine, finely chopped
1 onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 sprigs of fresh oregano, leaves picked off the stems
3ml smoked paprika
3ml chilli flakes
1ml ground cumin
300g arborio rice
125ml white wine
1L warm chicken or vegetable stock
200g parmesan, grated
A handful of fresh parsley, chopped
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste*

To pané:

*160g cake wheat flour, seasoned with salt and pepper
2 eggs, beaten
160g panko breadcrumbs, seasoned with salt, pepper, 2g chilli flakes and zest of 1 lemon

Oil, to deep-fry
1 lemon, to zest
80g prosciutto, sliced
Fresh vine tomatoes, to serve
Fresh salad herbs, to garnish*

For the risotto: Heat the butter and olive oil in a large pot over a medium heat. Add the aubergine and cook for 8 minutes, or until softened and browned. Remove from the pot and set aside.

Return the pot to the heat, add the onion and cook for 5–8 minutes, or until softened. Add the garlic, oregano, smoked paprika, chilli flakes, cumin and rice. Cook for 1 minute, then pour in the wine. Stir and cook for 1–3 minutes, or until the aroma of wine disappears. Add the stock, a three-quarter-cup at a time, stirring constantly and allowing each addition to be absorbed before adding the next. With the final addition of stock, add the cooked aubergine and cook until the rice is al dente and all the liquid has evaporated.

Stir in the cheese and allow to melt, then add the parsley. Season with salt and pepper. Remove the risotto from the stove and refrigerate overnight.

The following day: Divide the risotto into small, equal portions. Roll them quite firmly into balls, 3–4cm in diameter, and compressing the rice slightly.

To pané the arancini: Roll the prepared balls in the seasoned flour. Dust off excess flour, then dredge them in the beaten eggs. Finally, coat each ball in the panko mixture, pressing to coat completely. Repeat until all the arancini are coated.

In a medium pot, heat the oil over a medium-high heat to 180°C. Carefully place a few arancini into the hot oil. Turn frequently so they cook evenly until golden. Once they are a deep golden brown, remove the arancini and place on a paper towel-lined plate to drain off excess oil. Immediately zest lemon over the hot arancini.

Skewer each arancini with a pice of prosciutto and serve on a bed of vine tomatoes, garnished with salad herbs.