



From the kitchen of Amanda COHEN'93 and Dirt Candy restaurant (New York City)
CARROT RISOTTO WITH CARROT RIBBONS

The next time you want to impress someone, try this dish. It's easy to make, both vegan and non-vegan.

Carrol Stock provides the basic flavor foundation of this dish.

1 cup roughly chopped white onions
3 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
1 quart sliced carrots
1 cup sliced celery
2 quarts water

1. In a large pot, simmer everything together for a half hour. You can cook it for longer, but just keep stirring. You want to come away with a stock that's got a really strong carrot flavor.
2. Strain through a sieve to remove all the vegetables and reserve liquid. Allow to cool. You can refrigerate it for a week or freeze it for longer.

Carrot Risotto (makes 4 servings)

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon garlic, minced
1 cup white onion, diced
2 cups arborio rice
1/3 cup white wine
1 tablespoon lemon juice
6 cups carrot stock (see above)
1 cup carrot juice (available at any juice store or juice it yourself)
1/4 cup carrots, diced
3 tablespoons parmesan, grated (leave out if vegan)
3 tablespoons unsalted butter (leave out if vegan)
1 tablespoon thyme, destemmed
Salt to taste

1. On medium low heat get carrot stock simmering.
2. Put olive oil in a pan over low heat. Drop in a bit of onion. When it starts to sizzle the oil is ready for the rest of the onions. Add and stir until they're translucent. Add garlic and keep stirring for three to four minutes.
3. Add the rice to the pan and toss it until the rice is translucent—about 7 minutes.

4. Add wine and stir until it has evaporated.
5. Add lemon juice and stir until it has evaporated.
6. Slowly add the simmering carrot stock—rice and stock need to be same temperature before you add them in one cup increments while stirring. Add a cup, stir until it's incorporated, then add the next cup. Let the carrot flavor slowly develop. This is the trick to cooking risotto: SLOW.
7. When you have two cups of stock left to add, pour the carrot juice into the stock and stir until it's incorporated, then add the next cup of stock to the rice and incorporate.
8. When you have one cup of stock left, add the diced carrots to the rice, then add the final cup of stock.
9. When the rice looks juicy, but there's no liquid sloshing around, add butter, parmesan and salt. Stir it in. This is known as “finishing the dish” and pretty much all restaurants do it: adding a bit of butter and salt at the end of a dish gives it that extra bump of flavor that distinguishes restaurant food from home cooked food. If this is a vegan recipe, no need to add the butter and parmesan.
10. Adjust salt levels and take off heat.

Carrot Ribbons (These are just for fun, but they make the dish look fancy.)

3 bunches of different colored carrots

½ cup corn starch

8 cups canola oil

1. Using a vegetable peeler, peel the carrots into long strips.
2. In a bowl toss the strips with the cornstarch until they're coated.
3. In a medium sized pot, heat the oil until it reaches about 350 degrees.
4. In batches, fry the strips for about 30 seconds to 1 minute, or until crispy.
5. Place on paper towel and let cool.

To Serve

Divide the risotto onto four plates (or bowls, or pieces of bark) and sprinkle with the thyme. Then lay the carrot ribbons on top for dramatic effect.