

# Leak Pea and Smoked Pancetta Risotto

Recipe by Belinda Jeffrey



Serves 4



## INGREDIENTS

- ❖ 70g unsalted butter
- ❖ 2 large leeks, well washed and finely sliced
- ❖ 1 large clove garlic, finely chopped
- ❖ About 1.5 litres good chicken stock (see recipe below)
- ❖ 200g carnaroli, arborio or vialone nano rice
- ❖ 2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
- ❖ 70g smoked pancetta, thinly sliced then cut into fine strips
- ❖ 180g peas (frozen are fine)
- ❖ 2 tablespoons finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
- ❖ Finely grated zest of 1 lemon
- ❖ 1-2 tablespoons lemon juice, to taste
- ❖ 1-2 tablespoons cream (or a tad more butter)
- ❖ 50g freshly grated parmesan cheese, plus extra to serve
- ❖ Sea salt, to taste
- ❖ a little sliced taleggio, fontina or fresh goat's cheese, optional
- ❖ tiny parsley leaves, for garnishing



## Mornings

with Georgia Stynes

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## DIRECTIONS

- ❖ Melt the butter in a large, preferably deep-sided, frying pan (or use a large saucepan) over medium heat. Add the leek and garlic and cook, stirring regularly, for 8-10 minutes, or until they are soft and wilted.
- ❖ In the meantime, heat the chicken stock in a separate saucepan until it's very hot, but not quite boiling. Reduce the heat so it barely bubbles.
- ❖ When the leek mixture is ready, tip the rice into the pan and cook it for a couple of minutes, stirring constantly, so it's slightly toasted and coated in the buttery leek and garlic.
- ❖ Add a ladleful of hot stock, just so it covers the rice (it will most likely hiss and steam), and cook, stirring regularly, until the rice has absorbed the stock. Add another ladle of stock, and again let it bubble and be completely absorbed by the rice, stirring regularly (the bubbling should be relatively gentle and even over the surface of the rice). I know many recipes say to stir risotto constantly, but it's not entirely necessary – a good stir every 20 - 30 seconds is fine.
- ❖ Continue to add the stock, one ladleful at a time, until the rice is done to your liking – the grains should still be slightly firm and the whole mixture a bit sloppy and creamy. Depending on the rice you use, you may not need all the stock: what you are after is rice that mounds slightly on the plate when you serve it, but slowly collapses on itself. All up, it takes about 18-20 minutes to get to this stage.
- ❖ While the rice is cooking, warm the olive oil in a frying pan, over medium heat. Add the smoked pancetta, and cook for a minute or so until it is translucent.



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## DIRECTIONS

- ❖ Add the peas (straight from the freezer is fine) and toss them about until they are heated through and tender – this only takes a few minutes. Remove from heat and keep warm.
- ❖ When the rice is ready, turn off the heat and stir in the parsley, lemon zest and juice, cream (or butter), parmesan and salt to taste. Now stir in most of the pea mixture – if the risotto firms up a bit too much with these additions, just add about half a ladleful of stock to loosen it
- ❖ (Occasionally I mix in slices of taleggio, fontina, or little nuggets of fresh goats' cheese at the very end, just before serving the risotto.) Serve in warm bowls, scatter the remaining pea mixture on top and garnish with tiny parsley leaves. Serve with extra parmesan, if liked.



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