

Scrumptious Summer Supper

Written by Debbi Covington
Tuesday, 27 May 2008 07:24

Tomato-Basil Risotto **Raspberry Pecan Salad** **Mocha Cake**



Risotto has become a popular dish in upscale restaurants. Unfortunately, the classic preparation involves a lot of patience and a great deal of stirring. Traditionally, risotto begins by sauteing Arborio rice in butter with a bit of chopped shallot. Then, simmering broth is added one ladle at a time and stirred until the liquid is absorbed. The process continues until all of the broth is added which can sometimes take up to an hour of stirring and ladling. My recipe for Tomato-Basil Risotto includes sauted chicken breasts, diced fresh tomatoes, fresh basil and shredded Romano cheese. Instead of following the traditional method, rice is sauted in butter and then cooked in chicken stock like regular rice. It needs to be simmered, covered, for about 15 minutes. The rice will be slightly undercooked since you will need to cook it again. Arborio rice is a highstarch, short-grained Italian rice. Its high starch content provides creaminess to the risotto that can't be duplicated with any other type of rice. You can find it in most local grocery stores. Serve the risotto piping hot with shredded Romano cheese. It's a great one-dish meal, but also delicious accompanied by Raspberry-Pecan Salad. Yummy Mocha Cake is the perfect ending to this scrumptious summer supper! (P.S. Please visit my new website: www.cateringbydebbicovington.com)

Tomato-Basil Risotto

2 tablespoons butter, divided
1 cup Arborio rice
1/2 cup white wine
1 (14.5-ounce) can plus 1/2 cup chicken stock, divided
1 teaspoon minced garlic
1/2 pound boneless, skinless, chicken breast halves, cubed
Salt
Freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons heavy whipping cream
1 large tomato, diced
1/2 cup shredded Romano cheese
1/4 cup slivered fresh basil leaves

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Heat 1 tablespoon of butter in a sauce pan. Add the rice and saute for 1 minute. Add the wine and the can of chicken broth, bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer, covered, until rice is almost done, about 15 minutes. Heat the remaining butter in a skillet with the garlic. Add the chicken and saute until the chicken is almost completely cooked. Season the chicken with salt and pepper. Add the prepared rice, remaining 1/2 cup of chicken broth, whipping cream, and diced tomato. Cook, stirring, until the rice is heated through. Stir in the shredded Romano cheese and basil. Serve immediately. Serves 6.

Raspberry-Pecan Salad

1/2 cup raspberry spreadable fruit
1/3 cup raspberry vinegar
1 tablespoon honey
1 tablespoon poppy seeds
3/4 cup canola oil
8 cups mixed salad greens
1 cup fresh raspberries
1 avocado
1/2 pound mushrooms, sliced
2 bunches green onions, chopped
1/2 cup chopped pecans

Combine first 5 ingredients in a blender until smooth. Place greens in a salad bowl, top with remaining ingredients and toss with dressing. Serves 8.

Mocha Cake

2 cups sour cream
2 large eggs
1 (18.25-ounce) package chocolate cake mix
1/2 cup coffee liqueur
1/4 cup vegetable oil
2 cups semisweet chocolate morsels
1/2 cup crushed almond toffee bits (optional)
Powdered sugar
1 pint whipping cream
1/4 cup powdered sugar

Stir together first 5 ingredients in a large bowl; blend well. Stir in morsels and toffee bits. Pour batter into a greased and floured 10-inch Bundt pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 50 to 55 minutes

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or until a wooden pick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool in pan on a wire rack 10 to 15 minutes; remove from pan, and cool completely on wire rack. Sprinkle with powdered sugar. Beat whipping cream at medium speed with an electric mixer until foamy; gradually add 1/4 cup powdered sugar, beating until soft peaks form. Serve with cake. Serves 12.

The writer owns Catering by Debbi Covington and is the author of the cookbook, Dining Under the Carolina Moon. Debbi's website address is www.cateringbydebbicovington.com. She may be reached at 525-0350 or by email at covingtoncats@embarqmail.com.