

Saffron and Tomato Risotto with Pan-seared Herb Salmon

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See also: [Basic Risotto Recipe](#)



This recipe follows the ingredient list and directions for the basic risotto recipe with a few important variations. Although you certainly can prepare this dish – especially if you’re just doing the saffron and tomato risotto without the pan-seared salmon – with the light chicken stock; if using the salmon it is best to use a fish stock. Again, if it is your preference you certainly may add all the cheese, but in this case, we only use the mascarpone. This yields a somewhat lighter risotto that complements the herb flavored salmon filet.

Serves six

Ingredients:

For the Risotto:

- 2 quarts fish stock, heated (you may not use the entire amount)
- Pinch of saffron
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 medium leeks (white part only) or 1 medium onion; finely chopped
- 2 cups good quality risotto rice; Arborio, or Vialone Nano are the most commonly available
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup good quality, dry white wine
- 3 tablespoons butter
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup mascarpone cheese
- 1-pint fresh cherry (halved or quartered), pear, or grape tomatoes
- Salt and white pepper to season
- 1 tablespoon chopped Italian (flat) parsley (garnish)

For the Salmon:

- Six 4-ounce fresh salmon filets
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup good quality, dry white wine
- one bunch fresh tarragon
- several sprigs fresh thyme and parsley

Directions:

For the Risotto:

Heat the fish stock in a small saucepan and leave on very low heat to just keep warmed.

In a large saucepan heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil over medium heat. Add the leeks or onions, and cook until translucent, about 3 to 4 minutes. Do not allow the leeks or onions to

brown.

Add the remaining tablespoon of olive oil. Add the rice and stir to coat the grains with the oil. Keep stirring for about one to two minutes. If you look closely at the grains, you should see the edges become translucent and a small white dot remaining in the center.

Add the wine and cook until the liquid has reduced, about another minute or two. To 1 cup of warm stock add the saffron. Add this cup of the warmed stock to the rice mixture, stirring constantly. Allow this liquid to be absorbed before adding any more stock. Adding too much stock all at once simply boils the rice. Over the next 15 minutes, add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of stock, stirring until evaporated. Continue to add stock in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup increments.

After 15 minutes, taste the risotto. It should be slightly al dente. Quickly add the butter and mascarpone. Remove from the heat. Season as needed with salt and white pepper. Top with the salmon filet and garnish as desired. Serve immediately.

For the Salmon:

In a plastic bag or other sealable container, combine the salt, olive oil, wine, and herbs. Add the salmon fillets and coat generously. Allow to marinate at least four hours or overnight. Remove the fillets from the marinade and pat dry. Allow to return to room temperature. In a heavy-duty skillet or sauté pan heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Place the fillets, three at a time, into the pan presentation side down. The exact cooking time will depend on the thickness of the fillets. Allow to cook for roughly 4 to 6 minutes and then turn the fillets over. Cook another 2 to 4 minutes until done. The flesh should be slightly translucent in the center and easily flake apart. Remove from the heat and allow to rest for several minutes. Place on top of the risotto, garnish, and serve as noted above.



Saffron and Tomato Risotto with Pan-seared Herb Salmon. This dish was made in a hotel using 1 pot and pan. If I can do it in a hotel room, you can do it at home!