

Kleine Zalze Wines / Terroir restaurant Prawn Risotto



This dish has been on our menu since opening in 2004 and has proved to be an all-time best seller. We have tried to take it off on several occasions but our customers protested so much we had to reinstate it, and hence have several variations on the theme over the years. Our latest take on the theme is to replace half the quantity of the dairy cream with coconut cream, and adding 1 tsp roasted cumin seeds, 1 tsp roasted coriander seeds and 5 green cardamom pods crushed and 1 tsp of chopped ginger frying the vegetables and proceed as usual. The recipe seems long but in fact is very easy to pull off for a fancy dinner party starter as the rice can be cooked to about 80% and spread on a tray and kept covered in the fridge for the next day. Simply put the cold rice in a warm saucepan and continue stirring and adding the rest of the ingredients. The sauce can be made a day ahead as well and you can fry the prawns in 3 minutes when ready to eat. We use the word "Americaine" pretty loosely here as strictly speaking it should be made with lobster or crayfish but we have adapted this traditional recipe to the method of cookery but have use of the prawn heads in much the same way.



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RISOTTO

3 Tbs olive oil
2 Tbs butter
1/2 small onion finely diced
1 cup Arborio rice (225g)
50ml dry white wine or Vermouth
3-4 cups hot chicken or vegetable stock
45ml ml cream
1 tsp butter
30g grated Parmesan
Salt and pepper to taste
1 cup fresh yellow corn
10 thinly shredded basil leaves

TO COOK:

Heat a saucepan, add the oil and butter. When hot add the onion and sweat gently for 25-30 min. DO NOT COLOUR.

Add the rice and stir fry for 5-6 min turning up the heat. Add the wine cook until absorbed. Now start adding the hot stock slowly, ladle by ladle at a time stirring thoroughly and continuously until rice is "el dente". Stir in the Parmesan and cream and beat in the butter off the heat with a wooden spoon and allow it to sit for 2-3 minutes while you pan fry the prawns. Check seasoning for salt and pepper. From start to finish rice should take 20min. it should be the dropping consistency of loose porridge. If not stir in more stock to loosen.

If not using the rice straight away, cook until almost done (about 15 min) remove pot from stove and spread in a thin layer on a cling film covered tray and allow to cool. Cover and keep refrigerated for two days until needed.

PRAWN BUTTER

500g shells
500g butter
250ml vegetable oil
120g tomato paste
3 garlic cloves, peeled
1 small onion
3 sprigs fresh tarragon
1 small bunch basil
3 sprigs thyme
1/2 small bunch parsley
1 bay leaf
1/4 tsp whole black pepper corns

TO COOK:

Sweat onions and garlic in 50ml oil until soft. Heat another saucepan over high heat add 100ml oil and fry the heads until they turn bright red and all their juices have cooked away. Add the cooked onions and garlic to the heads along with the rest of the oil and all the butter. Simmer for one hour on a low heat. Add the aromatics, cover and remove from the heat and allow to infuse for 30min. pass through a fine sieve. Cool, cover and chill. Will keep for two day or freeze for a month.

TO SERVE:

Heat the sauce and froth with a hand held blender if possible. Divide the risotto between 6 plates, place the sautéed prawns on top of the rice. Spoon some sauce around the outside of the rice, garnish with basil leaves or parsley sprigs and serve.

If you would like to lighten and aerate the sauce pour it into a cream gun or Isi gun charge with a single cartridge and keep in hot water. Dispense into a warm cup first then spoon onto the rice. Serves 6 as a starter.

SAUCE "Americaine"

18 tiger prawns, heads removed and put aside. Tails shelled and cleaned, removing the digestive tract but leaving on the tail.
4 Tbs olive oil
18 prawn heads
2 carrots, diced
1 onion, diced
1 celery rib, thinly sliced
1 fennel bulb, diced
4 garlic cloves sliced
1 tsp tomato paste
100ml brandy
200ml dry white wine
2 ripe tomatoes blitzed smooth
500ml cream
1 star anise
2 bay leaves
Good twist of black pepper
A small bunch thyme
Pinch dried tarragon

TO COOK:

Heat a saucepan to a medium high heat, add oil and butter then when butter starts to foam add the prawn heads and fry until they turn pink. Drain through a colander and collect the run-off oils. Put the reserved oil back in the same pan turn up the heat slightly and add carrots and onions and stir for 5 min, add celery, garlic and fennel. Cook for 15 min or just until they just start to brown. Add the tomato paste and stir fry for 3 min then add the prawn heads then the wine and brandy and reduce by two thirds, add the tomatoes and rest of ingredients and simmer on a low heat, partially covered for 30 min. Season with salt (and pepper if needed) Remove from heat and allow to rest for 10-15 min. Pass through a fine strainer into saucepan, cover and refrigerate if not using immediately. Sauce should be the consistency of pouring cream if it is a little thin reduce it for 5min until it almost coats the back of a spoon.



PRAWNS

2 Tbsp prawn butter (see below)
1 clove garlic finely chopped
1-2 red chillies, seeds removed, finely chopped
5-6 leaves basil (finely sliced)
Lemon juice, a squeeze
Salt and pepper

TO COOK:

Heat a sauté pan over a medium-low heat, when warm add the butter and allow to heat. Add the prawns, chillies, salt and pepper and cook for 1 min, turn the prawns over, add the garlic and sauté for a minute then add the basil and cook for another 2 minutes. Remove from the heat, add the lemon juice and keep warm.

Wine pairing: Kleine Zalze Vineyard Selection Chenin Blanc