

Everyday Healthy! Everyday Delicious!

From the Kitchen of Janice Feuer Haugen

Roasted Asparagus Risotto with Peas & Spinach

Inspired by and adapted from a number of recipes, including Rose Gray and Ruth Rogers' Asparagus Risotto from [The Café Cook Book](#). Elegant, creamy and comforting Roasted Asparagus Risotto features an abundance of spring green asparagus, peas and spinach for heightened color, flavor and nutrients.

Makes 6 servings

Active and Total Time: 60-75 minutes

2 - 2¼ pounds medium asparagus

2 teaspoons olive oil

Coarse Salt

7-8 cups well-flavored vegetable or chicken broth *OR* 2 tablespoons [Organic Better Than Bouillon](#) concentrate (vegetable, chicken or a combination of both)

1 small onion, minced

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon butter

1½ cups risotto rice, such as arborio or carnaroli

4 ounces fresh baby spinach, stems removed

1 cup peas, defrosted if frozen

½ cup grated [Pecorino Romano](#) or Parmesan cheese

1 tablespoon butter

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

1. Heat the oven to 475 degrees.
2. Snap off the tough ends from the asparagus. Place the ends in a pot along with 7 cups of water or broth. Bring the liquid to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat so the liquid simmers. Cook the asparagus ends for 15 minutes. Strain and discard the asparagus. Save and measure the cooking liquid. Add additional water or broth to equal 7 cups.
3. Return the liquid to the pan. If using water and not broth, make the water into broth by seasoning it with the bouillon concentrate. Cover the pot. Keep the broth hot over very low heat.
4. Meanwhile, roast the rest of the asparagus:
 5. Place the asparagus spears in one layer on a rimmed sheet pan. Sprinkle with the olive oil, sea salt and ground pepper. Shake the pan back and forth to evenly coat the asparagus.
 6. Put the asparagus on the lower rack in the preheated oven. Bake for 10 minutes. Remove the pan and again shake it back and forth to reposition the asparagus. Return the pan to the oven for another 4 minutes. (Note: with thicker spears increase the roasting time by two minutes.)
7. Cut the tips off the roasted asparagus in 1½-inch lengths and set aside. Cut the remaining stalks into 1-inch pieces. Use a blender to purée 1½ cups of the stalks with a cup of broth. Set aside.

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Roasted Asparagus Risotto with Peas & Spinach, continued. . . .

8. Place a soup pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the olive oil. When hot add 1 tablespoon of butter. Stir in the minced onion. Cover the pot and cook about 5 minutes till the onion is translucent.
9. Add the rice. Stir the rice for a couple of minutes until each grain becomes coated with the oil and butter.
10. Add 3 cups of the hot broth to the rice. Keep the broth at a constant and lively simmer. Stir the rice every few minutes until the broth is absorbed. The bottom of the pan will be almost dry.
11. Add a ladleful of broth. Stir frequently until it is absorbed. Repeat ladle by ladle, stirring until one ladleful is absorbed before adding the next.
12. After about 20 minutes, begin to check the texture of the rice. Continue to cook the rice (adding ladlefuls of broth when required) until the rice is almost *al dente*. There may still be broth remaining in the pan.
13. Stir in the puréed roasted asparagus, spinach and peas. As necessary, stir in a little additional broth (or water if you've used up all your broth) to loosen the risotto's texture. Stir in the asparagus tips and stalks. Optional: reserve a few asparagus tips for garnishing each bowl.
14. Remove the risotto from the heat. Stir in a tablespoon of butter and the grated Pecorino Romano. Taste and adjust the salt and pepper as necessary. Risotto should be slightly soupy. Add additional broth or water to reach the perfect consistency.
15. Serve immediately, possibly garnished with the reserved asparagus tips.