

Mike Chelini's Farmhouse-style Prawn Risotto

Mike Chelini, Stony Hill's winemaker for thirty-five years, works his magic in the kitchen, just as he works it in the winery, turning out delicious, authentically Italian dishes night after night to the delight of his family. Oh, those lucky members of the Chelini clan... we should all be eating so well! Here is one of Mike's gems, simple as can be and totally delectable. Enjoy!

Ingredients:

Serves 4

25 prawns with heads and tails on
Butter and olive oil
2 carrots coarsely chopped
2 celery stalks coarsely chopped
1 cup chicken stock or clam juice
5 cups water
2 medium shallots peeled and minced
2 cloves garlic peeled and minced or peeled and left whole
1 fennel bulb coarsely chopped
1 glass Stony Hill Chardonnay
1 cup Arborio rice
Chopped Italian parsley
Salt and pepper

Preparation:

To make the stock, sauté the prawns for 2 minutes in butter and olive oil. When half cooked, remove the heads, tails and shells of the prawns and place them in a large pot with five cups of water, a cup of chicken stock or clam juice, the carrots and celery. (If you are not using prawn heads to make the stock, use clam juice instead of chicken stock for more seafood flavor.) Cook for 30 minutes until the stock becomes rich and flavorful. Strain the stock, discarding the prawn shells and vegetables, and warm it over low heat until time to add the liquid to the risotto.

To cook the risotto, sauté the shallots and garlic in butter and olive oil in a large sauce pan over medium heat. Instead mincing the garlic you can choose to leave the cloves whole, which still allows them to flavor the butter and oil but without the risk of burning. Once they release their fragrance, remove the garlic cloves, add the fennel and rice and stir until rice is well coated with oil and slightly crispy. Add a glass of Stony Hill Chardonnay and stir until the liquid has evaporated. Begin adding the prawn stock $\frac{1}{2}$ half a cup at a time, stirring until the liquid is absorbed before adding more. It should take about 25 minutes to add all the liquid and for the rice to become al dente. With the final addition of broth add the prawns and salt and pepper to taste. Mike says that according to Italian tradition we do not add parmesan cheese to seafood risottos, so swirl in 2 more tablespoons of butter, cover, and let sit for five minutes while the flavors to meld. Garnish with chopped Italian parsley and enjoy!