

## My First Arancini

The other day I was trying to figure out what the heck to do with that left-over saffron risotto from the other night. Having just returned from Italy guess what sprung to mind? Aww, you guessed! This risotto is not totally traditional...but it worked great! Of course you could make the risotto and use the entire batch and make more arancini. Hmm, not a bad idea I think!

### Arancini – Makes 6

1 ½ cups firmly packed cold risotto (recipe follows)  
1 beaten egg  
3 Tbsp. finely grated Parmigiano Reggiano  
6 (1/2") cubes of Fontina cheese  
1 Tbsp. finely chopped fresh marjoram  
½ cup + Dry breadcrumbs  
Canola oil or other vegetable oil for frying

Stir the beaten egg & cheese into the risotto with a fork combining well. Using wet hands shape the risotto into 6 balls & place onto a piece of wax paper. Press an indent into each one with your finger. Roll each piece of cheese in the chopped marjoram before placing into the hole in each arancini. Reshape into a ball; then roll each in the breadcrumbs. As the arancini are formed place them on a rack set on a baking sheet & once all are rolled in breadcrumbs, refrigerate for an hour or so.

When ready to fry the arancini, heat 2 – 3" of oil in a deep-fryer, or you can use a deep electric frying pan (which is what I do), to 350F. When the oil is hot, carefully lower the arancini into the oil & fry until they are nicely browned, approximately 7 minutes. Remove from the oil onto a baking sheet lined with paper towels. Cool for a few minutes & serve (they don't need to be piping hot).

### Saffron Risotto (Makes more than required for 6 arancini)

1 Tbsp. unsalted butter  
½ cup chopped onion  
½ tsp. chopped garlic  
½ tsp. **Spanish** paprika (not smoked)  
1 cup short-grain risotto rice  
¼ tsp. saffron threads  
2 ½ cups unsalted chicken stock, either homemade\*\* or bought  
Salt & freshly ground pepper to taste  
1 Tbsp. chopped parsley

Heat the chicken stock until hot. Add the saffron, cover & keep warm.

Heat a sauté pan over medium heat; add the butter until it's melted & hot; then add the onions & sauté until softened but not browned; add the garlic for a minute. Stir in the paprika & sauté for another 2 or 3 minutes; add the rice & stir until the rice is coated with the butter.

Stir in the hot chicken stock & ½ tsp. salt; bring to a boil; reduce the heat to medium-low & let rice cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until stock is absorbed & the rice is tender but still moist; season with additional salt & freshly ground pepper to taste & stir in the parsley.

**\*\*If you would like to make your own chicken stock, please see Homemade Stock.**