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Cooking for Wine

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Risotto de quinoa con callampas, vino tinto y queso de cabra

Risotto of quinoa with mixed mushrooms, Carmenère and mature goat cheese

Quinoa, called the mother grain, is a gift from the Andean heights. In this recipe, it shines in a modern interpretation paired with other staple Chilean ingredients, including mushrooms, dried and fresh, goat cheese and, of course, the Carmenère grape variety, which is emblematic for Chile. Makes 6 servings

For the mushrooms

1/4 cup olive oil
10 ounces mixed mushrooms, white mushrooms, shiitake, oyster mushrooms etc., finely sliced
2 cloves garlic, finely minced
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the risotto

6 cups chicken broth, preferably homemade
1 ounce dried porcini mushrooms, soaked in 1 1/2 cups of hot water for 30 minutes
4 Tablespoons butter
2 scallions, finely sliced
2 cups quinoa, rinsed under cold water
3 ounces smoked speck, pancetta or bacon, diced
1 cup Carmenère
Salt to taste
4 Tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley
7 ounces aged goat cheese, such as Manchego (1/2 grated, 1/2 shaved to be served on top)

Method

1. Prepare the mushrooms: Heat the oil in a large skillet over high heat. Add the mushrooms and cook, stirring, until light golden, 2-3 minutes. Add the garlic and season with salt and pepper. Cook and stir until the mixture is dry and the mushrooms browned. Reserve while you prepare the risotto.
 2. Heat the broth in a saucepan and keep warm. Strain the soaked mushrooms, reserving and straining the soaking liquid, and chop the mushrooms fine.
 3. Melt 3 Tablespoons of the butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the scallions and pancetta and cook, stirring continuously, 2-3 minutes. Stir in the chopped dried mushrooms; cook 1 minute before adding the quinoa. Keep stirring the mixture, 1-2 minutes or until the grains are well coated with the butter. Add the red wine and cook, stirring, until the wine has evaporated. Add 1 cup of the reserved mushroom liquid and cook until it is all reduced. Pour just enough hot broth into the mixture to barely cover. Cook, still over medium-low heat and stirring frequently, until the broth has been absorbed almost completely. Continue cooking the risotto in this manner until the quinoa is tender but firm to the bite, about 15-16 minutes.
 4. When the risotto is done, stir in 1/2 of the parsley, 1/2 of the grated goat cheese and the remaining tablespoon of butter. At this point the risotto should have a moist and slightly loose consistency. Taste and adjust the seasoning. Serve at once topped with the sautéed and quickly reheated mixed mushrooms and decorate with the rest of the shaved goat cheese and parsley.
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Why this dish works with the Casillero del Diablo Reserve Carmenère Rapel Valley

Using the same wine for cooking and drinking makes for a natural match. And when it comes to flavours, the earthiness of the fresh mushrooms and the intensity of the dried mushrooms are complemented by the wine's ripe, up-front fruit. The smokiness of the speck mirrors the smokiness imparted by oak barrels to the wine. Cheers!

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