

A CHAKRA RESTAURANT RECIPE FOR Red Beet and Mascarpone Risotto

By Mel Fabrikant Tuesday, January 13 2009



Chakra

With winter upon us, Nelson Martinez, Executive Chef of Chakra Restaurant, has capitalized on the long growing season of the red beet, capturing its strong, sweet flavor and vivid color, not to mention its nutritional value, to add verve to the warm, inviting texture of risotto, for a hearty and colorful cold weather dish.

Ingredients

- 1 Half Spanish Onion (small diced)
- 1/2 cup of white wine
- 1 tablespoon of canola oil
- 1 Large Red Beet (peeled)
- 2 Cups Arborio Rice
- 3 Tablespoons of Mascarpone
- Salt and Pepper

Method

In a large saucepan, fill with water and place peeled beet. Cook on medium heat until beet is tender about 30 minutes. Take the beet out of the liquid and reserve the cooking liquid. Cool the beet down and then small dice and reserve. In large sauce pan, heat the tablespoon of oil and place the diced onion. Cook until translucent on low heat. Once translucent, place rice in the pan, continually stirring to release the starch. Once the starch is released you will notice the rice has become sticky; you then add the white wine, cooking until all the wine is absorbed, stirring continuously. Once the wine is absorbed, start transferring the cooking liquid into the risotto to incorporate the nice red color from the beets. Stirring continuously, allow the rice absorb the liquid and then add more to the rice, 1 cup at a time until the rice is cooked (it will be tender and creamy). Once the rice is cooked, season with salt and pepper and fold in the mascarpone and serve. Garnish with any kind of seafood, poached shrimp or cleaned lump crab meat.

Serves 4-6.

About Executive Chef Nelson Martinez

Having recently taken the helm of Chakra Restaurant, Executive Chef Nelson Martinez served in several positions under noted chef, Gary Robins, at Wish in Miami as well as Mi, the Biltmore Room, and Sheridan Square in New York City. The chef also brings to Chakra his experience as executive chef from Duvet, the trendy New York City-based restaurant, carrying over an understanding of the careful balance of atmosphere and cuisine. Chef Martinez draws upon a natural creativity and passion for developing dishes that amplify the true nature of the freshest, locally-sourced foods, which he incorporates into his culinary creations.

About Chakra Restaurant

Chakra Restaurant, located in Paramus, New Jersey, features an inviting menu focused on New American cuisine with European and Asian influences. Dominated by candlelight, the restaurant features a low-lit stone water wall, soft, velvet pillow-backed banquettes, Asian throw rugs, a mahogany bar, as well as romantic, silk-tented bungalows. Raised fire crevices fill the old brick walls, which were built from bricks that are over 120 years old.

The 187-seat dark, dramatic restaurant, located 10 miles from New York City, in the heart of Bergen county New Jersey, is open for dinner Monday through Wednesday from 5:00 to 10:00 p.m., and Thursday through Saturday from 5:00 to 11:00 p.m. The inviting lounge is open until midnight Monday to Wednesday, and until 2:00 a.m. Thursday through Saturday. Happy Hour is offered from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Chakra's monthly wine dinners celebrate wines from a variety of regions and vineyards. A private dining room, equipped with an LCD projector, is available for special events during the day and night. Chakra restaurant is a four-time recipient of the Wine Spectator Award of Excellence.

Chakra Restaurant is located at W. 144 Rt. 4 (eastbound), Paramus, NJ.

For more information, visit www.chakrarestaurant.com or call (201) 556-1530.