

Arancini

INGREDIENTS



DIRECTIONS

- Grease a cookie sheet and set aside.
- Bring the vegetable stock to a boil.
- Add rice and simmer stirring often until all liquid is absorbed and rice is Al dente.
- Remove from heat and add butter.
- Mix until butter has completely melted.
- Carefully evenly spread the cooked rice onto the prepared cookie sheet.
- Place in refrigerator while you make the sauce for the filling.
- Place olive oil and chopped onion in saucepan.
- Place over medium heat and stir onion until wilted.
- Add ground beef, flaking it as you add it to the pan.
- Stir to brown meat evenly.
- Add red wine, stir and allow alcohol to evaporate.
- Add tomato paste and stir to sauté it for one minute.
- Add 1 cup of water to melt the paste into sauce.
- Add more water if needed to achieve a thick sauce.
- Season with salt and pepper to taste.
- Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer sauce, stirring often to avoid sticking.
- Cook for 20 to 30 minutes until meat is cooked and sauce has totally dried.

- **For the rice shell:**
- 500 grams (17 Oz) package Arborio or Carnaroli rice
- 1 quart vegetable stock or soup
- 4 TBSPs butter
- Salt if needed (optional)
- **For the filling:**
- 1 lb ground beef
- 1/2 medium onion, chopped
- 2 TBSPs olive oil
- 1 can (6 Oz) tomato paste
- 2 Oz red wine
- 2/3 cup cooked peas, from fresh or frozen (not canned, see tip)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 8 Oz dry mozzarella (aka provola or caciocavallo), diced small
- **For the crust:**
- 1 cup flour mixed with 3/4 cup water
- 1 1/2 cup dried breadcrumbs
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- Oil for frying

NONNA'S TIPS ON PAGE 2



DIRECTIONS (CONT.)

- Remove from heat and add peas.
- Stir gently to distribute evenly in sauce.
- Make an assembly line on your working surface.
- Place cookie sheet with rice, saucepan with filling and a small bowl with diced mozzarella on working surface.
- With a spatula, cut the rice sheet in 9 even pieces.
- This step helps to keep the arancini balls even in size.
- With wet hands, remove one rice square from the sheet and place on your wet palm.
- With wet fingers and curled palm, shape into a little bowl, making a well in the middle.
- Add a generous tablespoon of meat sauce in the middle.
- Also place a few pieces of mozzarella.
- Wetting your fingers again, close the rice around the filling.
- Roll rice ball in your wet palms, applying gentle pressure to make sure the rice ball is totally closed and compact.
- Place rice ball onto parchment lined plate.
- Repeat process until all rice is gone.
- Mix flour and water in a bowl to make a fluid paste with the consistency of beaten eggs.
- Place breadcrumbs in a shallow bowl.
- Carefully dip each rice ball into flour paste, coating all sides.
- Allow extra liquid to drip back in the paste bowl.
- Next, roll wet rice ball into the breadcrumbs, making sure to coat completely.
- Place on another parchment lined plate.
- Repeat until all rice balls are coated.
- Pour oil for frying in a deep frying pan.
- Make sure to have about 1 1/4" level of oil in the pan.
- Bring oil to 360F.
- Prepare another cookie sheet by lining it with paper towels and set next to frying pan.
- Carefully add a few arancini, one at a time, to the hot oil.
- Don't overcrowd the frying pan!
- When bottom side is golden, turn arancini over.
- Remove from oil with a straining spoon and place on paper toweled cookie sheet to drain.
- When all arancini are fried and drained, place on serving platter.
- Serve hot. Makes 9 arancini.



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Arancini

NONNA'S TIPS

- Only use rice that is recommended for risotto or it will not stick. Also, make sure rice is cold and dry before assembly for best results. If you like your rice to have the deep yellow color you sometimes see, just add a little saffron while rice is cooking.
- Do not use canned peas because they are too soft and will mash in the sauce.
- Also, do not use wet mozzarella or the extra liquid will break up the arancini. Use a dry mozzarella either in a block or ball. If you can't find it, you can substitute with mild provolone from deli.
- Some people use the flour first, beaten eggs next and breadcrumbs last method before frying arancini. That's an option but the original recipe calls for the flour paste and breadcrumbs method I used in the recipe.