

TWO-STAGE PEA AND PROSCIUTTO RISOTTO

(adapted from Food and Wine magazine, May 2011)

3 slices of prosciutto, cut in small pieces (use scissors)
1 cup frozen peas, thawed
1 Tbs olive oil
1 small shallot, finely diced
1 cup arborio rice
1/4 cup dry white wine
4-5 cups chicken stock, warm (you will not need it all)
1 Tbs butter
1/4 cup Parmigiano cheese
salt and pepper to taste
a nice squeeze of lemon juice
1 cup pea shoots, very loosely packed

Heat the chicken stock in a saucepan, and keep on very low heat. Using a blender or the food processor, puree half the peas in 1/2 cup of chicken stock. Reserve. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet, cook the prosciutto until it starts to get crisp. Remove the pieces and place over kitchen paper, reserve.

In the same skillet, cook the shallots seasoned lightly with salt and pepper, until soft and fragrant. If necessary, add a little more oil, then the rice and cook stirring often until all grains are well coated. Add the wine and simmer until absorbed, about 3 minutes.

Add enough hot chicken stock to cover the rice, and cook over medium heat, stirring often. Keep adding stock, one ladle at a time, until the rice is about 75% cooked through (taste it, it should feel still hard at the center; it took me about 25 minutes). Remove from the stove and immediately transfer it to a baking sheet in a layer. Place it in the fridge until time to serve the dish (several hours won't harm it).

When it's time to finish the risotto, heat 1 cup of the remaining chicken stock in the skillet, add the rice, cook for a couple of minutes, then add the reserved pea puree (warm it briefly in the microwave). When the rice is done, nicely *al dente*, add the peas, the prosciutto, the grated cheese, the butter, and a squeeze of lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper, add the pea shoots right before serving.