

Sicilian Arancini (Cheese-Stuffed Rice Balls)

Ingredients

Tbsp olive oil
2 Tbsp unsalted butter
1 medium onion finely diced (about 1 cup)
1 cup ham finely diced (about 3 oz)
2 cups Jasmine rice un-rinsed
1 cup dry white wine
5 cups chicken broth or stock (hot)
1 tsp salt (plus more to sprinkle fried arancini)
1 cup frozen peas fully thawed
1/3 cup parsley finely chopped
1 cup Parmesan cheese shredded
4 oz mozzarella cheese cut into 24 (1/2-inch) cubes

For Breading/ Frying

1 cup all-purpose flour
3 large eggs beaten with a fork
1 1/2 cups Italian bread crumbs
Oil for frying vegetable

Method

Using a dutch oven or heavy-bottomed pot with tight fitting lid, over medium/high heat, add 2 Tbsp olive oil and 2 Tbsp butter. When hot, stir in diced onion and sautee until soft and golden (4-5 min). Add finely diced ham and cook another 2 min or until golden. Add rice and stir to coat with oil.

Pour in 1 cup white wine and cook until mostly evaporated (2 min). Add 5 cups hot low sodium chicken broth and 1 tsp salt then cover and simmer until liquid has been absorbed by the rice (about 15-17 min). Stir in the peas in, then cover with a tight fitting lid and finish cooking (2 min). Rice should be soft and the liquid mostly absorbed. Spread rice mixture onto a large rimmed baking dish to cool.

Once rice is at room temperature, stir in 1/3 cup finely chopped parsley and 1 cup Parmesan cheese. Form rice balls with wet hands, using a heaping ice cream scoop for each. Stuff each rice ball with a cube of mozzarella cheese and form a tight ball with the rice mixture to enclose the cheese.

Set up 3 shallow bowls, the first one to have 1 cup flour, the second with 3 beaten eggs, the third with 1 1/2 cups bread crumbs. Dredge each rice ball in flour, shaking off the excess, then dip one-by-one in the beaten egg allowing excess egg to drip back into the bowl. Finally, roll balls in breadcrumbs until evenly coated. It's best to roll and bread all of the rice balls before beginning frying since the frying is quick.

Add an inch of vegetable oil into a deep pot over medium heat. Once oil is hot (350°F), add the breaded rice balls in batches without crowding the pot and cook about 3 min total per batch, turning to get all sides golden brown. Transfer to paper towels, sprinkle right away with salt and serve warm with

