

RED WINE RISOTTO WITH FIGS AND PROSCIUTTO

by Christopher Lee

This risotto has a delicious tart-sweet flavor and wonderful texture. Use Carnaroli rice, which has a high starch content and absorbs a lot of liquid. The two fantastic reds of September's Club Rouge are thrilling with this risotto.

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| 8–10 ripe Black Mission or Brown Turkey figs | 6 tablespoons yellow onion, finely chopped |
| 2–3 sprigs thyme | 1¾ cups Carnaroli rice |
| ¾ cup dry fruity red wine | 1 teaspoon sea salt |
| 3 tablespoons olive oil | Freshly ground black pepper |
| 2 cups homemade chicken stock combined with 2 cups water | 2 ounces Parmigiano or Grana Padano, finely grated |
| 3 tablespoons unsalted butter | 4 thin slices of Prosciutto |

Trim stems from figs and cut in half lengthwise. Place figs cut side up on a sheet of aluminum foil on baking pan. Place thyme sprigs around figs. Sprinkle figs with ¼ cup of red wine and a few drops of olive oil and roast for 10 minutes in a 425° F oven until they start to brown around the edges and collapse. Set aside four nice halves. Chop remaining figs into 1-inch pieces. Crumble thyme sprigs into chopped figs.

Heat stock and water and hold at a near-simmer. Melt 1 tablespoon butter with 2 tablespoons olive oil in a wide, shallow, heavy-bottomed saucepan until butter starts to bubble. Soften onion in butter and oil. Add rice and sauté, stirring, until translucent, about 2 minutes. Deglaze with ½ cup red wine and cook until wine is nearly evaporated. Add salt. Ladle 1 cup hot stock onto rice to cover rice by ¼ inch. Bring rice to a robust simmer. Stir gently and frequently in a circular motion with a wooden spoon to release its starch. Scrape bottom of pan with a wooden spoon to keep rice from sticking. Add chopped fig mixture—the figs will melt into the rice. When stock drops below the surface of the rice, add more stock to cover rice by ¼ inch. Continue cooking and stirring until rice is tender but still firm and without any crunchiness. Rice will be creamy and easily pourable. The entire process will take about 18 minutes.

Remove rice from heat, taste for salt and adjust, if needed. Off heat, stir in remaining 2 tablespoons butter. Add more stock if rice is too tight. Spoon risotto into warm bowls. Lay one fig half on top of rice in each bowl. Grind fresh black pepper on top and sprinkle with grated cheese. Drape a slice of Prosciutto loosely over each mound of rice.

Serves 4–6



Christopher Lee is a former head chef of Chez Panisse and Eccolo restaurants in Berkeley and co-founder of Pop-Up General Store in Oakland. Visit his website: oldfashionedbutcher.com.

SEPTEMBER 2022

ROUGE









2019 BARBERA D'ALBA SUPERIORE ALESSANDRO E GIAN NATALE FANTINO

DESCEND INTO THE FANTINO brothers' humble cellar beneath the village of Monforte d'Alba and the first thing you notice are the large, vertical Slavonian oak barrels, where, for a minimum of four years, Nebbiolo takes its time developing into deep and complex Barolo. At the other end of the cellar stand large stainless steel tanks in which Alessandro and Gian Natale age this more approachable and exuberant Barbera for a year and a half with the aim of preserving as much young charm, fragrant fruit, and bright acidity as possible. Depending on the vintage, the Fantinos' Barbera can show a stronger side of this grape variety with robust concentration and flavors, or a lithic and more refined side. While 2018 showed the former, this 2019 embodies the latter with its elegant and versatile profile and notes of cherries, cranberries, and blood orange that pair as perfectly with pizza as with Chris Lee's risotto with figs and prosciutto. —Tom Wolf



\$26.00 PER BOTTLE \$280.80 PER CASE

					
2019 Barbera d'Alba Superiore <i>Alessandro e Gian Natale Fantino</i>	Barbera	Planted in 2015 Gray marl, clay	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F Decant optional	Cherries, cranberries, blood orange Charming, fragrant, elegant	Drink now through 2025
2019 Gigondas "Terrasse du Diable" <i>Domaine Les Pallières</i>	90% Grenache, 5% Mourvèdre, 5% Clairette	45 years average Red sandy clay, limestone, scree	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F Decant 1–2 hours	Dark fruit, <i>garrigue</i> , licorice Succulent, concentrated, age-worthy	Drink now through 2035

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2019 GIGONDAS "TERRASSE DU DIABLE" DOMAINE LES PALLIÈRES

OVER THE LAST COUPLE of decades, the quaint hillside town of Gigondas has become home to some of the greatest wines made in southern France. Nestled at the base of the Dentelles de Montmirail (shown on the cover of *Adventures on the Wine Route*), thirty minutes east of the Rhône river, Gigondas benefits from abundant Provençal sun, the region's famous, purifying mistral wind, and old vines that, in the right hands, produce reds of outstanding power and finesse. The vines at Les Pallières are certainly in the right hands—those of the Brunier family, who purchased the property with Kermit in the late '90s from an old-school vigneron who had no successors. In 2007, after almost a decade of blending a lone cuvée, Kermit and the Bruniers realized that the vineyards around the winery produced wines of two different characters and therefore began to bottle two different cuvées. This one is named after Terrasse du Diable—Terrace of the Devil—the historic name of the domaine's highest-elevation parcel. Year after year, these Grenache vines—along with a little Mourvèdre and Clairette—yield Les Pallières' darker, stonier, and more structured cuvée. Joining the melting tannins and grippy texture and flavors of *garrigue* are succulent and concentrated notes of dark fruit and licorice, making for a monumental *rouge* that is gorgeous today and will only get better over the next ten or twenty years.



\$45.00 PER BOTTLE
\$486.00 PER CASE

RIGHT
Vines at Les Pallières.
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COVER
Daniel Brunier (right)
with Kermit.
© Gail Skoff

