

Arancini (Crispy Italian Rice Fritters)

Leftover Risotto (as if!) gets a redo as crispy fritters. The name Arancini comes from the Italian “little oranges” which is what these cuties resemble. Perfect for appetizers, lunch or whenever the mood strikes.

The Italian notion of *Cucina Povera* (poor kitchen) is one that I embrace. I use everything up and don't waste food. I also use real ingredients and make the most of them. *Cucina Povera* is perfect for Quarantine and Pantry cooking!

yield: about 25 pieces

3 cups leftover cooked risotto

1/4 cup marinara sauce (homemade or purchased)

1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese + more for garnish

8 ounces mozzarella or favorite melty cheese (I like smoked mozzarella or gouda), cut into 1/2-inch cubes

1 1/4 cups olive oil

3 eggs

2 cups breadcrumbs

Serve with hot Marinara sauce

1. Stir risotto, marinara sauce and parmesan cheese together. The mixture should be very thick.
2. Roll a spoonful of mixture into a small ball, pushing a small indentation into the ball with your finger. Place a piece of cheese into indentation, closing the opening by rolling the ball between palms. Continue until all mixture is used.

3. Heat 1 1/2 inches of oil to 350 degrees over medium-high heat in a medium saucepan. Meanwhile, beat eggs in a small bowl; place breadcrumbs in a shallow bowl. Dip each ball in the beaten eggs, then roll in breadcrumbs to completely cover. Fry, turning frequently, until golden brown, about 5 minutes; drain on a plate lined with paper towels. Sprinkle with sea salt and serve with marinara sauce if desired.