

# Italian Style Rissoles with Smokey Red Lentil & Tomato Sauce

This meal is great to have on hand when there is leftover cooked rice in the fridge, and it also uses up the garden odds and ends that are usually around in springtime – overwintered carrots, the last of the sundried tomatoes, and the first offerings of fresh thyme for the season. Like me you may still have fresh chilis on your kitchen bench from the plants you have just cleared out from your tunnel house, but if you don't you hopefully have a dried chili or two that you can use instead.

*Serves 4*

## Ingredients

### *Rissoles*

- 2 ½ cups cooked brown rice
- Large handful of fresh thyme, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 4 – 5 sundried tomatoes, finely chopped
- 1 mild large red chili OR 1 – 2 dried red chilis, deseeded and finely diced
- 1 teaspoon flakey sea salt
- Cracked black pepper to taste
- 1 large egg
- 125 grams feta cheese
- 1 cup tasty cheese, grated

### *Rissole coating*

- 2 eggs, beaten
- ½ cup fine polenta
- Ricebran oil for cooking

### *Sauce*

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, finely diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium carrot, finely diced

- 4 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- ½ cup red lentils
- 1 x 400 gram tin cherry tomatoes
- 2 teaspoons smoked paprika
- Salt & pepper to season

## Method

1. Make the rissoles first. Place the rice into a large bowl and add the thyme, garlic, sundried tomato, fresh chili, salt and a good amount of black pepper. Crack the egg in and mix it all together using a fork ensuring the egg is incorporated throughout the whole mixture. Sprinkle in the feta and tasty cheese and mix until just combined.
2. Take two shallow bowls. Place them next to each other with the two beaten eggs in one and the fine polenta in the other. Season each with a pinch of salt and place a large plate or tray on the bench to put the rissoles on.
3. Using wet hands roughly divide the rissole mixture into quarters with the anticipation of shaping two rissoles from each quarter, making eight rissoles in total. As you shape the rissoles make sure to squeeze the mixture well to help them stay together and try to form each one into a slightly flat circular shape.
4. Once all the rissoles are shaped gently coat them in the beaten egg and then the polenta. Place them on the plate and cover and refrigerate while you make the sauce. This chilling process will help the rissoles stay together while they are cooking.
5. Heat the olive oil in a wide pan and gently sauté the onions, garlic and carrots for a few minutes until the onions begin to become translucent. Don't season them with salt yet, as salt added now will prevent the lentils from cooking. Add the balsamic vinegar and cook for a minute or two, stirring.
6. Add the lentils, tomatoes and smoked paprika. Fill the tomato tin up with water and add that too. Bring to the boil, then turn the heat down and simmer for 10 – 12 minutes, or until the lentils are soft, stirring often.
7. Season the sauce well with salt and black pepper.
8. Heat a heavy based frying pan to medium and add some ricebran oil. Cook the rissoles gently for 4 – 5 minutes on each side, or until golden and crispy.
9. Serve them topped with a generous amount of sauce and *Ghee roasted pumpkin* on the side.