

## Fennel Risotto

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Untried as yet - from *Waitrose Food Illustrated*. It may be difficult - I've never seen baby fennel!

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### Planning

serves:	6
prep time:	45 mins
cooking time:	15 mins

### Ingredients

8 baby fennel bulbs, tops  
and fronds chopped and  
reserved  
10g tarragon, chopped  
3 star anise  
25g butter  
2 shallots, peeled and finely  
chopped  
175g Arborio rice  
200 ml white wine  
2 tbs crème fraîche  
40g Parmesan cheese,  
grated

### Method

First, make the stock for the risotto. Simmer the baby fennel in 500ml salted water for 5-6 minutes. Remove the fennel bulbs with a slotted spoon and refresh them in cold water, then set aside. Add the fennel tops, star anise and half the tarragon to the cooking water and bring to the boil. Remove the star anise, whizz the stock in a blender, then strain into a saucepan. Keep the stock hot over gentle heat to make the risotto.

Melt the butter in a clean pan and sweat the shallots for 2 - 3 minutes. Stir in the rice and cook for a further 1- 2 minutes until transparent. Add the white wine and let it evaporate almost completely. Now start adding the hot fennel stock, ladel by ladel, stirring frequently and allowing each addition to be absorbed before adding the next. It should take about 15 minutes to use all the stock. Stir in the crème fraîche and Parmesan, then season the risotto and let it rest for 3 minutes. Stir in the remaining half of the tarragon.

(Roast the blanched baby fennel and serve along with the risotto to accompany some roast spring lamb.)