



## Ken Mayer

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One of the best ways to make a house into a home is to invite some friends over for a meal. If you try this recipe, let me know how it turns out for you. And if you have a favorite recipe of your own, send it my way.

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## Champagne Risotto

4 thin slices prosciutto	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup Arborio rice
3 cups low-salt chicken broth	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup Champagne
12 asparagus spears, cut in 1" sections	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup grated Parmesan
3 tablespoons butter, divided	$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt
1 shallot, finely chopped	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp black pepper

1. Pre-heat the oven to 450°.
2. Place the slices of prosciutto on a lightly-greased cookie sheet and bake until it is almost completely crisp, about 6-8 minutes. (It will crisp up more as it cools.) Set aside.
3. In a medium saucepan, bring chicken stock to a boil, then reduce to a simmer. Blanch the asparagus in the stock for 2 minutes, then remove with a slotted spoon. Set asparagus aside and keep broth at a low simmer.
4. In another medium saucepan, melt half of butter over medium heat. Add the shallot & cook until tender, about 2-3 minutes. Be careful not to brown it. Add the rice and stir to coat in the butter. Continue toasting the rice, stirring constantly, for 3 minutes more. Add the Champagne and simmer over medium-low heat until liquid is almost evaporated, about 3 minutes. Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of simmering broth and stir until almost completely absorbed, about 2-3 minutes. Continue cooking rice, adding another  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of broth at a time, stirring constantly and allowing each addition of broth to absorb before adding the next, about 20-25 minutes total.
5. When rice is tender but still firm, remove from heat. Gently stir in asparagus, remaining butter, Parmesan, salt, and pepper. Spoon the risotto into serving bowls and garnish with crumbled prosciutto. Serve immediately—makes 2 bowls.

Notes: Low-salt broth is important – you'll get plenty of salt flavor from the butter & prosciutto. Use Mexican green onion if you can't find a shallot. Keep another cup of broth or champagne available if the rice needs it.

This is a great date-night meal, because you are already halfway to brunch the next day. Use the left-over champagne for mimosas, wrap the prosciutto around some melon, and use any extra asparagus with your Eggs Benedict!

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