

The first of this year's asparagus has hit the shelves, and to celebrate I've been making this lovely light risotto with a little extra punch from some wild garlic which is prolific in woodlands and hedgerows right now.

Wild garlic contains good levels of vitamin C and beta-carotene, and a host of antioxidant phytochemicals. When foraging for wild ingredients like this it is important you make sure you are 100% you are picking the right plant, if in doubt, don't pick it. It is also important you follow responsible foraging guidelines, check the Woodland Trust website for details.

Asparagus is a great source of folic acid, potassium, thiamine, and vitamins A, B6, C, and K. It is also a good source of prebiotic fibres which have been shown to feed the beneficial bacteria in the gut.

I like to use buckwheat for this risotto, if you've not tried it before I encourage you to give it a go, but this recipe will also work with normal risotto rice.

Asparagus and wild garlic buckwheat risotto

(serves 2)

160g asparagus (ends trimmed)

Small handful of wild garlic (washed and finely sliced)

1/2 white onion (diced)

1 garlic clove (finely grated)

130g buckwheat

1 tsp Lemon zest

400ml hot vegetable stock

1tbsp extra virgin olive oil

Pinch of black pepper

Optional extras: sliced spinach or spring greens, grated parmesan (or nutritional yeast)

Heat a large frying pan on a medium heat. Add the oil, garlic, and onion, and fry for a couple of minutes, stirring often until softened.

Rinse the buckwheat and add to the pan, frying for a minute. Add the stock and simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Slice the asparagus into approximately 3cm chunks. Cut thicker stalks into shorter chunks so they all cook around the same time.

Add the asparagus and wild garlic to the pan stirring through and simmer for a further 5 minutes until the buckwheat and asparagus are cooked.

Just before serving add the lemon zest, black pepper, spinach, and parmesan if you are using them.



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