

Steel cut oat risotto with pesto, kale, and cashew Parmesan

This sounds unconventional, but steel cut oats can attain a consistency remarkably similar to that of risotto when cooked with the right seasonings and amount of liquid. It's higher in protein and fiber than rice, plus it's a great way to use up that big ol' bag of steel cut oats that you're tired of eating for breakfast every morning. You can use store-bought pesto and skip the vegan Parmesan if you're in a hurry, but they add tons of flavor and texture to the dish.

Cashew Parmesan

- ½ cup unsalted cashews
- ¼ cup nutritional yeast
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. garlic powder

Risotto

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 bunch kale, chopped
- 8 oz. button mushrooms, sliced
- ½ cup sundried tomatoes, roughly chopped
- 1 cup steel cut oats
- 3 ½ cups vegetable broth
- ¾ cup pesto, store-bought or homemade (recipe follows)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Easy pesto

- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 bunch of basil, thick stems removed
- ¼ cup nuts (pine nuts are expensive so I usually use cashews or walnuts)
- 3 tbsp. homemade vegan Parmesan cheese (or nutritional yeast)
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- Juice of ½ lemon (about 2 tbsp.)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

- 1) In a food processor, pulse together all ingredients for cashew Parmesan until it has a consistency similar to that of grated Parmesan cheese or breadcrumbs. Transfer to a bowl and set aside for now.
- 2) If you're making homemade pesto, puree ingredients for that in a food processor or blender until mostly smooth. If it's too thick, add a splash of olive oil or water.
- 3) Heat up the oil for the risotto in a pan. Add the garlic and sauté for 30 seconds, or until fragrant. Add kale and mushrooms and sauté for about 5 minutes, or until mushrooms are slightly golden and kale has cooked down a bit.
- 4) Add the oats and broth and bring to a boil. Simmer for about 20 minutes, or until liquid has been absorbed and oats have attained a creamy, risotto-like consistency. Stir in the pesto and season with salt and pepper to taste.
- 5) Top with cashew Parmesan and enjoy!

