



?W? in our Vegetarian Alphabet? OK we?ve had to bend the rules a little as our Mushrooms weren?t actually foraged as it the wrong time of year for most of them. But you get the idea I hope?

Today?s bit of useless information. Auricularia auricula-judae go by many common names. As you can see by their Latin name ?Wood Ears? is one of the more polite versions. ?Jews Ears? is the older and now generally redundant version. Legend has it that Judas Iscariot hung himself from an Elder Tree after betraying Jesus. The Elder is the favoured host species, so the similarity to ears and legend combined to give this interesting like Fungus it?s name. In fact there?s likely to be very little truth in this particular legend as Elder prefer colder and wetter conditions, also the wood is very brittle and doesn?t support much weight before snapping. But who am I to question an good myth?!

Ingredients:-

Wild Mushrooms (We had a pack of dried Auricularia auricula-judae from the local Chinese Supermarket and a pick of Woodland Mushrooms from the Supermarket)

Vegetable Stock

1 Large Onion, finely chopped

3 Cloves of Garlic, minced

Risotto Rice

A Small (125ml) bottle of White Wine

Butter (Or Margarine)

Fresh Parsley to garnish

Grated Italian style Cheese

Lemon Juice

Salt & Pepper to season

Olive Oil

Dried Thyme

Method:-

- (1) If you are using dried Mushrooms rehydrate them according to the instructions.
- (2) Fry the Mushrooms in Butter or Margarine and set aside.
- (3) Add more Butter (Margarine) and Olive Oil to the frying pan.
- (4) Gently fry the Onions until they are translucent.
- (5) Add the Rice dry and stir it to coat.
- (6) Add the Wine and simmer to reduce whilst stirring regularly.
- (7) Add the Garlic and Thyme.
- (8) Add the Stock little by little stirring continuously.
- (9) Once the liquid has been absorbed add the Mushrooms and stir well.
- (10) Just before serving stir in the Italian Style grated Cheese.
- (11) Season with Salt & Pepper to taste.
- (12) Plate up and squeeze a little Lemon juice over and garnish with fresh Parsley.