


Crawfish Arancini

 4 servings

Crawfish are part of Louisiana's history. The Houma Indian tribe has used the crawfish as its emblem for centuries. In the 1800s, Cajun settlers modified lobster recipes passed down from their coastal Canadian forefathers, substituting them with crawfish. Creole restaurateurs in New Orleans caught on, and once it took off in the Big Easy, the secret was out: Crawfish became synonymous with Louisiana cooking. Today, Louisiana leads the nation in crawfish production.



INGREDIENTS

14 Tbsp. butter
3/4 cup chopped onion
1 cup Arborio rice
1/2 cup white wine
4 cups chicken stock
1/2 cup finely grated parmesan cheese, plus extra for garnish
1/3 cup heavy cream
1 Tbsp. chopped parsley
1/2 Tbsp. Creole Seasoning
1/2 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
1/2 lb. cooked crawfish tails, cooled and refrigerated
1 egg

For Frying

3 cups season flour
egg wash (4 eggs, 1 cups milk)
2 cups Italian bread crumbs
vegetable oil, for deep-frying

INSTRUCTIONS

In a saucepan, bring the chicken stock to a simmer. Cover and set aside to keep hot. In a heavy Dutch oven, melt the butter over medium-high heat. Add the chopped onion and sauté until transparent, about 5 minutes. Add rice and cook, stirring constantly, about 1 minute. Add the white wine and cook, stirring until absorbed. While continually stirring, begin adding the stock in 1/2 cup increments, allowing the liquid to become completely absorbed between additions. Cook until the rice is just tender and the risotto is creamy, about 20 minutes. Remove from the heat and add the grated parmesan cheese, heavy cream, parsley, and Creole seasoning. Stir to combine well. Transfer to a mixing bowl or baking dish and allow to cool completely. Refrigerate until thoroughly chilled.

When ready to make the arancini, remove the chilled risotto from the refrigerator, and stir in one of the eggs and the mozzarella cheese. Using your hands, divide the risotto into approximately 10 rough ball shapes, about 1/4 cup per ball. Press a hole into the center of each risotto ball and stuff with 2 to 4 crawfish tails, depending on their size. Press the opening closed and roll the ball between your hands until it is smooth.

Prepare fryer to 350°F. One by one, roll each risotto ball in season flour, then egg wash, then bread crumbs, so that each ball is completely coated. Transfer to a plate or baking sheet until you are ready to fry the arancini. Fry the balls in batches, a few at a time, turning during cooking so that they are evenly browned, about 5 minutes. Transfer to paper-lined plates to drain briefly, then serve immediately.