

BARLEY RISOTTO WITH PEAS AND CARROTS

(slightly modified from [Chocolate and Chillies](#))

4-6 cups of vegetable stock
2 Tbsp olive oil
1 shallot, minced
1 leek, chopped
1 cup pearled barley
2 carrots, diced
1 cup frozen peas, thawed
1 tsp salt
1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
1 Tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
1/4 cup light cream cheese, at room temperature
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese

Boil the vegetable stock. Reduce heat to medium-low to keep it warm.

Heat olive oil in a large saute pan over medium heat. Add the minced shallot and leek. Saute 5-7 minutes until tender. Add barley and stir for a minute so that everything is well coated. Add 1 cup broth and stir until most of it has been absorbed. Continue to add 1/2 cup hot vegetable broth at a time, stirring until it has been absorbed before adding the next 1/2 cup.

While the barley is being cooked, microwave the pieces of carrots with a little water until almost tender, and reserve. Or you can cook them on top of the stove in a little salted water, and drain them well.

After 15 minutes of cooking the barley, add carrots and peas. Stir in salt and pepper. Continue to add water until barley is cooked through.

Remove from heat. Add lemon juice, cream cheese and Parmesan cheese. Stir until cheese is melted.