

RED BEET RISOTTO-CULINARY FIGHT CLUB CHALLENGE



Photo by Anthony Martorini

It was an honor to be invited to participate in the *Culinary Fight Club* Black Box Challenge by Cheferee and Fight Club Host, Anthony Martorini. This very prestigious and coveted cooking challenge was held at the Bay Area *Travel and Adventure Show* last weekend. The event hosted two Culinary Fight Club Pro Chef Series Mystery Box Challenge's. Competitors had 45 minutes to cook live in front of an audience and then create 2 perfect plate ups from the supplied box of ingredients plus one infused ingredient for the judges to taste.

Culinary Fight Club is a national organization that hosts live cooking competitions. At each event, attendees watch as contestants from home cooks to executive chefs race for their pantry in 45 seconds. Contestants get to choose from 15 provided ingredients. From there, contestants have 60 minutes to create the most gourmet dish that represents their take on our monthly theme. The audience and judges vote and decide on a winning dish.

Aside from being an incredibly fun event, Culinary Fight Club events exclusively give back to the 501(c)(3) non profit organization *Fight2Feed*, an organization that partners top restaurants with food trucks to provide service and support to hungry men, women and children in our communities.



My competitors were professional chefs, Adam Pechal and Richard Pannell. Chef Pannell pulled out the win with only 4 points separating first place from third. Although I didn't win, I stood up to the pressure of competitive food sport competing along side the pros. Here's a photo of Chef Pannell's winning dish Bourbon Chicken.



Our esteemed Judge for the event was 2 Time World Burger Champ Chef Wade Fortin and a random guest judge from the audience. Sponsors, *Bull Outdoor Grill* and *Gunter Wilhelm Knives*. More Fight Clubs to follow in Los Angles, San Diego, Denver, Dallas and Philly.



Red Beet Risotto with Goat Cheese and Honey

When faced with a “Black Box Challenge” it’s always good to have a few recipes tucked away. The official rules allowed for 3 secret ingredients of the chefs choice. Thankfully, I’ve been working on a Red Beet Risotto recipe for the [Oregon State Fair 2017](#) where I’ll be featured as a guest and doing a live demo the last day of the fair, September 3, 2017. I decided to use the base recipe as my secret ingredients for the Culinary Fight Club Challenge. My three secret ingredients: arborio rice, red beets and organic chicken broth. My strategy was to have a base for my dish then use the Black Box Pantry to complement the dish. Just a few moments into the challenge we were all given a required featured ingredient to use in our dish [Thai Srira Srira Smokey Hot Sauce](#) . I opted to add a protein to my recipe using chicken breast from the pantry items and to accompany the dish, I served roasted

vegetables and candied Srira Srira bacon.



RED BEET RISOTTO

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Prep Time

10 min

Cook Time

35 min

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10 min

Cook Time

35 min

Ingredients

1. 1 cup arborio rice (do not rinse)
2. 4 cups hot organic chicken stock
3. 1 cup white wine (optional)
4. 2 cups shredded red beets (peeled)
5. 1/2 cup fine chopped onion or shallot
6. 1 tablespoon olive oil
7. 4 tablespoons butter
8. 1/4 cup heavy cream
9. 1 small bunch fresh rosemary
10. 1 small bunch fresh thyme
11. salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Using a medium stock pot, heat pan to medium, add oil, chopped onion and risotto. Stir to coat all of the rice and cook until onions are translucent. Add shredded red beets and 1 tablespoon butter. Stir to combine. Begin making risotto by adding 1/2 cup hot chicken broth. After each addition of hot liquid, stir constantly until stock is almost absorbed by the rice. Continue adding stock until rice is al dente (about 30 min). Remove herbs stems and discard. Stir in remaining butter and heavy cream. Season to taste.
2. Optional: If using wine add 1 cup to the hot stock before making the risotto.
3. Candy Bacon: 1/4-pound bacon cooked. Remove bacon from pan leaving about 1 tablespoon bacon fat. Add 1/4 cup Srira Srira Sauce reduce by half. Return bacon to pan and allow to cook until bacon is caramelized (about 5 minutes)
4. 1 Chicken breast filleted, seasoned both pieces with salt and pepper and sauté in 1 teaspoon oil. Deglazed pan with 1/2 cup chicken stock and 1/4 cup Srira Srira Sauce. Use to dress chicken when plating dish.
5. Mixed roasted vegetables: sauté in olive oil, 1/4 cup sliced mushrooms, 1/4 cup chopped carrot, 1/4 cup sliced leeks.

Notes

1. Arrange chicken near or over risotto, add candy bacon and roasted veggies to plate, and serve

By Rebecka Evans

At Home with Rebecka <http://athomewithrebecka.com/>

I was thrilled to have my husband Blake step into the Culinary Fight Club ring as my sous. I'm still in the process of recovering from shoulder surgery so he helped with all the chopping and stirring required. We had an amazing time together. He tells me he a professional sous after helping me win the *Food Network's Clash of the Grandmas*!! I think he's right!



My sweet Blake looking fine in his apron!



Culinary Fight Club Travel and Adventure Show 2017



Chef Pannell, Anthony Martorini, Rebecka Evans



