

## Why Arborio Rice?



Arborio rice ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arborio\\_rice](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arborio_rice)), commonly used in risotto, is the secret to this soup's creamy texture. When cooked, Arborio releases starch, making the broth luxuriously thick without needing heavy cream. It's naturally gluten-free, making it an excellent choice for those with dietary restrictions.

## Why You'll Love This Recipe

This Arborio spinach rice soup checks all the boxes for a quick, nutritious, and hearty meal. It's gluten-free, vegetarian-friendly (if you use vegetable broth), and highly customizable. Plus, it's a fantastic way to use pantry staples like Arborio rice while incorporating a healthy serving of leafy greens. Whether you love classic Italian flavors or need a filling, one-pot dish, this recipe will impress. Try it today and let the creamy goodness of Arborio rice elevate your soup experience!

## Variations

**Add Protein:** For a heartier soup, stir in cooked shredded chicken, turkey, or crispy bacon bits.

**Vegan Option:** Swap the Parmesan for nutritional yeast and use vegan butter or olive oil.

**Different Greens:** Kale, Swiss chard, or even arugula can replace spinach for unique flavors.

## Ingredients

- 1 cup Arborio rice
- 6 cups vegetable broth (or chicken broth for non-vegetarian options)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil or butter
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 cups fresh spinach, roughly chopped
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme

- 1/2 teaspoon chili flakes (optional, for a slight kick)
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Parmesan cheese, grated (optional, for garnish)

## Directions

### Step 1

**Saute the Aromatics:** Warm olive oil or butter in a sizable pot over medium heat. Add chopped onion and garlic, and sauté until they become tender and aromatic (approximately 3-4 minutes).

### Step 2

**Saute the Arborio Rice:** Incorporate the Arborio rice into the pot and stir for 2 minutes. Sautéing the rice boosts its nutty flavor and aids in preserving its creamy consistency.

### Step 3

**Incorporate the Broth:** Gradually mix in the vegetable broth, adding one cup at a time while stirring often. Let the rice soak up the liquid before introducing additional broth. Keep repeating this method until the rice is soft and the soup has the consistency you prefer (approximately 20 minutes).

### Step 4

**Add the Spinach:** Introduce the chopped spinach into the pot during the final 5 minutes of cooking. The heat will cause the spinach to wilt, resulting in a smooth integration into the soup.

### Step 5

**Season to Perfection:** Add dried thyme, chili flakes (if using), salt, and pepper. Adjust seasonings according to your taste.

### Step 6

**Serve and Garnish:** Scoop the soup into bowls and top with grated Parmesan cheese for extra flavor. Serve it warm alongside a piece of crusty bread or by itself.

## Serving Ideas

Pair soup with crusty bread, garlic salad, or a bowl of taco salad (<https://kitchencousine.com/taco-bowl-recipe/>)

## Personal Recipe Tip

Stir in a heavy cream or coconut milk splash at the end of cooking.