



Makes 16 rice balls
Preparation Time: 40 minutes
Cook Time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

4 cups cubed Yukon gold potatoes

2 cups cooked brown rice

2 cups oil-free store-bought or [homemade marinara sauce](#)

¼ cup unsweetened, unflavored plant-based milk

¼ cup + 1 tablespoon nutritional yeast (optional)

3 cloves garlic, minced

Sea salt, to taste

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

2 cups fresh cremini or button mushrooms, trimmed and chopped

1 cup chopped yellow onion

1 cup bread crumbs

½ cup fresh or frozen green peas

2 teaspoon finely chopped fresh basil or 1 teaspoon dried basil, crushed

1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh thyme or ½ teaspoon dried thyme, crushed

Red pepper flakes (optional)

Sicilian Rice Balls with Mushrooms and Peas

Rice balls, or arancini, are a popular Sicilian snack of leftover cooked rice mixed with other flavorful ingredients (usually meat sauce), breaded, and deep-fried. This version is filled with a savory mixture of mushrooms, peas, and onion and then baked to crispy perfection. Dip these scrumptious finger foods into a side of tangy marinara sauce to get the full Italian experience. Perfect as a **dinner party** appetizer or an afternoon snack! For more healthy meals inspiration, check out our [best vegan recipes](#).

*From **Forks Over Knives: Flavor!***

By Darshana Thacker Wendel

- 1 Preheat oven to 450°F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. Place potatoes in a steamer basket in a large saucepan. Add water to saucepan to just below basket. Bring to boiling. Steam, covered, about 15 minutes or until tender. Transfer potatoes to a large bowl; mash with a fork.
- 2 Meanwhile, in a large saucepan combine rice, 1 cup of the marinara sauce, the milk, the ¼ cup nutritional yeast (if using), and 2 of the minced garlic cloves. Bring to boiling; reduce heat to medium-low. Simmer, uncovered, 7 to 10 minutes or until liquid is absorbed. Remove from heat. Season with salt and black pepper. Add the rice mixture to potatoes; stir to combine.
- 3 For filling, in a large skillet cook mushrooms, onion, and the remaining 1 clove minced garlic over medium about 10 minutes or until onion is tender, stirring frequently and adding water, 1 to 2 tablespoons at a time, as needed to prevent sticking. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon nutritional yeast (if using), 1 tablespoon of the bread crumbs, the peas, basil, thyme, crushed red pepper (if using), and salt to taste. Cook for about 3 minutes or until heated through. Remove from heat. Let stand about 5 minutes or until mixture is cool enough to handle.
- 4 Place the remaining bread crumbs in a shallow dish. Shape ¼ cup rice mixture into a 2- to 2½ -inch patty, dusting your hands with bread crumbs if the mixture sticks to them. Spoon 1 tablespoon of filling onto center of the patty; fold edges of patty over filling to cover and roll into a ball. Roll each ball in bread crumbs to coat; place on the prepared baking sheet. Repeat with remaining rice mixture, filling, and bread crumbs.
- 5 Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until lightly browned. Heat up the remaining 1 cup marinara sauce. Serve with rice balls.