Creative Barley "Risotto"

Ingredients

**VEGETABLES**
- Thin drizzle of vegetable oil
- 1/2 butternut squash (2 cups or 350 g) peeled, cut into 1 cm cubes
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) vegetable oil
- 1 package (227 g) white mushrooms, thinly sliced
- Salt and pepper, to taste

**BARLEY "RISOTTO"**
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) vegetable oil
- 1 leek, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 ½ cup (375 ml-325 g) pearled barley, rinsed and drained
- 4 cups (1 litre) chicken broth, sodium-reduced

**GARNISH**
- 200 g frozen small Nordic shrimp, cooked, peeled and cleaned
- Zest of ½ lemon
- ½ cup (125 ml) cheese, any kind, grated or crumbled
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) herbs, your choice, chopped
- Spices, seasonings and/or other ingredients, as desired
- Salt and pepper, to taste

**YOU WILL NEED:**
- medium saucepan
- cutting boards
- knives
- set of measuring spoons
- set of measuring cups
- wooden spoon
- peeler
- pastry sheet
- parchment paper
- large frying pan
- grater
Preparation

Preheat the oven to 475°F.

**VEGETABLES**

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and place the squash cubes on it. Drizzle with oil, salt and pepper.
2. Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes.
3. Heat a large frying pan over high heat, pour in 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil.
4. Sauté mushrooms until browned. Season with salt and pepper.

**BARLEY "RISOTTO"**

1. Heat a medium saucepan over medium-low heat and add 15 ml (1 tbsp) of oil.
2. Sweat the leek for 3 minutes.
3. Add garlic and barley, cook 2 to 3 minutes, stirring.
4. Add 2 cups (500 ml) chicken broth. Cook for 15 minutes, stirring regularly until broth is completely absorbed.
5. Add 2 cups (500 ml) chicken broth. Cook for 10 minutes or until barley is cooked, stirring regularly. Add broth if necessary.

**GARNISH**

6. Add shrimp, lemon zest and vegetables to barley risotto. Mix and taste to determine seasoning and possibilities.
7. Add, as desired: cheese, an herb and/or spice, seasoning and/or condiment. Taste between each ingredient addition, adjust flavours and seasoning to achieve a good balance.

**CHEF’S TIP:** To speed up cooking, heat the broth before adding it to the barley.

**DIETITIAN’S TIP:** vary vegetables over the seasons. In spring, replace squash with asparagus, in summer with coloured pepper or eggplant.