

## Simplest Rice Pudding with lemon-pistachio crush

Last week, my friend [Emma](#) and I traded books. I went home with her copy of Sophie Dahl's lovely [Very Fond of Food](#) (Ten Speed, 2011), and Emma adopted my extra copy of Ruth Reichl's [Comfort Me with Apples](#) (Random House, 2001/2010).

This rice pudding originated with Dahl's recipe for Rice Pudding Cake. While making it, though, the rice took so long to absorb the milk that I got impatient, changed tacks, screwed the cake, and we all just ate warm, sweet, milky rice for dessert instead. The next morning, the budding adventurer in me decided that if oatmeal qualifies as breakfast, then rice pudding should, too.

Makes 4 servings

4 cups milk (I used 2%), plus extra for breakfast  
3/4 cup Arborio rice  
2 lemons (Meyers are lovely if you have them), divided  
1/4 cup superfine sugar, plus more (to taste)  
Handful of lightly toasted (unsalted) pistachios

Combine the milk, rice, and zest of 1 lemon in a medium saucepan over low heat. (Refrigerate the zested lemon, wrapped well in plastic, for another use.) Cook gently, whisking occasionally, until the rice absorbs about 85 percent of the liquid. This will happen quite slowly at first, so you can play Boggle and pop in just to give it a quick whisk every now and again. After about 20 minutes, though, you'll want to stay close and scrape the saucepan with your whisk more frequently. This can take anywhere from 40 to 60 minutes, so clear your schedule. You don't want the milk to scorch.

When the pudding is ready, stir in a scant 1/4 cup sugar and give a taste. If it's not sweet enough, add additional sugar, just a bit at a time, until you're happy. Cool ever so slightly.

Serve warm, right away, or cool completely and refrigerate overnight.

In the morning, thin the leftover pudding with additional milk until it's creamy and fluid, like a loose porridge. Reheat gently. Zest the second lemon onto a cutting board. Lay the pistachios on top. Chop the pistachios into the zest, then sprinkle this bright topping over your {cough} cereal.