

# A question about rice: Do you wash it before cooking?

This week's recipe is Asparagus and Tomato Quiche. The photo you see is Tomato Quiche only— sorry, forgot to buy the asparagus on the way home! But goes to show you how versatile the quiche is! You can add chopped ham or bacon (cook it first); you can change the cheeses or you can add any type of veggie you like.

The only thing with the veggies is that you must pre-cook them slightly, as they will not be fully cooked if you just put them in the quiche raw. And when you cook them, ensure that they are quite dry, otherwise, the water released from the vegetables during cooking will cause your quiche to become watery and it may not set. So, either sauté your veggies or blanch them in boiling water or steam them— but ensure that they are well drained, especially high water content veggies like spinach and mushrooms.

If you are going to use asparagus in the quiche, then be sure to do what the recipe says and SNAP the woody ends off— don't cut them off. If you snap them, the stem will naturally break where the woody part ends and the tender part begins. If you cut them, you are assuming that you know better than the asparagus itself where to cut!

I have an excellent question for you this week, brought to my attention by one of my colleagues.

**Lori Gysel & Gerry Kentner**



“Are you supposed to wash rice before cooking or not?” Now the article wouldn't be very exciting if I just told you the answer, so I will tell you a little more about rice first.

Rice, apart from wheat, is the most widely cultivated cereal in the world. It has been cultivated in China for over 3,000 years. However, it is thought that the rice plant may have originated in southern India, then spread north. There are two main subspecies of rice: long grain rice (indica) which remain separate when cooked and short grain rice (japonica) which stick together when cooked. From these two subspecies, rice is then classified according to the type of processing it receives after harvesting. The processing affects the flavour, food value and cooking qualities of the rice.

- Brown rice is a rice still retaining the bran, but without the husk.
- Camolino rice is polished and lightly coated with oil.
- Glace rice is a polished rice covered with a fine layer of French chalk suspended in a glucose solution and specially processed to give it an attractive sheen.
- Paddy rice is unhusked rice in its raw state.
- Polished rice is white rice that has been passed through machines that remove any flour still adhering to the grain.
- Pre-cooked or instant rice has been husked and soaked then boiled for 1-3 minutes then dried.
- Steamed or pretreated rice is paddy rice that has been meticulously cleaned, soaked in hot water, steamed at a low pressure and then dehusked and blanched.
- White rice is brown rice from which the germ and the outer layers have been removed by passing the grains through machines that rasp the grain.

There are also many different varieties of rice: basmati, camargue red rice, Carolina rice, sticky rice, perfumed rice, risotto rice, Surinam rice, sushi rice and wild rice. Wild rice is actually the seed of an aquatic grass, but it is related to the rice plant and has a similar appearance. Each of these varieties of rice requires a different ratio of liquid to rice in the cooking procedure and they each take a different length of time to cook.

Rice can absorb a great deal of liquid and will soak up whatever liquid your recipe calls for (water, stock, wine, oil, milk, etc). The art of cooking rice is to ensure that the grains remain a little firm (just as you would want your pasta a little firm— not mushy).

Unless the rice is precooked or pretreated, then all rice should be washed in cool running water and drained well before being cooked. Have fun and keep cooking!

*(Lori and Gerry can be reached at [whatscookin@independentfreepress.com](mailto:whatscookin@independentfreepress.com))*

## Asparagus Tomato Quiche

### Pastry ingredients

- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup shortening
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 2-3 tbsps cold water

### Pastry method

Add salt to flour. Blend in shortening until it resembles coarse meal. Gently and slowly add cold water until pastry binds. Roll out pastry on a lightly-floured surface. Pick up piece of rolled out pastry and place in pie shell. Trim off excess, leaving about one-inch of pastry hanging around all sides of pie shell. Fold this under then crimp edges with a fork or your fingers for a finished look.

### Filling ingredients

- 3 cups Swiss or Brick Cheese, grated
- 18 stalks asparagus, blanched (six stalks are to be reserved for garnish)
- 1 tomato, sliced and halved
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup cream
- 1/2 tsp dry mustard
- 1/4 tsp cayenne
- salt and pepper

### Filling method

To blanch asparagus: Snap the woody ends off the asparagus. In a shallow roast pan or frying pan half fill with water. Bring to a boil and add asparagus. Bring to a boil again and simmer 3-5 minutes, until asparagus has reached desired texture (should be still firm, but not hard). Drain and refresh under ice cold water to stop the cooking process and retain the green colour.

In the pie crust, spread 1 and a half cups grated cheese, then the 12 stalks blanched asparagus (arrange them like spokes). Next layer the remainder of the grated cheese followed by the sliced tomato and the last 6 stalks of asparagus to decorate.

In a separate bowl, combine the eggs, milk, cream, dry mustard, cayenne, salt and pepper. Whisk these ingredients together until well mixed. Pour over the asparagus in the pie plate.

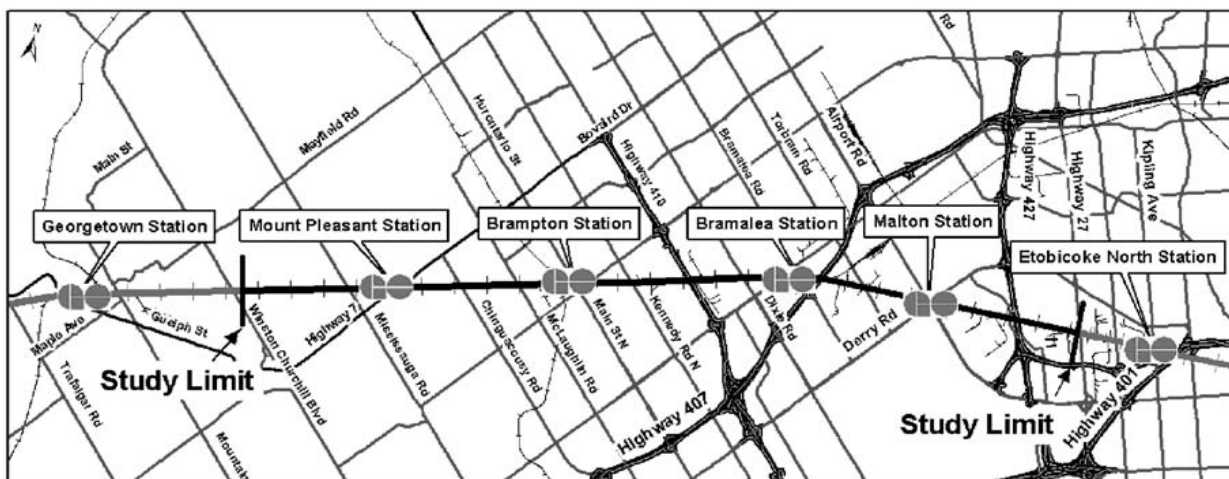
Bake in a preheated 375 degree oven approximately 50-60 minutes.

## NOTICE OF STUDY COMPLETION

### GEORGETOWN NORTH CORRIDOR RAIL EXPANSION FROM WINSTON CHURCHILL BLVD. TO EAST OF THE MALTON GO STATION

#### THE STUDY:

GO Transit, the Province of Ontario's inter-regional public transit service for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton areas, has completed the Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) for improvements, including additional tracks to the Georgetown Corridor to accommodate increasing demands for service. The study also identified a location for a GO Train storage facility near the Mount Pleasant GO Station. The study limits are from Winston Churchill Blvd. to east of the Malton GO Station.



The project classified as a Group "B" project according to GO Transit's Class EA Document (2003) will require approval under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA). The Environmental Study Report (ESR), documenting the planning and design process for the EA will be filed on the Public Record for a 45-day comment period from April 24 to June 8, 2006.

#### The Environmental Study Report may be viewed at the following locations:

Ministry of the Environment  
Central Region Office  
5775 Yonge Street, 8th Floor  
North York, ON M2M 4J1

City of Brampton  
City Clerk's Office  
2 Wellington Street West  
Brampton, ON L6Y 4R2

Ministry of the Environment  
Halton-Peel District Office  
4145 North Service Road, Suite 300  
Burlington, ON L7L 6A3

Brampton Library  
65 Queen Street East  
Brampton, ON M6W 3L6

#### For further information about this project or related background studies, please contact:

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Please forward comments about the ESR to either contact before Thursday, June 8, 2006. If you feel that serious environmental concerns exist, you may write to the Minister of Environment, 135 St. Clair Avenue West, 12th floor, Toronto, ON M4V 1P5, copy to GO Transit and Earth Tech, to request that the project be subject to a Part II Order requiring an Individual Environmental Assessment. This may result in a formal government review process being undertaken.

The Governments of Canada and Ontario have jointly committed \$770 million under the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund to improve and expand the GO Transit rail and bus transit system in the Greater Toronto Area.

Pour plus de renseignements, veuillez composer le (416) 869-3200 ou le 1 888 GET ON GO (438-6646).

