

power in the *pilota*. They worked in shifts, eating at different times, and this way of cooking rice kept the rice nice and warm and ready to eat for some time, unlike the conventional risotto.

A dish from Verona, where salt cod or stockfish are cooked to a milky whiteness (like a *brandade de morue*), we find crisp spears of young asparagus in a saffron-coloured risotto with a last-minute swirl of this *crema di baccalá*.

Garlic, rosemary and pancetta go into a rustic risotto; while *mela golden melinda*, a superior kind of Golden Delicious grown in the Val de Non, and a local cheese, *toma della Valsesia*, with a few sliced walnuts, make a characteristically local use of what is to hand, *kook met wat voorhanden is*; another local combination is sausage and chestnuts, with a seasoning of nutmeg; a Sardinian touch comes with using a combination of tiny artichokes, garlic and bottarga; the red radicchio of Treviso goes with *scamorza*, a smoked pulled cheese from the south of Italy; leeks and *funghi porcini* make a fine vegetarian risotto.

The book is illustrated with black and white line subjects and many (some rather muddy) monochrome photographs of the landscape and implements of traditional rice production. These are a unique visual record of north Italian rice culture, and whatever their short-comings a huge improvement on the superfluous colour photographs that hike up the cost of so many food publications. This book is a treasure trove of little known recipes and a lovingly researched account of a classic Italian dish and how to cook it. An English translation would be warmly welcomed.

GILLIAN RILEY

Alexis Gauthier: *Vegetronic*: Preface, 2013: 375 pp., hardback, £30.00

As soon as you open this book, you will experience the intense, pacy and passionate world of Alexis Gauthier. With full page, colour pictures of truffles, bright green jelly moulds and neon street signs, his diversity lends itself to the design as well as to the recipes and the tone. With recipes that range from mimosa sweets and bubblegum to black truffle polenta, this is far from being a book about vegetables – it is about a total love of food and fresh ingredients. It is a celebration of flavour and freshness and will change the way you cook vegetables.

ALICE RICHARDSON

Helena Attlee: *The Land where Lemons Grow: the Story of Italy and its Citrus Fruit*: Particular Books, 2014: 272 pp., hardback, £20.00.

Citrologists of the world will unite in welcoming this absorbing grand tour of the citrus-growing regions of Italy. A distinguished garden writer, Attlee fell under the spell of citrus over ten years ago and the resulting book is a zesty