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FARRO is an ancient grain, once the staple of the poor. Rich in fibre, protein, magnesium and vitamins, it sustained the Roman legions and gave rise to the Italian name for flour.

Spelt is often confused with farro and they do both belong to the wheat family; however, spelt is much softer than farro, with farro predating spelt by some 5000 years.

Farro went out of favour for a while, with other grains in more modern times being easier to cultivate and with a much higher harvest yield.

While the majority of the world's farro is produced in Italy, you can buy locally or at least Australian, with Mount Zero Olives producing farro from the Wimmera/Grampians region in western Victoria. Committed to sustainable farming, **Mount Zero Olives** produces lentils, oils, vinegars and, of course, olives.

Farro is used in soups, braises, salads – just about anything you can think of that uses a grain can be replaced with farro. It even declares itself a risotto when cooked in a similar fashion.

We made today's recipe of **farro, roasted garlic, mushroom and thyme** and served it with slow-roasted lamb; it was delicious.

Surprisingly, I had some left over and the next day served that with some gold band snapper cooked in brown butter with a little verjuice.

It worked just as well with the meat and fish. If by chance you are after a vegetarian option, then just replace the chicken stock with white wine or water.

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ANCIENT: Farro, traditionally the grain of the poor that fuelled Rome's legions, goes well with thyme, roasted garlic, mushrooms and lamb. Picture: Jeff Camden