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- * MINI FOOD PERFECT FOR PARTIES
- * 3-INGREDIENT CANAPÉS

MASTERCLASS

MAKE YOUR BEST EVER PIZZAS

HEARTY WINTER COMFORT FOOD
(TURN TO P.10)

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INGREDIENTS EVERY COOK NEEDS

Do you have our definitive list in your cupboards?

JAMIE OLIVER

"Cook my sensational Sag Aloo this week!"

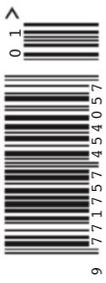
SWEET SENSATION

SALTED CARAMELS, CHOCOLATE HONEYCOMB, HOT CHOCOLATE DIPPERS AND MUCH MORE...



ICE CREAM BOMBE P.47

ISSUE 62 | JANUARY 2014 £3.99



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EDITOR'S LETTER

Welcome to the UK's leading vegetarian cookery magazine...



LOUISE MILES,
DEPUTY EDITOR
01206 505491
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JOINING US THIS ISSUE



JAMIE OLIVER: The chef's curry is great value for money



XANTHE CLAY: Writer Xanthe shows why we should enjoy January



TIM MADDAMS:
Ex-River Cottage Chef on the virtues of cooking kale

With the party season in full swing it seemed only right to turn this issue over to entertaining. For us, having people over means a chance to put our most polished culinary skills to good use; from finding the perfect drinks (check out our Cocktail Hour feature on p86) to cooking up a fabulous banquet of on trend food (we love Jamie Oliver's Sag Aloo recipe on p18 – it's such great value for money!).

So, we've gathered together sophisticated canapé recipes (p26), snacks and nibbles that only require three ingredients (p24) or something better suited to a sit down meal, like our glorious meals that make staying in an occasion on p48.

But let's not allow hosting take over our lives this month. We've got fabulous sweet recipes that reveal how to make confectionery like an expert on p80 and the professionals at Franco Manca (a small chain of incredible pizza restaurants based in London) teach us how to make our best ever homemade pizzas on p66.

Whatever you turn your hand to this month, we say bravo to you and raise a glass. Let's start as we mean to go on; learning new skills, breaking bread with more friends and enjoying some truly fabulous vegetarian food.

Happy New Year!

Fae x

FAE GILFILLAN (FAE@COOKVEG.CO.UK)



Cook Vegetarian magazine's app is now available to purchase on the Apple Newstand



Cook Vegetarian is a magazine for food lovers, who, for any of a variety of reasons, don't wish to eat meat or fish. We don't preach, but we do make sure that every recipe is suitable for even the strictest ovo-lacto vegetarian, with vegan options clearly marked to make your choices easier. We believe that meat-free food has endless possibilities. All you need is a little inspiration!

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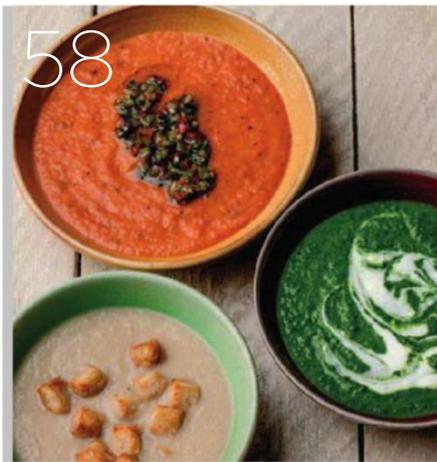
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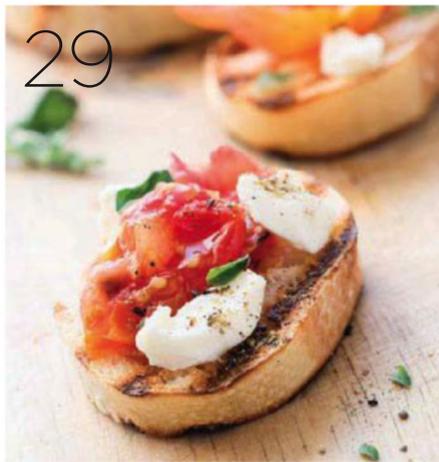
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FREEZES WELL



QUICK MAKE



COST CUTTING



ECO FRIENDLY



VEGAN FRIENDLY



GLUTEN FREE

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IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS WITH COOK VEG
 This month, perfect your pastry, get more from your celeriac and source the most beautiful Chinese tableware

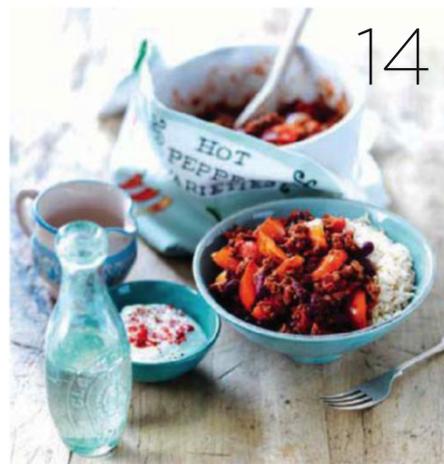
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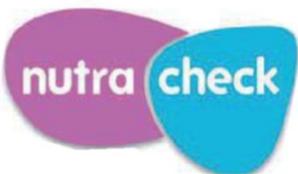
Our selection of gifts to you worth £1,000

98 NOTES FROM THE ALLOTMENT

This month, Alys Fowler discovers gifts from the garden

WIN! EXCLUSIVE READER TREATS

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Calorie and fat analysis provided by Nutracek.co.uk UK's largest online calorie counter, over 100,000 foods. Download the App – search for 'Nutracek' in the App Store or Play Store.

January's Recipes

All of the full-length recipes in this issue of *Cook Vegetarian* are listed here, but remember – there are lots more tips & recipe ideas throughout!



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OVER TO YOU

We'd love to hear your news and views, favourite recipes and comments on anything you've read in *Cook Veg*, and you could win a fantastic prize

Star letter

Q I'm writing to Cook Vegetarian about the lack of interesting options available for vegetarians when eating out. It's possible to find an absolutely lovely restaurant when planning a special occasion, but when just going out for a reasonably-priced meal with friends or family they offer a choice of cheese-topped vegetable bake or pasta in tomato-and-vegetable sauce.

This doesn't seem to be due to an absence of concern for vegetarian customers as much as it is to a complete lack of inspiration or understanding of what we want to eat. My husband recently went to a local carvery where the food was, for meat-eaters, very good. When the proprietor asked what my husband thought of the food he answered honestly and said it was very nice, but the vegetarian options were poor. Far from being offended the owner asked him for suggestions as she simply didn't know what to give to someone who didn't eat meat. I will be sending her a stack of ideas including picking up a copy of Cook Vegetarian so she can see just how many creative and delicious vegetarian options really are out there.

Amelia Crowley, via email



"The proprietor asked him for suggestions as she simply didn't know what to give to someone who didn't eat meat"

A We loved your letter Amelia, we whole-heartedly agree with you. We find Parmesan and Grana Padano can be a problem too when eating out.



WIN!

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Q As a long time reader of your magazine, I like to consider myself somewhat of a vegetarian foodie. I really enjoy cooking and entertaining, and I use lots of your recipes when I want to impress my meat-eating friends with something delicious.

However, one thing I really struggle with is lunches. I work in an office, and take in my own food, but more often than not, this ends up being cheese sandwiches. It would be great if you could print some really interesting, economical and easy recipes so I could experiment during the day too!

Maria Carlisle, via email

A Thanks for writing in Maria. Lunchtime meal options can be difficult when you work in an office. Our top tip is to keep leftovers from dinner and create smaller portions for lunch. In the Cook Veg office we love tucking into quinoa salads and pasta dishes.

What you're saying

What type of microwave do you have and what do you use it for?



CLAUDES VOICE
Microwaving the heat pads to keep our ex-batt hens warm at night.

JULIA ANN KERR
I don't have a microwave, I think if we did we would eat more unhealthy food.

MOIRA ALISON MASTERSON
I use my microwave constantly. The only thing I use my cooker for is boiling potatoes and baking. I wouldn't be without one!

ANNA BLEWETT
I've not lived with a microwave since The Great Egg Explosion of '03. The physical scars healed but the mental ones cannot.

Join the Debate at www.cookveg.co.uk/forum

Q Your recent Christmas issue was an absolute godsend. People get so obsessed with the idea of turkey, and it was very satisfying to prove that veggies are not just a side dish!

I have never cooked celeriac before, but it was really nice to have alongside potatoes. So tasty and less stodgy too.

I particularly loved the free recipe book that came with the December issue. The little book was packed with some great Christmas ideas which helped me plan for the festive period.

I'm looking forward to more inspiration for the new year.
Charlotte Costwain, via email

A What a complementary letter, thanks Charlotte. We are very pleased to hear you enjoyed the issue. We will hopefully continue to inspire you in 2014. Next month, we will be focusing on healthy eating and keeping up with your new year foodie resolutions. If you would like more recipe inspiration, check out our website; cookveg.co.uk.

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FOOD TO VALUE

These delicious meals aren't just hearty and healthy, they're great value-for-money too...

SWEET POTATO PASTA BAKE



Serves 4

Ready in 45 mins

350g dried macaroni
1 head broccoli, trimmed and cut into small florets
1 large sweet potato, peeled and cut into small chunks
300g low-fat natural cottage cheese
small handful of finely chopped fresh chives
2 free-range eggs, beaten
4 tbsp quark
150g cherry tomatoes, halves
30g reduced-fat Cheddar cheese, grated

1 Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/ Gas 6.

2 Cook the pasta according to the packet instructions, adding the broccoli and sweet potato four minutes before the end of the cooking time.

3 Meanwhile, mix together the cottage cheese, chives, eggs and quark and stir well.

4 Drain the pasta, stir in the cottage cheese mixture and tomatoes and tip the pasta into an ovenproof dish. Scatter over the Cheddar cheese and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden.

PER SERVING: 538 CALS, 7.96 FAT

FRAGRANT SPICED BIRYANI



Serves 4

Ready in 35 mins (plus soaking)



COOK'S TIP

This dish is equally delicious made with roasted vegetables such as peppers, onions, butternut squash or courgettes – stir them into the cooked pasta before baking in the oven.

250g dried basmati rice
low-calorie cooking spray
1 large onion, roughly chopped
2 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
4cm piece of root ginger, peeled and finely grated
1 level tsp ground cumin
1 level tsp ground coriander
1 level tsp mild chilli powder
1/2 tsp crushed cardamom pods

1 large carrot, peeled and diced
1 large sweet potato, peeled and diced
1 courgette, trimmed and diced
400g small cauliflower florets
1/2 tsp turmeric
salt and freshly ground black pepper
300g fine green beans





“Delicious, aromatic basmati is the ideal rice for this classic Indian dish, which is packed full of fragrant spices and fresh vegetables. You won’t be able to resist second helpings!”

- 1** Place the rice in a bowl, pour over enough cold water to cover and leave to soak for 20 minutes. Tip the rice into a sieve and run under cold running water until the water runs clear.
 - 2** Meanwhile, spray low calorie cooking spray into a deep, heavy-based casserole pan that has a tight-fitting lid. Put the pan over a medium heat, add the onion and sauté for five minutes until softened and beginning to brown. Add the garlic and ginger and cook for one minute, stirring continuously.
 - 3** Add the cumin, coriander, chilli and cardamom and cook for 2-3 minutes, stirring, so that the spices don’t stick to the bottom of the pan. Add the carrot, sweet potato, courgette, cauliflower and 300ml of water and bring to the boil. Cover and simmer for five minutes.
 - 4** Drain the rice and add to the casserole along with 250ml of boiling water and the turmeric. Stir well and season with a little salt and freshly ground black pepper. Bring to the boil, cover and cook over the lowest possible heat for 12-15 minutes, without lifting the lid.
 - 5** About five minutes before the end of the cooking time, cook the green beans in a pan of lightly salted boiling water until tender. Drain well.
 - 6** Fluff up the rice, stir in the green beans and serve hot.
- PER SERVING: 388 CALS, 3.26 FAT



CAULIFLOWER DHANSAK



Serves 4

Ready in 45 mins

2 large onions, chopped
2 large garlic cloves, crushed
4cm piece of root ginger, peeled and finely grated
1 large red chilli, deseeded and chopped
1/2 tsp ground black pepper
2 tsp ground cinnamon
2 tsp turmeric
2 tsp ground coriander
2 tsp ground cumin
low-calorie cooking spray
2 x 400g tins chopped tomatoes
175g dried red split lentils
175g dried yellow split lentils
1 medium cauliflower, trimmed and broken into florets
200g baby spinach leaves
2 tsp garam masala
salt and black pepper

1 Put the onions, garlic, ginger, chilli and eight tablespoons of cold water into a food processor with the pepper, cinnamon, turmeric, coriander and cumin

and whiz to make as smooth a paste as you can.
2 Spray a large deep saucepan with low-calorie cooking spray and fry the paste for 5-6 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add one tin of chopped tomatoes, the lentils and one litre of cold water. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer gently for 30 minutes until thickened and the lentils are soft.
3 About ten minutes before the end of the cooking time, cook the cauliflower in a pan of lightly salted boiling water until just tender. Drain well and carefully stir into the lentils with the remaining tomatoes, spinach and garam masala. Heat gently to warm through, season to taste and serve.

PER SERVING: 354 CALS, 4.9G FAT

COOK'S TIP

Lentils are very filling and make a great storecupboard staple. Dried lentils are better value but canned lentils are quicker to use as they only need to be heated through. If you're using canned lentils here, drain and rinse, then add for the last five minutes of cooking.



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BOOK SHELF

All recipes taken from *Slimming World's Family Feasts on a Budget**, available from all 9,000 Slimming World groups in the UK and Ireland priced £4.95. To find your nearest Slimming World group visit www.slimmingworld.com or call 0844 897 8000.

*INCLUDES NON-VEGETARIAN CONTENT



“Chilli is a very big deal in the southern states of the US and our mildly hot veggie version is as mouth-watering as anything you’ll taste over there. Our amazing chilli cream is the ideal accompaniment and will get everyone talking!”

CHUNKY BEAN BURGERS WITH CAJUN WEDGES



Serves 4

Ready in 45 mins

400g tin haricot or cannellini beans, drained
 400g tin kidney beans, drained
 1 small onion or shallot, roughly chopped
 1 large garlic clove, crushed
 1 red chilli, deseeded and roughly chopped
 1 small red pepper, deseeded and roughly chopped
 bunch of spring onions, trimmed and roughly chopped
 salt and freshly ground black pepper
 1 free-range egg, beaten
 low-calorie cooking spray
 4 large baking potatoes
 2 tsp Cajun seasoning
 6 tbsp fat-free natural Greek yoghurt
 2 large tomatoes, roughly chopped

1 Place the beans, onion, garlic,

COOK'S TIP

If you don't have a gas hob or you don't want to cook the chillies over an open flame, you can roast them in an oven preheated to 200C/400F/Gas 6 for 10 minutes then steam them in a bag as above.

chilli, red pepper and half the spring onions into a food processor and whiz to chop roughly. Transfer to a bowl, season to taste and stir in the beaten egg. Divide the mixture into eight equal portions and shape into burgers. Place on a baking sprayed lightly with low-calorie cooking spray and chill for 20 minutes.

2 Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6.

3 Cut the potatoes into wedges and toss with the Cajun seasoning, then arrange on a baking tray, spray with low-calorie cooking spray and bake for 25 minutes or until golden.

4 When the wedges have been cooking for about 10 minutes, put the burgers on the oven shelf below the wedges and bake for 12-15 minutes or until golden.

5 Meanwhile, mix the yoghurt, tomatoes and remaining spring onions in a bowl and season to taste with salt and pepper.

6 Serve the bean burgers with the wedges, chunky sauce and your favourite salad.

PER SERVING: 476 CALS, 4.3G FAT

TEX-MEX VEGGIE CHILLI WITH CHILLI CREAM



Serves 4

Ready in 40 mins

3 large red chillies
 low-calorie cooking spray
 1 large onion, roughly chopped
 2 large garlic cloves
 1 red pepper, deseeded and cut

into chunks

1 orange pepper, deseeded and cut into chunks

2 tsp ground cumin

1 tsp ground cinnamon

1 tsp paprika

500g Quorn mince

400g tin chopped tomatoes with chilli and garlic

500g passata with herbs

400g tin kidney beans, drained

6 tbsp fat-free natural

fromage frais

1 Deseed and finely chop two of the red chillies. Spray a large, deep saucepan with low-calorie cooking spray and add the chopped chillies, onion, garlic and peppers. Fry over a medium heat for five minutes or until softened, stirring occasionally. Sprinkle over the cumin, cinnamon and paprika and cook for 1-2 minutes, stirring well.

2 Stir in the Quorn mince, tomatoes, passata, kidney beans and 300ml of cold water. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 20 minutes.

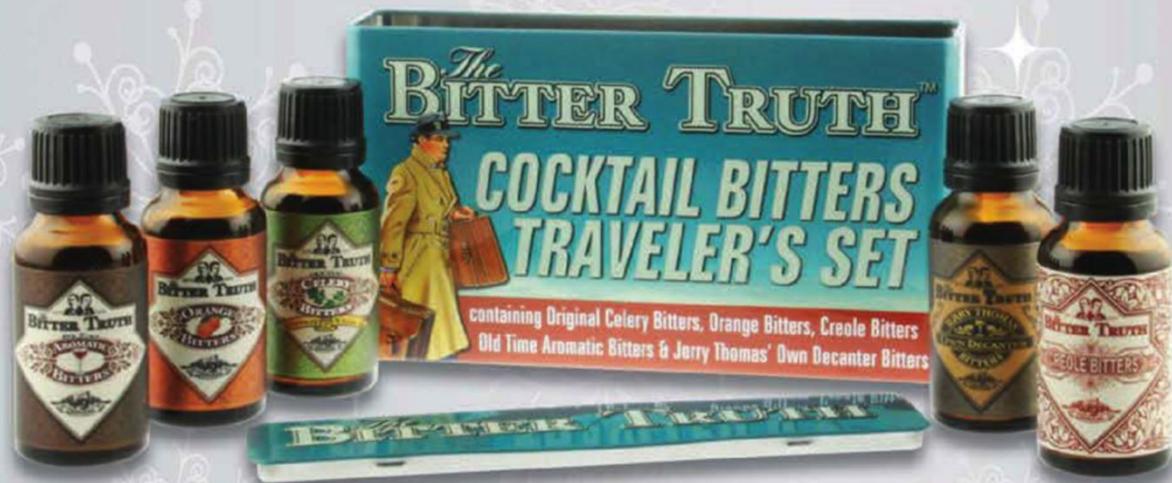
3 Meanwhile, use long-handled tongs to cook the remaining chilli directly over an open flame, carefully turning until charred. Place the chilli into a plastic food bag, seal and leave to steam for ten minutes. Remove the chilli's blackened skin and seeds. Using the blade of a knife, mash the chilli flesh and stir into the fromage frais.

4 Serve the chilli with the chilli cream and boiled rice.

PER SERVING: 355 CALS, 5.2G FAT

Celebrate the Season

with our professional tools & ingredients



Once an essential component of every good cocktail, bitters are well and truly back in the spotlight. This gorgeous, retro tin of authentic, professional quality bitters makes a great gift – if you can bear to part with it!

Gourmet

Add flavour, texture and colour to your Christmas cooking. Try our Crackle Crystals popping candy, our great range of Flavour Drops (including Xmas Pudding flavour) and PerlaZocni, an edible red or gold lustre. In fact, we stock lots of hard-to-find ingredients that are sought after by adventurous cooks.



Kitchen

Use our whippers to make foams or whip cream, try adding smoky flavours to food with our Smoking Gun or cook something special in one of our Agnelli, professional copper pans. Great to use and wonderful to give!



Molecular

Ferran Adria is the godfather of science based cooking and this El Bulli Texturas kit is sure to delight any fan. This is just one of our fantastic molecular gastronomy and mixology starter kits.



Bar

Our bar tools include all you need to add a flourish to cocktail making. We have everything from soda siphons to pourers and from shakers to muddlers. Our newest addition is the exciting Soda Plus that adds fizz to any liquid in seconds!



Cocktail

Recreating a favourite cocktail is easy with our professional range of bitters, flavour drops, cream of coconut and syrups. For a special toast, or as a gift, try our Hibiscus (Rosella) flowers. Drop one into a glass of bubbly and watch it open up.



Barista

As a supplier to some of the UK's best known coffee shops, we have lots of equipment and ingredients for coffee lovers from jugs, whisks, stencils, tampers, grinders and thermometers to flavouring syrup gift packs. Check out our AeroPress too – it makes fabulous coffee without fuss. You'll love it, so will your friends and family.



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ENTERTAINING

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Special

FOUR REASONS WE LOVE ENTERTAINING

1 THE EXCUSE TO COOK!

...not that we need one to get going in the kitchen, but entertaining friends and family gives us the chance to try our hand at all the over-the-top food. Because who eats blinis on a Wednesday evening? Parties mean we can make canapés, whip up cocktails and enjoy creating all the other indulgent treats we can't otherwise.

2 WE CAN DECORATE

Whether you love dressing a table or filling your house with candles, there's an art to making your home look special for guests, and it's an art we take great pleasure in. Find all the inspiration you need to decorate your home for your next gathering at our Pinterest board – www.pinterest.co.uk/cookvegetarian

3 INFORMAL ATTITUDE

If there's one thing we really hate at Cook Vegetarian, it's formal entertaining. There's nothing worse than a candlelit dinner, wearing clothes you don't feel comfortable in and eating tiny portions of albeit delicious food. We're much more about tapas, finger food and buffets that everyone can dip into. Our top tip: make people feel at home by kicking off your shoes – it works for Nigella Lawson!

4 BLOWING OUR OWN TRUMPETS

And finally, as loathed as we are to admit it, we love entertaining because it gives us a chance to test our culinary skills. If we get a few compliments as well, then who are we to argue? So whether you're a novice or a seasoned host, up your game with our canapé recipes (p26). Show offs... us?



COOK LIKE A PRO

Learn how to cook like **Jamie Oliver** by making one of his favourite party dishes

MY SAG ALOO



Serves 6
Ready in 50 mins

- 1 onion
- 2 ripe tomatoes
- 1/2 a bunch of fresh coriander (15g)
- 2 heaped tbsp rogan josh curry paste
- groundnut oil
- 1.2kg potatoes
- 4 garlic cloves
- 1 fresh red chilli
- 2 tsp cumin seeds
- 300g frozen spinach
- 6 heaped tsp fat-free natural yoghurt

1 Peel the onion and blitz with the tomatoes, coriander stalks and curry paste in a food processor until combined, then spoon into a large non-stick frying pan on a medium heat with a lug of oil. Cook for five minutes, stirring regularly, while you cut the potatoes into 3cm chunks (I like to leave the skin on – it saves a job and is more nutritious). Add them to the pan with a pinch of salt and pepper, then pour in enough water to come halfway up the potatoes but not cover them. Bring to the boil, pop the lid on or cover with tin foil, then simmer for 10 to 12 minutes, or until the potatoes are just cooked through. Remove the lid, then turn the heat up to medium-high and reduce until all the liquid cooks away and the potatoes start to get crispy and golden (around 15 to 20 minutes).

2 Meanwhile, to make the flavoured oil (called a temper – this really brings the sag aloo to life), peel the garlic and finely slice with the

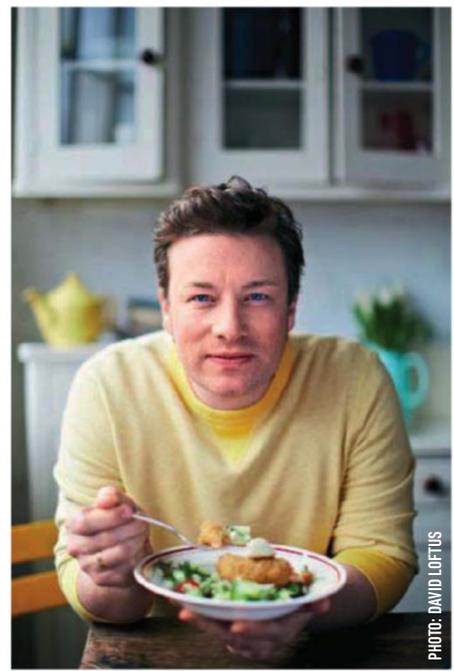


PHOTO: DAVID LOFTUS

chilli, place in a small pan and fry with the cumin seeds and a good lug of oil until nicely golden, then take off the heat. When the potatoes are looking good, stir the spinach into the pan and cook down for around five minutes, or until the liquid has evaporated and the potatoes are nice and crisp, stirring regularly.

3 Serve the sag aloo drizzled with the temper, dolloped with yoghurt, and with the coriander leaves scattered on top. It's really delicious wrapped in soft round lettuce leaves with an ice-cold beer on the side.

PER SERVING: 234 CALS, 5.76 FAT, 0.86 SAT FAT





BOOK SHELF

Recipes by Jamie Oliver.
Image © 2013, Jamie
Oliver Enterprises
Limited, Photography:
David Loftus

*INCLUDES NON-VEGETARIAN CONTENT

Flippin' Marvellous

Try making your best ever veggie burger tonight –
toppings and all!

QUINOA BURGER WITH GRAINS

Serves 4

Ready in 45 mins

4 homemade or bought buns

For the sauce

100g Dijon mustard
2 tbsp honey
2 tsp cider vinegar
2 pinches of celery salt
2 pinches of white pepper

For the patties

1 raw beetroot, peeled,
scrubbed and sliced
200g quinoa
125g bulgur
3 French shallots
100g dry breadcrumbs
pinch of salt
pinch of pepper
drizzle of vegetable oil

For the topping

45g rocket

1 To make the sauce, combine the mustard with the honey, cider vinegar, celery salt and white pepper.

2 For the patties, steam the beetroot slices for 5-7 minutes, then marinate in half the sauce, reserving the other half to spread on the buns. Cook the quinoa and bulgur according to the packet instructions, then put them in a food processor bowl with the shallots. Coarsely process in short pulses. Add the beetroot and pulse to roughly combine. Form four patties from the processed mixture and put in the refrigerator for at least 10

minutes. Combine the breadcrumbs, salt and pepper in a bowl. Coat each patty with this mixture.

3 Cooking the patties Pour a layer of vegetable oil on the base of a deep saucepan (approximately 1.5cm in deep), or use a deep-fryer if you have one. Over a high heat, when the oil is quite hot, cook the crumbed patties for about eight minutes in total.

4 To assemble, cut the buns in half horizontally and toast them for two minutes under the grill. Spread the cut side of the bun heels with half of the honey-

mustard sauce and top with the vegetable patties, a few leaves of rocket, the remaining honey-mustard sauce and the crowns.

PER SERVING: 607 CALS, 12.26 FAT

BOOK SHELF

All recipes taken from
*Hamburger Gourmet**
by David Japy, Elodie
Rambaud and Victor
Garnier (Murdoch
Books, £14.99)

*INCLUDES NON-VEGETARIAN CONTENT

"We love this Quinoa Burger because it's so filling and delicious. You can top it with whatever you like, but we enjoy honey-mustard sauce and lettuce"

BURGER MAKING TIPS

HOWEVER YOU COOK YOUR BURGERS, THERE ARE ALWAYS WAYS TO IMPROVE THEM. TO MAKE YOUR BURGERS TASTE EVEN BETTER, CHECK OUT OUR TOP TIPS BELOW...



BUTTER ME UP...

Spread a very thin layer of butter on the cut sides of the bun before you brown it in the pan or under the grill



FIRST CUT...

Cut the burger in half before serving to do this, take a sharp knife and hold it down horizontally, blade downwards, above the burger. Put the palm of your hand flat on top of the blade then aim at the middle of the burger and cut firmly, using your hand to stop the burger collapsing.



TURN OVER FOR MORE BURGER IDEAS >

160°C

FEELING HOT HOT HOT...

Only cook patties on a very hot surface, whether a pan, grill, hotplate or barbecue.



PERFECTLY FORMED...

To form the patties by hand, it is practical to have a bowl of lukewarm water next to your workspace: wetting your fingers each time you handle the patties helps with shaping the mix and allows you to achieve beautiful, round and even patties.

BULGUR, WALNUTS AND CUMIN BURGER

Serves 4
Ready in 1hr

4 homemade or bought buns
1 onion, finely chopped
2 tbsp olive oil
80g bulgur
230ml water
250g tinned white beans, drained and rinsed
30ml soy sauce
75g walnuts
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
45g fresh coriander leaves
1/2 tsp ground cumin
1/2 tsp cayenne pepper
pinch of salt
pinch of pepper

For the sauce
60g mayonnaise
1 tsp lemon juice
1 tsp lemon zest

For the toppings
1 oxheart tomato
2-3 tbsp olive oil
pinch of herbes de Provence
a large handful of rocket

1 To make the patties, lightly brown half the onion for 5-7 minutes with a drizzle of olive oil over a low heat in a saucepan. Add the bulgur and water and cook for 15-20 minutes, covered, over a low heat until the water has been completely absorbed. Pour the bulgur mixture into a food processor bowl, then add the white beans and soy sauce. Process the mixture, adding the walnuts, garlic, coriander, cumin, cayenne pepper,

salt, pepper and the remaining onion to make an even mixture. Work the mixture in short pulses, taking care to not over-process. Form four patties and put them in the refrigerator for at least 10 minutes.

2 For the sauce, combine the mayonnaise with the lemon juice and zest. To top the burger, cut the tomato into four rounds.

Cover them with olive oil and sprinkle with herbes de Provence. Cook them in a hot frying pan for five minutes, turning them halfway through the cooking time.

3 To cook the patties, brush both sides of the patties with olive oil. Cook the patties for about 5-6 minutes each side in a hot frying pan over a high heat.

4 Cut the buns in half horizontally and toast them for two minutes under the grill. Spread the cut side of the bun heels with the sauce, add the cooked tomato slices, the patties, a few rocket leaves, then the crowns.

PER SERVING: 697 CALS, 45.8G FAT



BEST VEGGIE BURGERS

If you've not got time to make them from scratch, chomp down on the tastiest veggie burgers around



FRY'S CHICKEN STYLE BURGERS £3.07, OCADO
 Try and see if your meat-eating friends can tell the difference by serving them these delicious grills. We love them sandwiched in a multi-grain bun, homemade salsa and sometimes a chunk of cheese. Perfect for winter barbecues or can be served as a veggie buffet option.



QUORN SMOKED CHILLI AND LIME BURGERS £2.60, WAITROSE
 The smokiness of this burger is what makes it stand out from the crowd. Spiced with chipotle chilli, lime and cumin – this is perfect for those who like a little heat in their food. Chilli chips are a brilliant pairing with this spicy burger choice.



LINDA MCCARTNEY 2 MOZZARELLA 1/4 LB BURGERS £2, OCADO
 Cheesy and well seasoned are the best words to describe these delicious grills. Made with soya protein – the texture offers a great meat substitute. Really juicy and so much nicer than some of the 'cardboard' ones we have tried in the past.



BIRDS EYE 4 VEGETABLE QUARTER POUNDERS £2, ASDA
 Make midweek cooking really easy with these ready-made burgers. Packed with healthy vegetables, you can easily add potato wedges or onion rings to make this a evening meal. Or you can slice it and pop into a wrap for a quick and easy lunch option.



AMY'S KITCHEN MANHATTAN VEGGIE BURGERS £3.79 GOODNESS DIRECT
 Firm and hearty, the veggie burger is the perfect all around burger for any occasion. Made with vegetables, walnuts and quinoa (an ancient protein-rich grain), this burger is free from dairy, gluten and soya, but full of flavour. This is a great way to serve guests because of its free-from qualities.

THREE INGREDIENTS FOR A PERFECT PARTY

Canapés, cocktails and buffets needn't cost a lot, as **Alice Whitehead's** recipes prove



RECIPE PARTY STARTERS

GET THE EVENING'S ENTERTAINMENT KICKED OFF WITH THESE IDEAS

SPUD SHELLS

Create bite-sized bakers by cleaning 8-10 very small baking potatoes and pricking with a fork. Bake for 1 hour in a hot oven and, using a tea towel to protect your hands, halve them with a sharp knife and scoop out the insides to leave the skin. Brush the skins with oil and crisp up under the grill, and mix your mash with veggie soft cheese and a little seasoned butter. Spoon back into your empty potato shells to serve.

BERRY MERRY

Try a berry-luscious take on a margarita by filling a cocktail shaker with crushed ice and adding a 240ml swig of tequila, 240ml traditional lemonade and 60ml blackberry liqueur (or more if you have lots of guests). Shake well and pour into long glasses.

YOKE OF GENIUS

Frittatas or baked omelettes increase valuable partying time because they can be cooked the night before and served cold from the fridge. Best of all, they can use up leftovers. Line a baking tin with greased baking paper and, in a jug,

whisk together 4 eggs with 100g veggie Parmesan-style cheese and seasoning. Pop your third ingredient into the tin – whatever you have lying around: a tin of chickpeas, chopped tomatoes, old roasted potatoes or cold veg – and pour in your egg mixture. Bake in a medium oven until golden and the centre feels firm and cut into thin finger-food slices.

HERBY HEAVEN

Muddle a few sprigs of fresh rosemary in your glasses and add a shot of gin. Fill to the top with either ice-cold lemonade, sparkling spring water or, if you're feeling opulent, a swish of bubbly!

FRITTI PLEASE

Coat thin strips of root veg such as parsnips, carrot or beetroot in seasoned flour and a pinch of paprika and fry until golden. Dry on kitchen towel and wrap individual portions in paper cones.

WINTER WARMER

Who says cocktails have to be cold? Help your guests warm up in the chilly weather by heating

1 measure brandy and 1 cup sweet espresso coffee in pan on the stove (per person) and, once heated through (but not bubbling) pour into a warmed cocktail glass. Top with freshly whipped cream, or alternatively a swirl of orange zest.

FRIDGE FUDGE

Swap after-dinner mints for these sweet canapé cuties. Heat a 379g tin condensed milk and 50g butter in a bowl (in a pan on the hob, or in a microwave) until the butter melts and add a 400g dark or milk chocolate bar, broken into chunks. Stir until the chocolate melts and line a baking tray with foil. Pour in your mixture, popping it in the fridge overnight. Cut into small squares, arranged on a serving plate, and keep chilled to stop it from melting before everyone arrives!

FRUITY FIZZ

See in the New Year in proper party style with a bit of bubbly and seasonal orange and cranberry. For each guest, pour a ½ measure orange liqueur into a Champagne flute and fill halfway with cranberry juice, topping up with Prosecco.

SNAP TO IT

Make crafty crackers (but not for Christmas!) by mashing 1 ripe banana with 4oz flax or sesame seeds. Grease a baking tray and spoon the mixture onto the tray, and mould into discs. Bake in a hot oven until golden and crispy and decorate each disc with a dollop of jam. A great one for kids' parties too.

CHOCOLATE MARTINI

Treat guests to a grown up dessert by chilling martini glasses and filling each with crushed ice. Add 125ml chocolate liqueur and 90ml vodka and top with chocolate shavings. I should cocoa!

“Save time and money on entertaining this New Year with these easy party foods. After all, two ingredients are company but three's a crowd pleaser!”



BASH BASICS

BE A PARTY ANIMAL INSTEAD OF A PARTY POOPER WITH THESE NIFTY TIME-SAVERS AND TIPS

PLAN THE MENU

Plan your buffet or canapés in advance so you can shop in good time (and possibly pick up some bargains), and dice and slice vegetables or freeze portions so they can be used or defrosted on the night. And if you're organised, you can shop online saving a trip to the supermarket.

MAKE A CROCKERY INVENTORY

If you know beforehand how many serving plates you'll need for the night, there's less need for last-minute washing up or flimsy paper plates. You could even label the plates with post-its so you know what you plan to use each of them for.

KEEP AN EYE ON QUANTITIES

Canapés are not supposed to be a main meal so keep your purse (and your guests' waistlines) trim by sticking to six to eight canapés per person.

RENT EXTRA GLASSES

You might be inviting 20 guests but you'll need at least 60 glasses! Everyone loses track of their glasses at parties, so swap dishwashing for socializing and rent or buy extra glassware or buy oodles of recyclable plastic for less breakages.

THINK LIKE YOUR GUESTS

Dress your house in a way that will

most appeal to your guests but don't go overboard. Light candles, fill the air with cooking smells, and give them a comfy seat – yes! But, clean behind the fridge, scrub the bath, put out your best cutlery? No! While all hosts like their house to be spick and span, it's likely your guests won't see the odd cobweb or smudge in the sink, so don't break your back doing unnecessary jobs or endless housework that won't be noticed.

CREATE A BAR

Set out the drinks on a separate table so there's no need for people to constantly raid your fridge, or ask for top ups. This area is also good for other party essentials such as napkins, ice, and glasses.



"No party is complete without a little bubbly. We love Bach Extrisimo Semi-seco Cava £8.99, www.hattieswines.co.uk. It will go down a storm with guests and offers great value for money too..."



NO-COOK PARTY PIECES

TAKE THE HEAT OUT OF PREPARING FOR PARTIES WITH THESE MINIMALIST MUNCHIES THAT DON'T NEED COOKING

- 1** Top fresh young radicchio (chicory) leaves with cubes of soft, vegetarian blue cheese and sprinkle with chopped almonds.
- 2** Cut a slices of bread into shapes using cookie cutters and top with a dollop of hummus and a slice of radish, or finely grated celery.
- 3** Make mini strawberry cheesecakes in shot glasses by filling the bases with crumbled biscuit and layering with chopped strawberries and Greek yoghurt. Serve with teaspoons.
- 4** Thread mozzarella balls onto cocktail sticks with sundried tomatoes and basil leaves.
- 5** Stuff plump, dried apricots with soft cheese mixed with crumbled walnuts.
- 6** Why should kids get all the jelly? Make grown-up orange veggie jellies in small pots, with the addition of a swig or two of campari and, once set, top up with custard.
- 7** Mix 250ml seasoned sour cream with 2tbsp creamed horseradish sauce and serve with roasted beetroot crudités.
- 8** Cut watermelon slices out with shaped cookie cutters and dip in chilli powder mixed with a little lime. Push a cocktail stick into the base and display on an upturned, halved watermelon.
- 9** In a blender, combine cranberry juice with fresh raspberries and crème fraîche and pour into individual glasses. Refrigerate your quick 'mousses' for at least 2 hours before serving
- 10** Stuff cherry tomatoes with soft cheese with chives, and finely chopped cucumber.
- 11** In a bowl mix together condensed milk and coconut until you get a thick mixture and use your fingers to press into individual balls. Place onto a baking sheet and pop into the fridge for an hour, before dipping in melted chocolate.

MINCE PIES WITH BLUE CHEESE ICE CREAM



Makes 12

Ready in 45 mins

225g cold butter, diced
350g plain flour
100g golden caster sugar
1 small free-range egg
icing sugar, to dust
jar of traditional mincemeat
pinch of salt

For the ice cream

200g Castello Danish Blue
good quality vanilla ice cream

1 To make the pastry, rub 225g cold, diced butter into 350g plain flour, then mix in 100g golden caster sugar and a pinch of salt. Combine the pastry into a ball and knead it briefly.

2 Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/ Gas 6. Line your patty tin by

pressing small walnut-sized balls of pastry into each hole and then spoon the mincemeat into the pies.

3 Take slightly smaller balls of pastry than before and pat them out between your hands to make round lids, big enough to cover the pies. Top the pies with their lids, pressing the edges gently together to seal. Bake for 12 minutes, until golden.

4 For the cheat's blue cheese ice cream, put the blue cheese into the freezer for three hours until frozen. Put your shop bought ice cream into a mixing bowl and let it melt for five minutes. When soft and malleable, grate on the finest side of a cheese grater the blue cheese and start working it into the ice cream with a baking spatula until the cheese is running evenly through the vanilla ice cream.

5 Transfer into a freezer friendly dish or Tupperware box and refreeze over night. Spoon on top of the mince pies just before serving. Dust with icing sugar and enjoy!

PER SERVING: 83 CALS, 4.4G FAT

A BLUES
PAR

“Cheese is very versatile when used in cooking. For this canapé I made a flavoursome cheese ‘snow’ by freezing the cheese beforehand and then grating. Left to thaw the frozen cheese will return to its normal state so you can pop any leftovers on the cheese board.”

RONNIE MURRAY, HEAD PASTRY CHEF FOR HIX RESTAURANTS

BAKED LEEK TART WITH BLUE CHEESE



Makes 12
Ready in 40 mins

2 leeks
200g oyster mushrooms
100g Castello Creamy Blue
250ml double cream

1 free-range egg yolk
12 short crust pastry cases or
croustades
butter, for cooking

- 1 Cut the cheese, putting half in the freezer the night before use and the other in the fridge as normal.
- 2 Sweat the leeks in a pan with some butter until soft and silky, then add the mushrooms.
- 3 When cooked, add a splash of

double cream and melt chunks of the refrigerated cheese to the pan until thick and glossy. Season with black pepper. Leave to cool for five minutes.

4 Add the egg yolk and mix well. Spoon the warm mixture into the shortcrust pastry or croustades and bake for five minutes until the top just starts to colour. Take the frozen cheese and grate directly over the tart. Serve immediately.

PER SERVING: 83 CALS, 4.4G FAT

Discover how blue cheese can leap from your cheeseboard into some more creative New Year canapés

“My ‘cheat’s blue cheese’ ice cream takes the stress out of making it from scratch so there’s no excuse not to dress up an old classic. It’s a new twist on the classic mince pie”



ENTERTAINING MADE EASY

If you're in a rush, try this VBites VegiDeli party platter. Each pack contains 6 x Garlic & Herb Cheezly Bites, 6 x Bacon Cheezly Bites, 10 x Mini Bites with Blue Cheezly, and 10 x Mini Bites with Pepperjack Cheezly. (£3.49, most health food shops).

BARBER'S
1833
VINTAGE
RESERVE
CHEDDAR
A Barber

Experience
the taste...
& taste the
experience.

For 180 years, the Barber family has been making cheese in Somerset. The culmination of all this experience - Barber's 1833. Made using only traditional starter cultures and always matured for a minimum of 24 months to provide cheddar with powerful intensity and unrivalled complexity and depth of flavour.



ROSE



EXPLAINS...

How do you host your best ever New Year party?
Rose Elliott gives us her top tips

We have a favourite way of celebrating informally in my family; it's a crostini party! For easy party food that looks beautiful, tastes wonderful, and everybody loves, you can't beat crostini. We make a huge colourful, mouth-watering tray of them, put it in the centre of our sitting room, and we all gather around, help ourselves and drink Champagne! We love to do this to celebrate the New Year – well, any occasion, really.

Crostini are great fun to make. As I have three daughters, there is usually one or more of them staying with me with their family over Christmas and the New Year, and we enjoy sharing the party preparations. In fact, making the food is part of the celebration for us. I do the essential prepping; make the bases, prepare the topping ingredients, assemble the garnishes, then we all sit round the kitchen table chatting and laughing as we put it all together.

For the perfect crostini, you need a crisp base, a 'sticky' topping that you can arrange delicious morsels on – so that they don't slide off – and some pretty garnishes.

Making the crostini bases

You can buy crostini bases which saves time, but homemade ones are easy and delicious, and can be made well in advance. Slice a baguette – any width, but I prefer the slim ones – to end up with circles about 3-4cm across and about 6mm thick. Brush lightly on



both sides with olive oil or a tasteless oil such as grapeseed. Spread them out on baking sheets, and bake in a preheated oven 150C/300F/Gas 2, for about 20 minutes, or until they are golden and crisp. Cool on wire racks, then store in an airtight container for up to a week, or four weeks in a freezer. They only take a few minutes to defrost if you spread them out.

For the toppings

It's best to finish making the crostini no more than two hours in advance, so that the bases stay crisp. For us, preparing them is part of the fun, so we tend to assemble them just before we eat them. Just cover the top with a spread of your choice – something

red onion 'jam'. Top with thin slivers of hard rennet-free goat's cheese and a sprinkling of fresh thyme.

GUACAMOLE, CHERRY TOMATO AND CORIANDER

Mash ripe avocado with lemon juice, seasoning and a sprinkling of red chilli flakes – or use bought avocado dip. Top with halved cherry tomatoes and fresh coriander.

STILTON AND CRANBERRY

Spread with left-over vegetarian Stilton mashed with cream or cream cheese, a dash of brandy and plenty of pepper. Top with whole-berry cranberry sauce and a little flat-leaf parsley.

ROASTED PEPPER AND FETA

Spread with veggie pesto or hummus, top with roasted red and yellow pepper strips – homemade or from the deli – then top with crumbled feta cheese.

PESTO AND ARTICHOKE HEART

Spread with veggie pesto, top with artichoke hearts (from a jar, or the deli) and garnish with fresh basil.

GOAT'S CHEESE AND ASPARAGUS

Spread with soft smooth vegetarian goat's cheese, top with a cooked asparagus spear, coarsely-ground black pepper and a tiny swirl of green olive oil.

ROASTED AUBERGINE WITH TAHINI AND PINE NUTS

Chop aubergine, roast in olive oil and cool. Mix with a little tahini, lemon juice, salt and pepper, pile up on the crostini and top with roasted pine nuts. Enjoy, and have a wonderful party season, and a happy New Year.

Here are some of our favourite crostini:

HUMMUS, BLACK OLIVE AND CORIANDER

Spread with thick layer of hummus, top with a few pitted black olives and fresh coriander leaves.

RED ONION AND GOAT'S CHEESE

Very slowly fry chopped red onion in olive oil with a dash of red wine vinegar, sugar and sherry for 30 minutes, until sticky and jammy – or use a jar of

COCONUT manna -isms

man-na /'manə/ noun
(in the Bible) The substance miraculously supplied as food to the Israelites in the wilderness (Exod. 16). An unexpected or gratuitous benefit: "the cakes were manna from heaven".



1 Assumes the identity of butter. Spread it straight on a cracker or toast.

2

Can take the place of starchy sauce thickeners, for a healthier, smooth thick superfood sauce or soup!

3

For BPA-free coconut milk, just add water!

4

Use in desserts as a natural sweetener and sugar replacement.

6

Did we say dessert? Eat a spoon straight from the jar for a sweet sensation and satiation.

7

Use in desserts for a dairy-free alternative

5

Bind your home-made granola with manna - beats the sugary syrup in the shop-bought product.

8

Manna-isms don't stop in the kitchen, use it in the bathroom place of your body butter. Straight up, or add your favourite essential oils for a nourishing skin treat that really is good enough to eat.



WorldMags.net

IN SEASON

Savour veggie produce...

ENJOY THE ABUNDANCE...

3 WAYS WITH... SHALLOTS

1 PANZANELLA Make croutons cutting stale bread into bite-sized pieces, placing on an oven tray, dousing with little oil and seasoning before baking for a couple of minutes until toasted. Mix with sliced shallots and diced cucumbers, tomatoes and peppers. Tear in a few basil leaves, dress with oil and vinegar and toss.

2 CHEESE DIP Mix together 30g deep-fried crispy shallots,

200g vegetarian cream cheese, 2 tbsp crème fraîche, 1 tbsp lemon juice and plenty of salt and pepper. Serve with a selection of crudités. To deep-fry shallots, peel the shallots, slice into rings and fry in batches in hot vegetable oil until golden brown. Drain on kitchen paper.

3 ROASTED CARROTS Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6. In a roasting tin, toss 500g Chantenay carrots and 12 shallots (peeled

and cut in half) in 2 tbsp olive oil to coat them and roast them in the oven for 10 minutes. Remove from the oven and add 2 tsp honey and 2 tsp sesame seeds and again toss to coat the vegetables. Roast for another 10 minutes after which the veg should be glazed.

WHAT'S IN SEASON IN JANUARY

apples
beetroot
blood oranges
Brussels sprouts
carrots
cauliflower
celeriac
celery
chicory
clementines
forced rhubarb
Jerusalem artichoke
kale
kiwifruit
leeks
lemon
parsnips
passionfruit
pears
pineapple
pomegranate
potatoes
satsumas
Seville oranges
shallots
swede
tangerines
turnips
walnuts
winter cabbage





"This vegan soup is just the thing to return to after a day of braving the elements, plus cauliflowers are in season, so are tasting their best right now!"

HOW TO SELECT THE BEST...

BETROOT

When you're in the supermarket, look for firm and hard beetroot that has a smooth skin. If the skin is wrinkly, it's past its best. If you can, find beetroot that still has its leaves attached – these should be vibrant green in colour. Yellow or wilted leaves means the veg has been on the shelves too long.

If you come across beetroot with its roots intact, go for those. While you can happily eat beetroot with damaged roots, it won't store nearly as well. And when it comes to size, smaller is better as it's usually the diddy ones that taste sweeter. For delicious recipe suggestions, visit www.cookveg.co.uk and search for 'beetroot'.



BUY LOCAL!

Looking for a last minute gift? Buy British with Northumberland Cheese Company's Festive Hamper (£50, www.northumberland-cheese.co.uk).

It's packed full of fantastic UK produce including Belvoir Spiced Winter Berries Cordial, Santa's Special Chutney, The Fine Cheese Company Quince Fruit, Rosemary Biscuits, Miller's Damsels Charcoal Handbaked Wafers and four of Northumberland Cheese's gorgeous fromages including *Cook Veg* favourite – the Oak Smoked wedge.



CREAMY CAULIFLOWER SOUP



Serves 4

Ready in 30 mins

1 medium sized cauliflower (chopped into florets)
 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
 2 pinches of saffron
 ½ lt vegan vegetable stock
 250ml Alpro Almond Unsweetened alternative to milk
 zest of an unwaxed lemon
 4 tbsp ground almonds
 plenty of black pepper
 1 tbsp good quality extra virgin olive oil

1 Add the cauliflower florets to a saucepan along with a pinch of saffron, garlic and vegetable stock, keeping a couple of tiny florets aside to use as a garnish. Gently simmer for 20 minutes, until the cauliflower has softened

2 Add the ground almonds, lemon zest and Alpro Almond Unsweetened. Use a blender or liquidiser to blitz until smooth (or to preferred texture)

3 Add a little of the olive oil to a pan along with the remaining cauliflower florets and saffron. Fry until tinged golden brown

4 Serve the soup chilled or hot, garnishing with the florets, a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil and a good grind of black pepper (season to taste).

PER SERVING: 82 CALS, 5.16 FAT

HOW TO USE UP... PARSNIPS



■ Peel and cut 750g parsnips into chips. Boil for 2 mins, drain and return to pan with 3 tbsp sunflower oil. Shake with 1 tbsp plain flour, 2 tsp flour and a pinch of cayenne pepper. Preheat a roasting tin (220C/425F/Gas 7) and roast the parsnips in it for 25-30 mins.

■ Sauté 1 sliced onion in oil for 10 mins. Oil a baking dish and add half the onion, half 750g peeled and sliced parsnips, 1 tsp chopped thyme, 50g grated Cheddar and season. Top with the remaining onions and parsnips and pour over 250ml veg stock. Sprinkle over 100g cheese and bake with foil on for 30 mins, remove and bake for another 20 mins.

■ Sauté 1 chopped onion. Trim and dice 750g parsnips and add with 1 crushed garlic clove, 2cm ginger (chopped) and cook for 2 mins. Add 1.2lt veg stock, bring to boil and simmer for 25 mins until the parsnips are tender. Blitz.

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Wheatgerm oil - The healthiest "germ" you will ever put on your skin, it's soothing anti-oxidants can help to reduce the appearance of wrinkles.

Chia oil - Allow water and nutrients in, while keeping toxins out and protecting against signs of ageing.

Rosemary Oil - Can improve circulation, and help combat age-related skin damage.

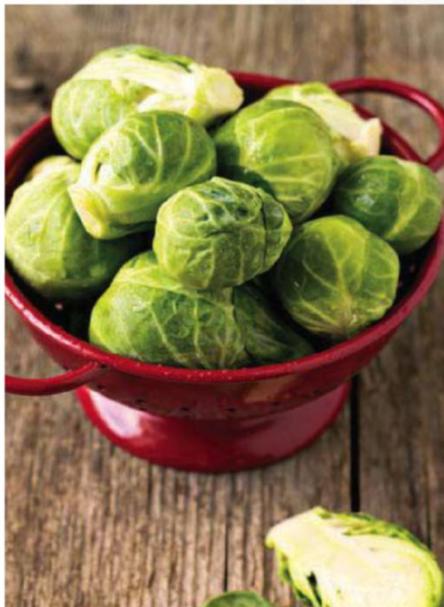
CELLIGENT®

Most of this range contains a unique stem cell blend called CELLIGENT®, this ingredient has been specially developed to treat UV stressed skin, helping to regenerate dead or damaged skin cells by neutralising free radicals which can cause damage to skin cells.



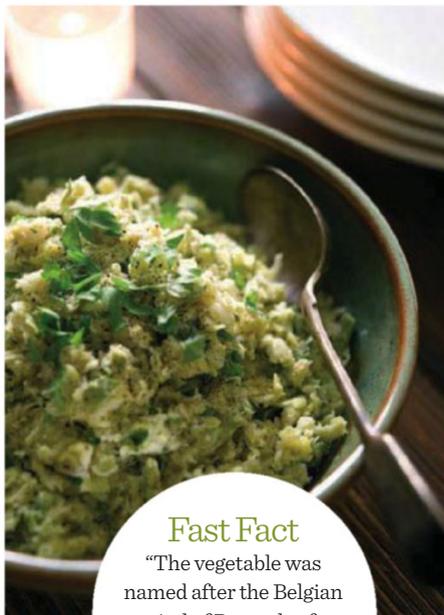
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SHOWCASING SPROUTS

At last it's time to enjoy the delicious taste of the British sprout. Find this winter classic in your veg box today and get cooking!



CREAMED BRUSSEL SPOUTS WITH NUTMEG



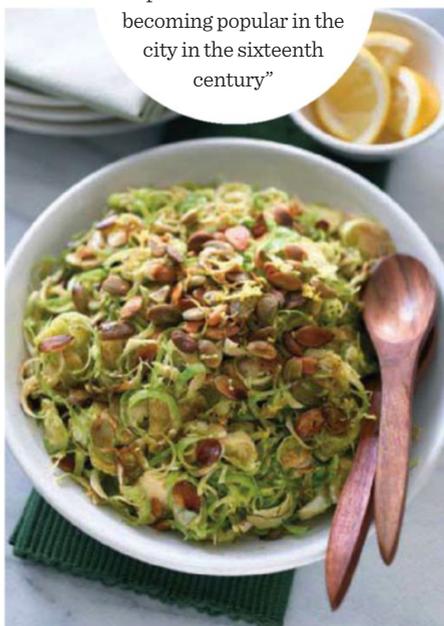
Serves 4
Ready in 30 mins

450g fresh sprouts, outer leaves and ends of stalks removed
30g butter
100ml double cream
1 tsp grated nutmeg
small bunch fresh parsley roughly chopped
black pepper

- 1** In a pan of boiling water, simmer the sprouts for 8-10 minutes until just done. Drain then tip into a food processor.
 - 2** Add the butter, cream, nutmeg and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the parsley and season to taste. Whiz till semi smooth so it still has some texture.
 - 3** Check the seasoning then spoon into a warm serving dish and scatter with the remaining parsley and a good grind of black pepper.
- PER SERVING: 709 CALS, 48.3G FAT**

Fast Fact

"The vegetable was named after the Belgian capital of Brussels after becoming popular in the city in the sixteenth century"



CRUNCHY SPROUT SALAD WITH PUMPKIN SEEDS AND BALSAMIC VINEGAR



Serves 4-6
Ready in 10 mins

450g Brussels sprouts
3 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
zest of 1 lemon
50g pumpkin seeds

- 1** Finely shred the sprouts using a grater, knife or mandolin.
 - 2** In a small bowl, combine the oil, balsamic vinegar and lemon zest and season to taste.
 - 3** In a frying pan, toast the pumpkin seeds until browned. In a serving bowl combine the shredded sprouts with the dressing and half the seeds mixing well then scatter over the remaining seeds.
- PER SERVING: 122 CALS, 8.8G FAT**

"When shopping for sprouts, you want to look for a firm sprout with a white bottom; this indicates freshness"



The man who grows... SPROUTS

Sprouts are without doubt one of the hardest crops to grow, says Matt Rawson from Love Your Greens

I grow 17 varieties, but I'm always trialing new ones. In total there are over 40 commercial varieties and hundreds are in development, but 90% will never become commercial because they are hard to develop. Sprouts can get lots of diseases if you are not careful with your planning, and pests like pigeons, slugs, aphids and caterpillars like to eat them because they are so tasty. But even when you have dealt with those problems, you can't control the weather. If it's too hot and dry they don't grow, if it's too wet like last year they don't grow. They are not easy to work with.

When to buy?

We produce sprouts in the UK from early August until early April, using a range of plants, geographical locations and soil types. Different times of the year coupled with varieties make for different tasting sprouts. Early crops pre-frost are so nutty tasting and mid season and Christmas crops make more flavourful crops. February onward crops get a really sweet taste.

When shopping for sprouts, you want to be looking for a firm sprout with a white bottom; this indicates freshness. Of course you should also look at the label too to see if it's a UK crop to support us guys, we work very hard and to strict quality guidelines.

The sprout is so versatile, we grade them into different sizes and market them in different sized packs and ways, i.e. babies, prepacked and loose, and increasingly prepared and on the stalk. They all lend themselves to different cooking ways and there is a sprout size to suit all families' needs.

It depends on the time of year, but I always enjoy baby sprouts just boiled for a couple of minutes then onto the plate. I love adding large sprouts into stir-fries and coleslaws, prepacked sprouts are great with any meal, particularly roasts. To make them a bit more exciting I add garlic. My other top tip is don't put a cross in their bottoms, it only makes them soggy and lose flavour.



Fast Fact

"Brussels sprouts are a cultivator of Brassica, the same species that includes cabbage, cauliflower, and broccoli"

BRUSSELS SPROUT & POTATO CROQUETTES



Serves 4

Ready in 30 mins

200g Brussels sprouts, trimmed and sliced
500g potatoes, cooked and crushed
1 free-range egg, beaten
50g plain flour
100g seasoned breadcrumbs, finely ground
300ml vegetable oil
200g tin chopped tomatoes
small bunch of coriander, chopped
1 tsp vegetarian Worcestershire sauce
1 shallot, finely sliced

- 1 Drop the sprouts into boiling water and blanch for 2-3 minutes. Drain and refresh with cold water. Combine with the potato, mashing them together with a fork. Season well and form the mixture into 12 croquettes.
- 2 Place the egg in a bowl, the flour on a plate and the breadcrumbs on a second plate. Dip each croquette into the flour first, to coat, then the egg and lastly the breadcrumbs. Make sure each is fully covered. Chill in the fridge for 30 minutes, or up to 24 hours.
- 3 To make the dip combine the tomatoes, coriander, vegetarian Worcestershire sauce and shallot, season and set aside.
- 4 Pour the oil into a large, deep frying pan, to a depth of about 4cm, and place over a medium-high heat. Fry the croquettes until golden all over for a total of five minutes – you may need to do this in two batches to avoid overcrowding the pan. Drain on kitchen paper and serve immediately with the dip.

PER SERVING: 202 CALS, 13.3G FAT

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THE CONTENTED COOK

The New Year can feel a bit dull and chilly, but us cooks have plenty to celebrate. Here are Xanthe Clay's January reasons to be cheerful



First off, January King cabbage has glorious dusky pink and green outer leaves and is my favourite cabbage of all, with a sweet nuttiness. Try cooking the sliced leaves slowly in olive oil with a spoonful of lightly crushed coriander seed.

Then there is forced rhubarb, a shocking pink that brightens the darkest day. The best is grown in Yorkshire's Rhubarb triangle – the Dutch variety comes earlier but is sprayed with the hormone gibberellic acid to speed growth. Hold out for the real stuff I say.

Last but not least, blood oranges are at their prime right now – look for Sicilian fruit, the ones wrapped in bright printed tissue paper. Skinned segments of the vibrant carmine stained orange flesh are gorgeous stirred through a bowl of poached rhubarb.

But they aren't just for sweet dishes: slices of peeled blood orange make a brilliantly fresh winter salad with ivory slices cut from the long tusks of mooli radish and a few pitted black and green olives. No need for oil: just squeeze over a bit more orange juice. Perfect to wake sleepy January palates.

CELERIAC, HAZELNUT AND TAHINI REMOULADE



Serves 8

Ready in 1 hr 20 mins

50g unsalted butter

2 apples and 2 pears, peeled, halved and cored

100g quince cheese or membrillo

100g caster sugar

225g all-butter pastry



“Hunt out a Middle Eastern type tahini – Syrian say, or Lebanese – which will have the right silky smoothness. Should there be any wild nuts – cobnuts, filberts or tiny beechnuts – to be had, use them instead of the hazelnuts. Remoulade is great with cold leftovers”

1 Put a pan of salted water on to boil. Slice the tough outer layer of the celeriac and cut it into slices 3mm thick. Pile up the slices a few at a time and slice again to make matchsticks.

Transfer to a bowl of cold water.

2 Drop the celeriac into the boiling water and allow the water to come back to a rolling boil, by which time the celeriac should be just about tender. Drain well and stir through the oil and a pinch of salt while still warm. Leave to cool a

little, then mix in the tahini and lemon juice. The tahini will stiffen, so add enough water (3-4 tablespoons) to make a coating consistency.

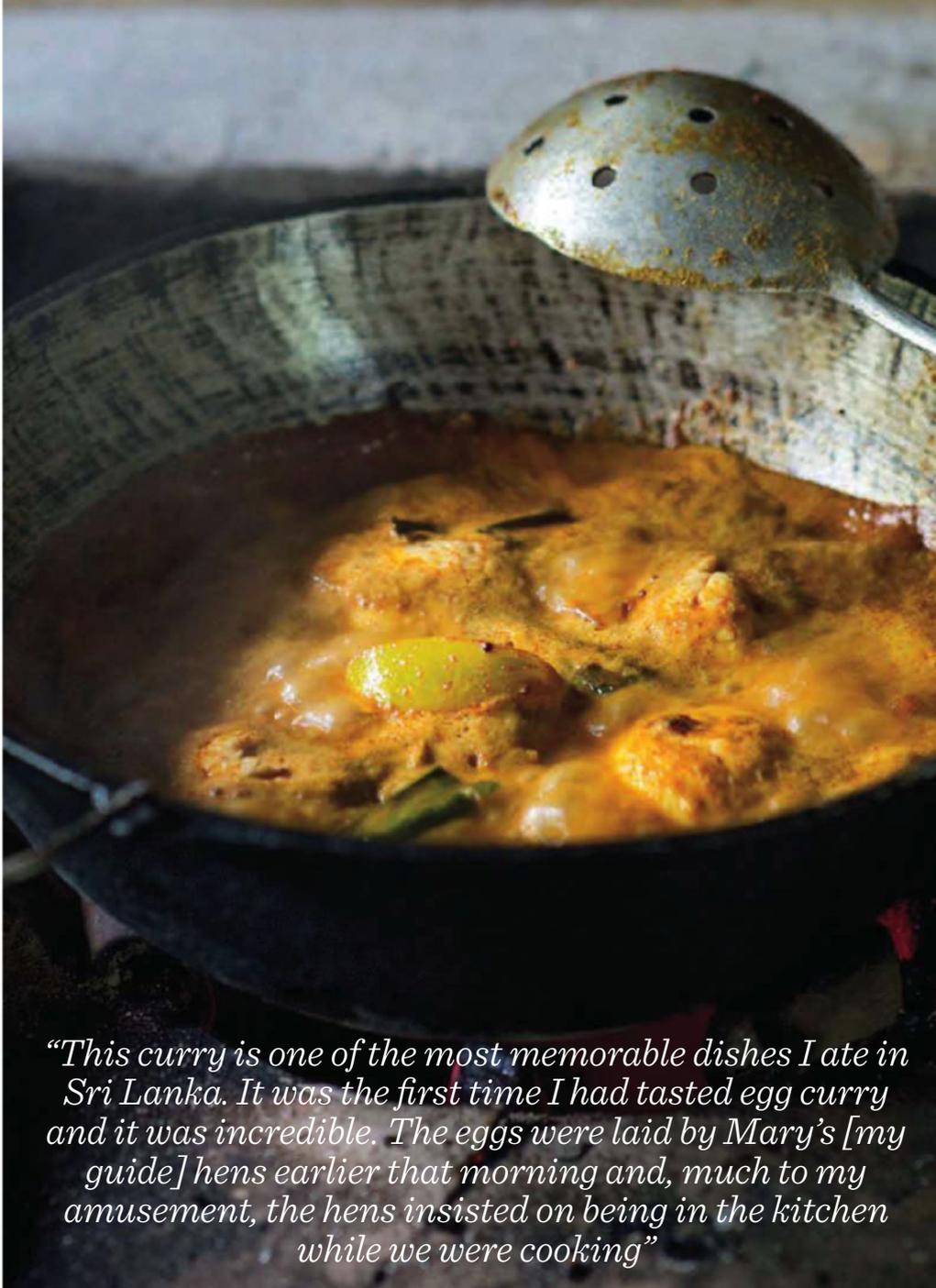
3 Mix with parsley and hazelnuts. Taste and check the seasoning.

PER SERVING: 256 CALS, 23.66 FAT

Recipe taken from Xanthe Clay's *The Contented Cook** (£19.99, Kyle Books). Photography by Tara Fisher.

HIDDEN KITCHENS OF SRI LANKA

Discover how to make recipes that have travelled all the way from Sri Lanka, says food writer Bree Hutchin



BOILED EGG CURRY



Serves 4-6, as a side curry
Ready in 45 mins

6 free-range organic eggs
185ml coconut oil, plus 1 tbsp extra
½ red onion, sliced
2 garlic cloves, ground into a paste
1-2 thin green chillies, cut into thirds
16cm piece rampe (pandanus) leaf, cut into 2cm pieces
2 small to medium vine-ripened tomatoes, cut into quarters, then small wedges
1 tsp roasted curry powder
1 tsp ground turmeric
1 tsp unroasted chilli powder
1 tsp salt, dissolved in a little warm water
¾ tsp black mustard seeds
¾ tsp fenugreek seeds
250ml coconut cream
salt, to taste

1 Boil the eggs for 10-12 minutes, or until hard-boiled, then drain and refresh in cold water. Carefully peel the eggs and then prick each egg two or three times with a fork (this allows the flavours of the curry to be absorbed).

2 Heat the coconut oil in a small wok over a medium-high heat and shallow-fry the eggs, spooning them with the oil and turning them over, so both sides are just starting to turn dark golden. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towel. Drain off the oil left in the wok, then return the wok to the stove.

3 Heat the extra coconut oil in the wok over a medium heat. Add the onion, garlic paste, chillies, rampe and tomatoes. Stir well and cook for five minutes, or until the onions have softened. Add the curry powder, turmeric, chilli powder, salty water, mustard seeds and fenugreek seeds. Mix well and cook for two minutes. Add the coconut cream and stir to combine, then add the eggs. Bring almost to the boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Taste and season with salt if needed. Serve with a main curry and with rice.

PER SERVING: 500 CALS, 12.6G FAT

“This curry is one of the most memorable dishes I ate in Sri Lanka. It was the first time I had tasted egg curry and it was incredible. The eggs were laid by Mary’s [my guide] hens earlier that morning and, much to my amusement, the hens insisted on being in the kitchen while we were cooking”

PUMPKIN CURRY



Serves 4-6

Ready in 45 mins

750g Jap pumpkin, seeded and cut into 5-6 cm (2 inch) pieces (skin left on)

4 small pink Asian shallots, sliced
2 thin green chillies, cut into thirds

1 sprig curry leaves, leaves picked and roughly chopped

8cm piece rampe (pandanus) leaf, cut into 2cm pieces

1 tsp unroasted chilli powder

1 tsp ground turmeric

½ tsp fenugreek seeds

1 ½ tsp roasted curry powder

1 tsp salt

500ml coconut milk

250ml coconut cream

For the tempering

2 tbsp coconut oil

1 tsp black mustard seeds

2 small pink Asian shallots, sliced

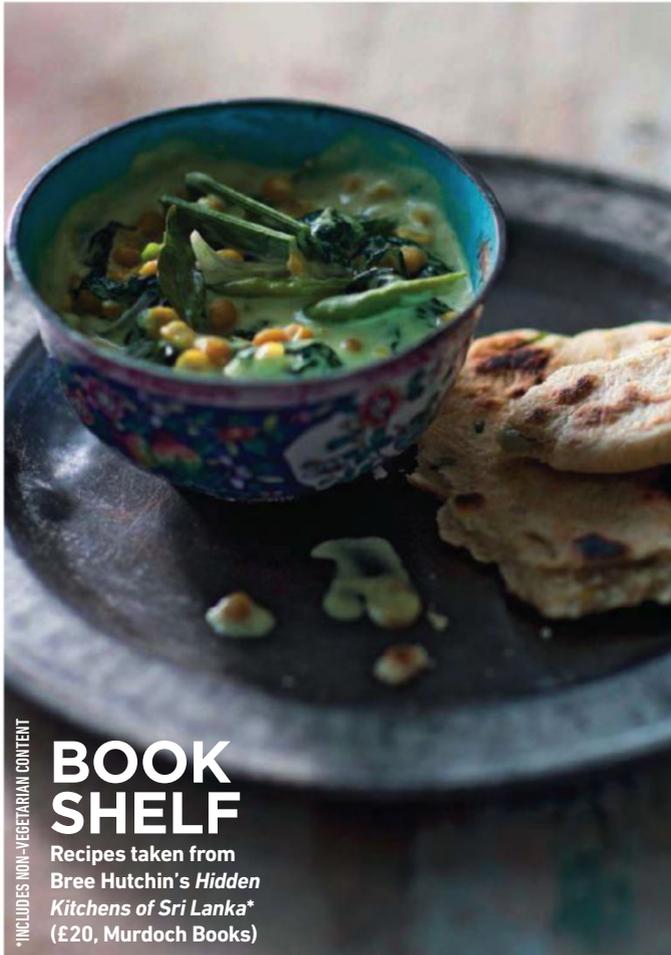
1 sprig curry leaves, leaves picked

1 To make the curry, place the pumpkin into a clay pot or heavy-based saucepan, add the rest of the curry ingredients and mix to combine. There should be just enough coconut milk and cream to cover the pumpkin pieces.

2 Bring to the boil, then cover, reduce the heat to low and simmer for 10-12 minutes, or until the pumpkin is tender, stirring the curry occasionally so the coconut milk does not split. Remove from the heat and set aside.

3 For tempering, heat the coconut oil in a small wok or frying pan over medium heat and add the mustard seeds. When the seeds start to pop, add the shallots and curry leaves and cook for 3-5 minutes, or until the shallots are dark brown and starting to crisp a little. Remove from the heat and strain through a sieve. Stir half of the tempered mixture into the curry and garnish with the remaining mixture. Serve with pol roti and rice.

PER SERVING: 337 CALS, 31.66 FAT



SPINACH WITH DHAL



Serves 4

Ready in 1hr

250g English spinach

150g chana dhal, soaked in water for 4 hrs

¾ tsp ground turmeric

1 tbsp coconut oil

1 tsp salt, dissolved in 60 ml warm water

2 garlic cloves, ground into a paste

1 red onion, sliced

2-3 thin green chillies, cut in half, on the diagonal

12cm piece rampe (pandanus) leaf, cut into 3cm pieces

1 sprig curry leaves, leaves picked

250ml coconut cream

salt, to taste

1 Wash the spinach, then cut the stems into 2cm (¾ in) pieces and tear the leaves into smaller pieces. Drain the soaked dhal, then rinse and drain again. Put the dhal, 500ml water and the turmeric in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Cover, reduce the heat to low and simmer for 30-40 minutes, or until the dhal is cooked and the water has been absorbed. Set aside.

2 Heat the coconut oil in a large wok over medium heat, and add the spinach and salty water. Add the garlic paste, onion, chillies, rampe and curry leaves; cook for five minutes, or until the onion has softened. Stir in the dhal and cook for two minutes. Pour in the coconut cream and simmer over a low heat for five minutes, stirring regularly so the coconut cream does not split. Taste and season with salt if needed. Serve with pol roti.

PER SERVING: 397 CALS, 26.26 FAT

10 fresh uses for Coconut Oil

The amazing properties of the coconut know no bounds...

1 Cooking



Organic Raw Coconut Oil is fabulous to replace butter and olive oil in everyday recipes.

Try it for yourself on your Sunday roast potatoes, or as part of this delicious **Coconut Curry**, rich in healthy fatty acids and a number of phytonutrient-rich spices.

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons Organic Raw Coconut Oil
- 1 can of coconut milk
- 1 tsp chopped garlic
- 2 pinches of sea salt
- 4 large potatoes, peeled and chopped
- ½ large cauliflower, chopped
- 2 large courgettes, chopped
- 2 tablespoons curry powder
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg
- ½ tsp ground ginger

Method:

Combine curry powder, cumin, nutmeg and ginger in a bowl. Steam potatoes for twenty minutes; add cauliflower for the last five minutes. Heat coconut oil in a large saucepan. Add garlic and courgettes. Cook until courgettes soften a little. Add steamed potatoes and cauliflower to the saucepan. Add coconut milk. Stir in the spices and sea salt until spices are fully incorporated. Enjoy this rich and delicious coconut curry with rice or quinoa. Serves 4.

2 Sports nutrition

Organic Raw Coconut Oil is becoming increasingly popular in sports nutrition, as a source of medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs).

3 Stretch mark prevention

Organic Raw Coconut Oil can help with the appearance of stretch marks and can help prevent premature ageing of the skin. Coconut oil absorbs very readily into the skin and keeps it soft but not greasy. It can be used as an all-over body moisturiser.



4 Lip balm

Protect your lips from winter chapping by rubbing a little Organic Raw Coconut Oil into them.



5 Acne

Organic Raw Coconut Oil can be used as a skin moisturiser by people suffering from acne because coconut oil is naturally small in molecular structure which allows for easy absorption through the skin without blocking pores.

6 After shave

An ideal post-shave soothing balm. Organic Raw Coconut Oil is also a great natural skin moisturiser. Suitable for face, legs, armpits and sensitive areas.



7 Nappy balm

Organic Raw Coconut Oil creates a water-repellent barrier. The natural moisturising properties of coconut oil are perfect for baby's bottom.



8 Hair and scalp rejuvenation

Organic Raw Coconut Oil is wonderful to use as a hair conditioner as it softens the hair and conditions the scalp, leaving it smooth and frizz-free. Using the oil as a pre-wash conditioner can help combat dandruff. Coconut oil is famous for its ability to strengthen the structure of damaged, devitalised hair.

9 Body scrub

Add a little sea salt and your favourite essential oil into some Organic Raw Coconut Oil and you have a natural body scrub that will exfoliate and moisturise at the same time.

10 Make-up remover



Organic Raw Coconut Oil is an excellent make-up remover because it moisturises at the same time. Powerful at removing stubborn eye make-up such as eyeliner and mascara.

100% Organic Raw Coconut Oil
Simply the freshest, most fragrant and delicious coconut oil

For your nearest specialist health store visit viridian-nutrition.com

TIM MADDAMS

Eats the Seasons

The ex River Cottage chef reveals why we should all be hailing the kale this month



It's no secret that kale has grown massively in popularity from its position as animal fodder some 15 years ago. And rightly so; its rich and irony flavour with those bittersweet undertones makes it somehow the perfect thing to eat.

It kind of begs you to get stuck in. Kale is resplendent in its glory and, what's more, right now it's trendy too, with even the most 'now' chefs placing it on their menus with pride. So, there's no reason not to get excited about a nice bit of kale.

Pick and mix

One of the best things about kale is that there's such a tremendous variety for you to choose from. They're all out there vying for your attention; almost screaming at you to pick them. I would urge you to give them all a try and see if you can get to know their mildly differing characters. I often like to use more than one variety together in the same dish, to give a little extra depth and complexity to something otherwise simple in nature.

If I'm honest, I can't really think of a dish that won't work with kale. Without being silly about it I think that, despite its fancy, colourful looks, it's a real stalwart of the kitchen; a great workaday veg that has the flavour to stand up to most treatments.

I love to cook kale down slowly with lentils and use this to fill pasties, but the same mixture can be diverted down the hearty curry route in no time at

all with the simple addition of some great spices. Kale loves garlic and I rarely cook the leaf without it, but if you want to sauce things up a little, allow it a complex love life with two partners. Both garlic and mushrooms when combined with kale have a sum greater than their component parts and have an effect like few others. If you're able to lay your hands on a few dried or fresh wild mushrooms, so much the better: the trio is literally one of the most savoury combinations I've ever tried. Served up with some nice celeriac and potato mash, there's little in the world to rival it in terms of hearty winter dishes.

If, however, you fancy a bit of the lighter side of life, then you can easily go the other way. Some quickly blanched, very fresh, sweet, green kale drizzled with a little olive oil and given some salt and pepper is a treat that frankly works with pretty much anything, or even on its own.

And finally...

Don't forget, though, that using the stalks is a must. They're much tougher than the leaf you will have stripped them from and so will need different handling. If you're going for a straightforward blanch-and-go effect, then pop in some stalk a few minutes before you drop in the leaf, giving it time to soften up and release a little sweetness before you take it all out and dress it. But, if you're opting for something slow-cooked you can sweat off the chopped stalks with some garlic and oil before you start the greens on the same journey.

THREE SEASONAL IDEAS

1 KALE AND MUSHROOM RAGOUT

Wash and destalk your kale. Place the chopped stalks and some thickly sliced large flat mushrooms in a casserole pan along with a hearty glug of good oil and plenty of chopped garlic. Let them sweat off together until the mushrooms have given up their moisture and the whole thing is smelling great. Add salt and pepper and glass of veggie red wine and after a few more minutes cooking, add the kale leaf and put the

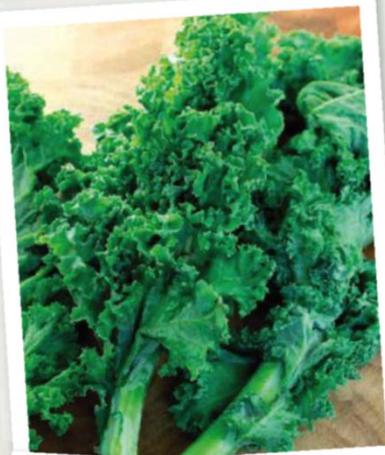
lid on the pan so it steams in all those flavoursome juices. Once wilted, stir in a little butter and serve with mash or polenta if you prefer.

2 KALE RISOTTO

This is as simple as it sounds, but get the chopped up stalks in there with the onion at the start and shred the kale to add at the last minute with the butter. Make sure the veg stock is worthy of your attention. Allow the risotto to rest for a few minutes before serving, to allow everything to come together properly.

3 KALE AND LENTIL CURRY

Start with your spices, onions and garlic in the pan along with the chopped up stalks. Add your raw but well-washed lentils and cook for a while to get the flavour really going. Add a tin of blitzed tomatoes, then add your veg stock and cover to cook as slowly as you like. Once it nears completion, add the kale and let this really cook out so the flavour is sweet and intense. If you've shown restraint, any that you have left over will make amazing pasties!





VOTING OPENS!

Make your voice heard by letting us know your heroes of vegetarianism. Everyone who votes will be entered into a draw to win over £500 worth of prizes!

THE AWARDS SO FAR...

The Cook Vegetarian Awards is in its fifth year now and is your chance to tell the food industry how you feel about the fare that's on offer to you, as well as your favourite meat-free cookbooks, restaurants and veggie celebrities.

This year, we threw the nominations over to you, our readers, and we were pleasantly surprised to see what you've picked so far. On the right are your nominations so now is the time for us to whittle them down to the prestigious winners.

THE PRIZE

And if making your voice heard wasn't enough, we're also entering everyone's vote into a prize draw for **two amazing kitchenware sets** from cooking experts **Stellar**, worth over **£500 each!**

In the set you'll find an incredible Stellar Stand Mix. With its classic styling in chrome, a powerful 650W motor and six-speed setting, this baking assistant has been engineered to last.

You'll also receive the Stellar 3000 wok which is manufactured in aluminium offering superb heat transference meaning faster cooking time and lower energy consumption. The comfy-grip handles stay cool during cooking and are oven safe up to 180C/350F/Gas 4.

Finally, you'll get the Stellar Colourtone knife set which comes complete with five of Stellar's most popular knives and the clever block which allows you to replace the blades wherever you like! With a soft-grip two-tone handle, matching non-stick steel cutting blade, this coloured collection of knives marries practicality and style.

AND FINALLY

Let's give the vegetarian and vegan community a voice by letting us know your favourite foods, products and resources, because it's good to make them aware when they're doing right by us, and give other companies a standard to strive for. Only then we will be as well catered for as meat eaters. So, get involved in the industry's most important veggie awards today!



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 Viridian
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BEST VEGETARIAN WEBSITE

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 (www.bbcgoodfood.com)
 Cook Vegetarian
 (www.cookveg.co.uk)
 Veggie Runners
 (www.veggierunners.co.uk)
 Vegetarian Society
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BEST VEGETARIAN COOKBOOK

- River Cottage Veg Every Day* by Hugh Fearnley Whittingstall
 Plenty by Yotam Ottolenghi
 Prashad Cookbook: Indian Vegetarian Cooking by Kaushy Patel
 Rose Elliot's New Complete Vegetarian
 Tibits at Home: Stylish Vegetarian Cooking by Christian Frei and Rolf Hitt
 Other _____

BEST VEGETARIAN RESTAURANT

- Bistro 1847, Manchester and Birmingham
 Greens, Manchester
 Hendersons of Edinburgh

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TERMS & CONDITIONS: All entries will be entered into the prize draw which is open to all UK residents aged 18 or over, excluding employees or agents of the associated companies and their families. Only one entry per person. The prize is two Stellar kitchenware sets worth £502 each set as shown and cannot be exchanged for cash, or replaced with any other item. Entries must be on the coupon or online form provided (no purchase necessary). Illegible entries and those that do not abide by these terms and conditions will be disqualified. No responsibility will be held for entries lost, delayed or damaged.

All entries become the property of Aceville Publications Ltd. Entries will be selected at random within one week of the closing date. No correspondence will be entered into. **CLOSING DATE:** 23rd Jan 2014. Winner will be notified by post, phone or email. The winner's name will be available in writing on request from Chloe Hunt, 21/23 Phoenix Court, Hawkins Road, Colchester, Essex CO2 8JY. This prize draw is only available through Cook Veg magazine or www.cookveg.co.uk/awards. Your details will be processed by Aceville Publications Ltd, (publishers of Cook Vegetarian magazine) in full accordance with data protection legislation. Aceville Publications Ltd and sister companies may wish to contact you with information of other services and publications we provide which may be of interest. Please tick here if you DO NOT wish to receive such information by Post Phone Email SMS . From time to time Aceville Publications Ltd will share details with other reputable companies who provide products and services that may be of interest to you. Please tick here if you DO NOT wish to receive such information by Post Phone Email SMS





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Serves 4

Ready in 45 mins

300g Quorn Chicken Style Pieces

2 tbsp tikka paste

1 tbsp ground coriander

1 tbsp ground cumin

1 tbsp turmeric

1 tsp chilli powder

150ml natural yoghurt

1 tbsp tomato purée

2 garlic cloves, crushed

1 tbsp vegetable oil

1 onion, chopped

400ml vegetable stock

1 sweet potato, peeled and cut into approx 1cm cubes

100g baby spinach leaves
coriander leaves, to garnish

1 Combine the marinade ingredients and stir in the Quorn pieces. Leave to marinate for at least 30 minutes or overnight.

2 Heat the oil and sauté the onion for 2-3 minutes until soft. Add the Quorn pieces to the marinade and cook for five minutes, stirring, to cook the spices.

3 Gradually add the stock, then the sweet potato, bring to the boil then simmer, covered, for 15 minutes or until the sweet potato is tender. Add the spinach and stir until wilted. Check the seasoning and garnish with fresh coriander. Serve with brown rice and mango chutney.

PER SERVING: 233 CALS, 8.3G FAT

DELICIOUS
MID-WEEK
CURRY!

FIND THIS
RECIPE AND
650
MORE AT
COOKVEG.CO.UK



“Now the party season is upon us, why not try making these Carrot and Cumin Pancake Canapés? The bite-size pieces are perfect for buffets and dinner parties – make them tonight!”

THE BEST OF ONLINE

WE ASKED... HOW MANY OF YOU WARM YOUR PLATES, AND IF SO, IN WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES?

Only for
guests!

LFLEET

If it's hot food, it *has* to be hot plates. Get miffed in restaurants if they aren't; I like to savour food and need it to stay hot.

JACQUELINE PYE

Generally don't bother for myself unless the oven is already on, but always for guests. Cold plates mean food goes cold quick – horrid!

CABBAGEPATCHCAT

Yep I always warm my plates ready for hot food – old hospitality habits die hard!

VEGSOUP4THESOUL

Every time. I cook I put the double oven on and put the plates in the top bit while cooking food in the bottom bit.

JOE BLOG



GARLIC IN A FLASH!

Over the festive period you might be in a real rush to get everything done. To ease mid-week cooking how about using this pre-chopped Smoked Chopped Garlic from Very Lazy? (£1.78, Tesco). It can be used in everything from veggie lasagne to speedy stir-fries. It can also really spice up roasted potatoes, carrots and parsnips. With this instant flavour booster, it's time to give your veggies a garlicky kick over the winter months.



ASK ALEX:

ALEX IS THE PRINCIPAL TUTOR AT THE VEGETARIAN SOCIETY'S CORDON VERT COOKERY SCHOOL, FIND OUT MORE AT WWW.CORDONVERT.CO.UK

Q This month, I want to make some new year foodie resolutions, what's your advice?

The months following winter offer the ideal time to take stock of your diet, rewrite your shopping list, clean out your larder, and take a good look at the food you eat figure out how not to waste so much and hopefully save you time.

Plan your meals before you go shopping so that you can mix and match ingredients to avoid wasting leftovers. Make a list to help you avoid impulse buys. Avoid pre-prepared food including ready meals, biscuits, sweets and even pre-chopped vegetables and fruits can all bump up the cost of your shopping. Shopping seasonally and locally can work out cheaper as transportation costs are much lower not to mention the reduction of air miles.

Look out for special offers to buy in bulk. Avoid buying fresh produce in large quantity as they have a short shelf life. Fruit and vegetables can sometimes be expensive but if you shop carefully there's no reason why you can't eat a healthy vegetarian diet even on a limited budget. Stick to non-perishable or freezable foods.

Over the years you can get stuck in a rut with your meal planning or even stop planning altogether. If you want to start the New Year with a revamped diet and a healthy spring in your step get a free copy of the Vegetarian Society's V-Healthy leaflet. It has 'seven ways to health' as well as being full of healthy-eating tips, budget solutions and nutrition information. See the website; www.vegsoc.org/vhealthy

Recipe of the month

This dessert looks so impressive, but it's devilishly simple to make

ICE CREAM BOMBE

€

Serves 10

Ready in 1 hr 25 mins (plus 14 hrs freezing)

For the brownie layer

100g plain dark chocolate (70% cocoa solids)
110g unsalted butter or margarine
200g light brown sugar
½ tsp vanilla extract

2 free-range eggs, beaten
100g plain flour
2 tbsp cocoa powder
100g finely chopped walnuts

For the bombe

1800ml vanilla ice cream
225g maraschino cherries, chopped
600ml caramel ice cream

To decorate

110g plain chocolate (70% cocoa solids)
20g unsalted butter or margarine
edible vegetarian silver baubles

1 Line a 4 lt freezer-proof bowl with clingfilm, allowing it to overhang the sides. Place in the freezer.

2 For the brownie layer: Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4. Line a 23cm (9 in) square tin with non-stick baking paper.

3 Melt the chocolate and butter in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Remove from the heat and stir in the sugar, vanilla and eggs. Beat well until smooth.

4 Sift in the flour and cocoa and stir until blended, then stir in the walnuts.

5 Put into the tin, level the surface and bake for 15-20

minutes, until just firm to the touch. Cool in the tin, then cut into strips to fit the bowl.

6 For the bombe: Beat the vanilla ice cream until softened, but not melted. Quickly spread about 2/3 on the base and up the sides of the bowl. Press the brownie strips into the sides of the ice cream lined bowl.

7 Quickly stir the cherries into the remaining vanilla ice cream and spread onto the brownie layer. Freeze for 1-2 hours until firm.

8 Beat the caramel ice cream until softened, but not melted. Spoon into the centre of the bombe and spread to completely cover the top. Cover and freeze overnight.

9 To decorate: melt the chocolate and butter in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering (not boiling) water. Stir gently to combine well.

10 Invert the bombe onto a serving plate. Remove the bowl and clingfilm. Spoon the chocolate over the bombe. Sprinkle with silver balls. Freeze for 20-30 minutes until the chocolate is firm.

PER SERVING: 940 CALS, 48.4G FAT

COOK'S TIP

You may not need to use all the brownie to line the bowl



LET'S STAY IN!

Make eating in the new eating out with these must-try recipes and ideas



BABY BEETS WITH BROAD BEANS AND LABNEH

GF E £

Serves 4-6

Ready in 30 mins (plus overnight straining)

300g thick Greek-style yoghurt

1kg baby beetroot

400g podded broad (fava) beans

drizzle of extra virgin olive oil

½ a lemon

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

a few chives or mint leaves, sliced, to serve

1 Strain the yoghurt overnight in a fine sieve or muslin (cheesecloth), placed over a bowl to catch the whey, in the fridge.

2 The next day, trim the leaves and stems off the beetroot, leaving 2.5cm (1 in) of the stem intact. Steam the beetroot in their skins for about 20 minutes, or until they can be easily pierced with a fork.

3 Remove the skins and stems under cold running water with your fingers (wear rubber gloves if you don't want pink hands). If the beetroot are perfectly cooked, the skins should slide off easily.

4 Cook the broad beans in boiling water for 3-4 minutes (or one minute if using frozen beans), then drain and run under cold water to stop them cooking further.

5 Pinch each bean between your fingers to remove the skin then put the beans in a small bowl, drizzle over some olive oil, squeeze over some of the lemon and season with salt and pepper.

6 Halve the beetroot and put in a bowl, drizzle over some olive oil and lemon juice and season with salt and pepper.

7 Spoon the beetroot and beans over your favourite platter then top with quenelles (pretty little spoonfuls) of labneh. Scatter over the chives or mint leaves (or both), drizzle with some more olive oil then serve.

PER SERVING (6 SERVINGS): 333 CALS, 6.7G FAT



DUKKAH-SPICED AUBERGINE WITH GOAT'S CURD AND YOGHURT DRESSING



Serves 4-6
Ready in 30 mins

For the aubergine:

80ml olive oil
2 garlic cloves, crushed
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 aubergines, cut into 8 wedges each
50g dukkah spice mix

For the dressing

130g thick Greek-style yoghurt
70g goat's curd
squeeze of lemon, to taste
pinch of salt
pinch of white pepper
pinch of sugar

To serve:

pomegranate molasses, for drizzling
coriander leaves, to garnish
toasted sesame seeds (optional), to garnish

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/ Gas 6.
- 2 Combine the olive oil and garlic for the aubergine in a small bowl and season with salt and pepper, and the cumin.
- 3 Arrange the aubergine wedges on a baking tray lined with baking paper. Lightly brush the wedges with the seasoned oil.
- 4 Roast for 20 minutes, or until the

aubergine wedges are lightly golden and tender to the touch, but still holding their shape.

5 Remove from the oven and, while they're still warm, coat each side of the aubergine wedges with the dukkah.

6 Whisk all of the dressing ingredients together in a bowl until smooth. Arrange the aubergine wedges on a long platter and spoon over the dressing. Lightly drizzle with the pomegranate molasses, and scatter over the coriander and sesame seeds (if using).

PER SERVING (6 SERVINGS, EXCLUDING SESAME SEEDS): 840 CALS, 28.4G

BANANA TOFFEE TART



Serves 8
Ready in 1 hr
(plus 30 mins chilling)

For the base:

125g unsalted butter, melted, plus extra for greasing
300g spiced speculaas biscuits (see Cook's Tip)
180g good-quality dark chocolate (70% cocoa solids), chopped and melted

For the filling:

250ml thin (pouring) cream
250g vegetarian mascarpone cheese, at room temperature
1 tbsp honey
1 tsp natural vanilla extract
5 large firm, ripe bananas

For the Chocolate Ganache Topping:

50g good-quality dark chocolate

“Dukkah is a roasted Egyptian spice mix laced with seeds and nuts. It's easy to make if you have the time and ingredients handy... Simple wedges of roasted aubergine are transformed into a super side dish when they're encrusted in this aromatic spice mix”



(70% cocoa solids), chopped
2 tbsp thin (pouring) cream

For the toffee pecan topping:

165g caster (superfine) sugar
125ml water
50g pecans

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/ Gas 4.
- 2 Grease a 25cm (10 in) loose-based round fluted tart tin and line the base with baking paper.
- 3 To make the base, blitz the biscuits in a food processor until you have fine crumbs. Add the melted butter and mix together until combined. Press the biscuit mixture evenly over the base and up the side of the tin, pressing it firmly to ensure it is solid.
- 4 Bake for 10 minutes. Remove from the oven and cool completely in the tin to set.
- 5 Spread the melted chocolate over the base and side of the cooled tart case (still in the tin). Refrigerate the tart case until the chocolate has completely chilled.
- 6 When ready to fill, carefully remove the case from the tart tin, peel off the baking paper and put the tart case on a serving plate.
- 7 To make the filling, beat the cream, mascarpone, honey and vanilla extract together using an electric mixer until lightly combined and the consistency of whipped cream. Do not overmix.

- 8 Spread the filling over the chocolate biscuit base. Cut the bananas into 1.5cm (5/8 in) thick rounds and push them into the cream mixture to completely cover. Pop in the fridge until ready to top.
- 9 To make the chocolate ganache topping, melt the chocolate and cream together over a double boiler (or on a gentle heat in the microwave) until well combined and smooth, then remove from the heat and allow to cool slightly.
- 10 To make the toffee pecan topping, put the sugar and water in a small heavy-based saucepan and bring to the boil over low heat. Gently stir a few times until the sugar has dissolved.

- 11 Increase the heat to high and, once boiling, continue to cook, without stirring, for 4-5 minutes. Brush down the side of the pan with a pastry brush dipped in water to dissolve any sugar crystals. When it turns a golden toffee colour, it is ready. Do not be tempted to taste or touch the caramel at any point — it is very hot and can burn.
- 12 Remove from the heat immediately, allow the bubbles to settle, then add the pecans and pour the mixture onto a tray lined with baking paper to cool and harden. Chop the hardened praline to a chunky consistency.
- 13 To top the tart, drizzle two-thirds of the ganache topping over the banana filling, top with the pecans, then drizzle the remaining ganache over the top. Chill for at least 30 minutes before serving.

PER SERVING: 843 CALS, 56.76 FAT

BOOK SHELF

Recipes taken from Anne Gare's *Eat In** (£16.99, Murdoch Books).

22

INGREDIENTS EVERY COOK NEEDS

Here are the foods you need to have in your cupboards every week (and why)

1 Carluccio's Pappardelle Egg Pasta £3.50
www.carluccios.com

Where would we be without pasta? Cheap, quick and delicious, it's the perfect meal time saviour. Carluccio's Pappardelle eats up sauce and makes it stick. An absolute must-try.

2 Tilda Steamed Basmati £1.59 (250g), Tesco

Rice is the ultimate staple; it is the most widely consumed food for a large part of the world's population, especially in Asia. With a sumptuous flavour and fluffy texture, for us, it has to be basmati and Tilda's offering is pure, unadulterated and grown in the foothills of the Himalayas (as it should be).

3 Belazu Balsamic Vinegar £12.99, Sainsbury's

Every cook needs vinegar in the cupboards – we always have cider, balsamic, red wine and sherry in stock – but if we had to choose just one, our affections are with balsamic. Its inherent sweetness makes the best dressings and adds depth and syrupyness to pasta sauces. Belazu's bottle is full of thick balsamic that has a delightfully complex flavour.

4 Clark's Clear Honey £2.68, Asda

Here at *Cook Veg*, we much prefer using honey and agave nectar (a great option for vegans) over sugar to sweeten our food wherever possible. It provides a much more stable form of energy

release. Clark's Clear Honey is sourced from the UK, unlike most honeys on sale here which come from Asia, and it tastes utterly delicious for it.

5 Maldon Sea Salt Flakes £1.99, Waitrose

Salt is a flavour enhancer (it helps with the aroma of your food too and suppresses bitterness) and has been part of our kitchens for time immemorial. The debate over whether high end salts are better than the cheap versions rages on but Delia has always stated it has to be Maldon, and in Delia we trust.

6 Black Peppercorns £3.09, www.lakeland.co.uk

A flowering fruit is dried to make peppercorns which have been used in Indian cooking since at least 2 BCE.

It adds a spicy heat to food that differs from chillies and we love it on everything! Lakeland's come in a handy pot to stop storecupboard spillages and tastes fantastic.

7 Tabasco Pepper Sauce £1.69, Morrisons

We couldn't create this list without adding a little something for heat. Whether it's fresh or dried chillies, or trusty Tabasco sauce, it's just the thing for pepping up bland meals. Created in 1868, Tabasco's simple recipe of peppers, vinegar and salt is still a hit today.

8 Tiptree Tomato Ketchup £1.99, Ocado

Okay, maybe not an essential but who can resist chips with a really good ketchup?

Plus, chill non carnes can benefit with a little slug to add sweetness. Tiptree's tomato sauce is dense, luxurious and achieves that perfect sweet-tangy flavour that only ketchup can.

9 Stokes Real Mayonnaise £3.15, Waitrose

Mayonnaise: A stalwart of the cupboard, it's great for veggie sandwiches, sauces, dips and salads alike. Suffolk-based Stokes' version uses more eggs and oil than other brands, making for a very creamy mayo.

10 Waitrose Cooks' Ingredients Dried Porcini Mushrooms £2.68

Dried mushrooms are great for injecting that umami (or savoury) flavour into your dinner. Simply



steep in hot water to release the flavour and add to soups, risottos, curries, pasta sauces... you name it! Waitrose offer quality mushrooms down to the bottom of the natty jar they come in.

11 Extra Large Pitted Amphisa Olives £4, www.olivesetal.co.uk

Everyone needs a jar of olives in the cupboard. They impart a saltiness to dishes and add depth to pasta sauces. Plus, they make a great snack. Our advice? Always opt for those that come in olive oil, they're far more flavourful.

12 Zest Vegan Basil Pesto £4.20, www.goodnessdirect.co.uk

On midweek nights, pesto becomes your best friend. Most pestos contain Parmesan, which contains animal rennet, but this jar (available from online veggie

emporium Goodness Direct) is not only veggie-friendly but suitable for vegans too. We love its basily and nutty flavour.

13 Organic Japanese Skinny Soba Somen Noodles £2.49, www.clearspring.co.uk

Where would we be without noodles? They bulk out healthy salads and stir-fries and taste delicious. We love Clear Spring's organic soba noodles which are made to a traditional Japanese recipe and taste incredible.

14 Hendersons Relish £1.50 www.hendersonsrelish.com

Worcestershire sauce adds that savoury, umami dimension to anything you sprinkle it into, but usually it's not vegetarian thanks to its use of fermented anchovies. Enter Hendersons Relish, the legendary (and veggie) condiment from Yorkshire. At *Cook Veg*, we take this on holiday and if you haven't tried it on chips, you haven't lived.

15 Avlaki Oils Olive Oil from £18, www.oliveoilavlaki.com

We all need a selection of oils. Rapeseed for roasting veggies, sesame for stir-fries and olive oil for everything from finishing dishes to making salad dressings. We keep one cheap mild version for frying and a high quality olive oil for anywhere you can taste. Avlaki's oil is top shelf stuff, and you can really taste the difference between it and other less carefully produced offerings.

16 Essential Tahini £2.59, Health Food Shops

Often on *Cook Veg*, we like to go vegan to remind ourselves how the challenges our dairy-free readers face. We always feel great for it but the one thing that drives us mad is the lack of lunch options in cafés and restaurants. We take to carrying around our own homemade hummus, which requires tahini. The Essential Tahini is absolutely delicious.

17 Crazy Jack Red Split Lentils 89p, Sainsbury's

Lentils and vegetarian might be a bit of a cliché but there's a reason these little pulses are so great for a meat-free diet. They're an amazing source of protein (the third highest of the legume family

after soya beans and hemp) as well as dietary fibre, folate and other vitamins and minerals. Crazy Jack's Red Lentils are organic and of the highest quality.

18 Sanchi Soy Sauce £2.49, Morrisons

Soy sauce adds a wonderfully salty flavour to food and it's as good in East Asian food as it is to season to veggie Bologneses and shepherd's pies. Sanchi's is aged in cedarwood kegs for eighteen months to create an authentic tasting Japanese soy sauce. Add at the end of your cooking.

19 Uncle Roy's Hot Wholegrain Mustard £2.49, www.uncleroys.co.uk

No larder would be complete with a mustard, and while we could only pick one for this shot, we would argue that wholegrain, Dijon and English are all essentials. This wholegrain ones from Uncle Roy's is one of the hottest we've tested – perfect for the hot heads out there.

20 Biona Organic Coconut Milk £1.77, www.goodnessdirect.co.uk

And when your food has got too hot, there's nothing better than coconut milk for cooling things down. A must for Thai and Indian dishes, its fragrant flavour is light and delicate. Biona's milk is made from the best coconuts and is organic to boot.

21 Biofair Quinoa £4.49, www.goodnessdirect.co.uk

Quinoa has become one of the most essential staples for vegetarians but ten years ago, most of us hadn't even heard of this ancient seed. Now, no veggie restaurant worth its tofu would have a menu without a quinoa dish on it. Biofair is wonderful because it's fair trade.

22 Opies Capers £2.29, Waitrose

Perfect for adding to salads, pizzas and pasta sauces, these salt-vinegar flower buds offer explosive flavour to whatever you combine them with. Opies' capers are quality to the bottom of the jar.



TEN THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT...

HERBS

Get more from herbs in your cooking with a little advice from the experts at **Gourmet Garden**



3 Chillies contain the most vitamin C per 100g of any food, with a whopping **242.5mg!** So add as much Gourmet Garden Chilli paste as you like to your cooking. (Vitamin C helps protect cells and keeps them healthy, and is necessary for the maintenance of healthy connective tissue, which gives support and structure for other tissue and organs, plus it helps wounds to heal.)

6 There are more than **60** varieties of basil grown all over the world from purple to Thai or Holy basil. Each has a slightly different flavour and fragrance, but the most common Sweet basil is the one used in Gourmet Garden! It's completely organically grown too. For a really refreshing salad dressing shake 2 tsp together with lemon juice and olive oil and pour over sliced tomatoes, olives and torn mozzarella.

1 In the UK, we throw out **7.2 million** tonnes of food every year. Fresh herbs might be easy to pick up from the supermarket but given that they're often grown in intensive conditions, these plants can be hard to keep alive once you get them home. Gourmet Garden tubes are packed full of herbs that are simply picked, washed and chopped and once opened, can be stored in your fridge ready to pep up your meals whenever you need them!



7 **51** is the record-breaking* number of the world's hottest chillies eaten in two minutes. Thankfully those Ghost Chillies are not used in Gourmet Garden's Chilli paste! But this spicy blend of chopped red chillies will still add a fiery kick to healthy stir fries, marinades, and even scrambled eggs, Mexican-style. Add as much as you dare...



4 Coriander can be traced back **5,000** years BC in Ancient Egypt. Coriander leaves have a distinctive taste that is great for adding a tangy flavour and aroma to a multitude of dishes, especially spicy food. Try Gourmet Garden Coriander as a topping for naan bread with a sprinkling of Nigella seeds.



2 Gourmet Garden's Ginger contains just **1.6 cal**s per 1 tsp plus ginger is well known for its stomach settling properties, as well as its anti-inflammatory effects.

5 A big culinary bugbear is prepping garlic. It takes **5** minutes of soaking in hot soapy water before all the garlic from a crusher will lift away, and chopping by hand has the downside of leaving an odour on hands. So avoid all the faff by using a squeeze of Gourmet Garden Garlic paste in your cooking instead. It lasts much longer too so you can add it to your everyday cooking without it sprouting quickly like fresh garlic does.

8 You'll find **4** stalks blended and packed into every 80g tube of Gourmet Garden Lemon Grass paste. Citrusy lemon grass is a key ingredient in Asian cookery, but you can also use the paste in sweet dishes too. Try it next time in a delicate flavoured cr me br l e or panna cotta.



9 46% of us cook too much food and end up throwing it away. Live up your leftovers with one of Gourmet Garden's Fresh Blends. Got leftover veg? Stir-fry them adding 1 tsp of Thai Fresh Blend. Too many cooked tomatoes? Give them a boost with the Mediterranean Fresh Blend before tossing through cooked pasta. Got a big bowl of cooked rice? Stir through a little Moroccan Fresh Blend, pack into halved peppers and top with a little feta before grilling and serving with a fresh green salad.



10 Everyone loves fresh herbs but tend to use them for special meals only. With the Gourmet Garden range of herb pastes there's no reason not to have that great fresh herb taste in your everyday midweek cooking. Even once opened, they last for up to 28 days in the fridge so they are wallet-friendly too!

GARLIC, BASIL AND CORIANDER SPAGHETTI



Serves 4

Ready in 15 mins

400g spaghetti
1 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp Gourmet Garden Garlic
1 tsp Gourmet Garden Chilli
1 tbsp Gourmet Garden Basil
1 tbsp Gourmet Garden Coriander
bunch of rocket, chopped
salt and freshly ground black pepper
vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese

- 1 Cook the spaghetti in boiling salted water until al dente.
- 2 In a large bowl, mix together the olive oil, Gourmet Garden Garlic, Chilli, Basil and Coriander.
- 3 Take 4 tbsp of the spaghetti cooking water from the pan, add it to the bowl and stir. Add the cooked and drained spaghetti and rocket to the bowl. Stir and season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve with freshly grated vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese.

PER SERVING (WITHOUT CHEESE): 416 CALS, 6.2G FAT

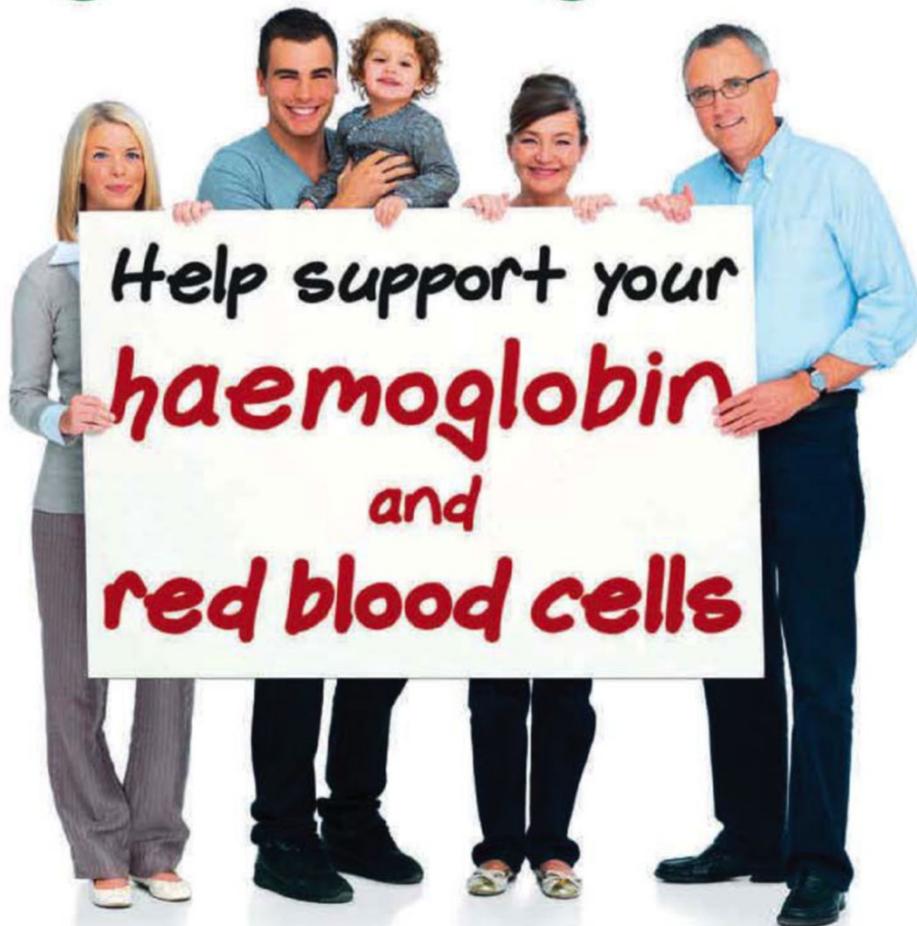
Find this recipe and more at
www.gourmetgarden.com/uk



Pick up the range of Gourmet Garden in your local supermarket and get creative in the kitchen every day of the week. You'll find a whole library of recipes on www.gourmetgarden.com/uk and Follow @GourmetGardenUK on Twitter and Facebook.



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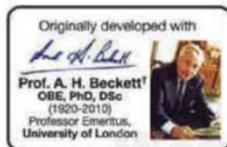
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Available from



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Vitamin supplements may benefit those with nutritionally inadequate diets. * Professor Beckett is not cited in the capacity of a health professional, but as a product inventor and former Chairman of Vitabiotics.




Britain's leading supplements for specific life stages




VITABIOTICS
SCIENCE OF HEALTHY LIVING

EAT SMART

Enjoy a healthier life...

THE BEST HEALTHY APPLIANCES

1 STEAM IT

SABICHI THREE TIER STEAMER (£19.50, WWW.SABICHI.CO.UK)

With this three-tier steamer you can prepare all your dinner components in one hit and the 60 minute manual timer ensures that your food is never overcooked.

2 CUT IT

SLICA BY SENSIO (£29.99, ARGOS)

Prepare ingredients quicker with this handy piece of kit. It can shred, spiral and grate vegetables in seconds!

3 BLEND IT

JUDGE GLASS BLENDER 550W (£48, WWW.JUDGEWARE.CO.UK)

Get smoothies and milkshakes ready in minutes with this nifty device. Due to its high power motor, it can easily crush ice.

4 FRY IT

TEFAL ACTIFRY FRYER (£134.99, AMAZON)

Just one tablespoon of oil provides enough liquid to fry a batch of chips for a family. It's also perfect for homemade veggie burgers, falafel or onion bhajis!

5 MICROWAVE IT

WHIRLPOOL MAX MICROWAVE (£174.99, ARGOS)

This appliance is not just a microwave – it also steams food as well! The steam function means healthier food everytime.

6 JUICE IT

OMEGA VERT 400 JUICER (£379, WWW.UKJUICERS.COM)

Slow juicers are suitable for those that want more nutrients from their juice. This appliance is also very easy to clean due to the lack of clogging.



NUTRITION BOOST

ENERGY BOOSTING
KALE, QUINOA AND
BERRY SALAD

Serves 4

Ready in 30 mins

■ 900ml vegan vegetable stock ■ 225g quinoa
 ■ 1 tbsp sunflower or rice bran oil ■ 4 tbsp
 flaked almonds ■ 2 tsp sunflower seeds ■ 1 tsp
 soy sauce ■ 1 tbsp sesame oil ■ 4cm piece root
 ginger, peeled and coarsely grated ■ 2 tsp agave
 syrup ■ black pepper, freshly ground
To finish: ■ 50g spinach leaves ■ 50g kale,
 shredded ■ 175g raspberries ■ 100g blueberries

1 Add the stock to a pan and bring to the boil, add the quinoa and cook for 10 minutes. Drain off most of the stock to leave enough to keep the grains moist.

2 Meanwhile, heat the sunflower or rice bran oil in a frying pan, add the almonds and sunflower seeds and fry over a medium heat until just beginning to brown. Take off the heat and stir in the soy sauce. Leave to cool.

3 Add the sesame oil, ginger and agave syrup to the quinoa, season with pepper and transfer to a salad bowl, if chilling overnight.

4 Add the spinach and kale leaves, raspberries and blueberries and toss together then sprinkle with the toasted almonds and sunflower seeds.

Per serving (full breakdown):

447 cals, 23.1g fat, 12g protein, 60g carbs,
1.2g salt

EVERYONE'S
TALKING ABOUT...**ARGAN OIL**

ARGAN OIL IS THE EQUALIVENT TO OLIVE OIL IN MOROCCO BECAUSE IT'S USED IN SO MANY DISHES. FROM TAGINES TO TABBOULEH - THE OIL IS USED A LOT IN NORTH AFRICAN COOKING. TRY THIS ONE FROM ALASSALA FINE FOODS, £11.99 FOR 100ML.

**KALE**

Per calorie, kale has more iron than beef. Iron is essential for good health

RASPBERRIES

You'll get significantly more antioxidant support by purchasing raspberries that are fully ripe

ALMONDS

Almonds are rich in vitamin E, calcium, magnesium and potassium

*Yvonne shines a spotlight on... baobab fruit*

Rather than a gruelling regime of a week of detoxing to start your year why not make the resolution to choose the best quality healthy foods you can on a regular basis this year? Choose organic foods where possible for the potential nutrient benefits as well as the lack of artificial fertilisers and pesticides. Pick wholegrain over white refined carbs and go for the ancient grains such as spelt over modern wheat. Start with breakfast to ensure you get your 9-a-day veg and fruit and have a daily portion of berries for their antioxidant power.

Try kicking off your healthy year with a superfood boost such as the Baobab fruit. This African fruit is packed with vitamins and minerals and is reputed to have ten times the antioxidants and six times the vitamin C of oranges, twice the calcium of dairy milk and good doses of potassium, B vitamins and antioxidants. It is also a good source of soluble fibre for digestive health. If getting to your ideal weight is part of your New Year plan don't forget the daily seaweed and algae shake for metabolic rate boosting along with a spectrum of absorbable vitamins, minerals, amino acids and phyto-nutrients. Ensure you get your one and a half litres of filtered, ideally alkalised water a day, walk for at least 30 minutes a day and your year should be off to a great and lasting start.

Yvonne Bishop-Weston has clinics in London and the New Forest. For more information, visit www.optimumnutritionists.com

THE GREAT DEBATE

INCREASE YOUR VITALITY

How do you combat hangovers during the party season? It's the answer that everyone wants to know. Here the experts part the fact from the fiction



THE NUTRITIONIST

Carina says...

Before you go out, have a light meal with a low glycaemic index, so that it stays in your stomach for a long time, helping slow the alcohol's progress into your bloodstream.

Drinks high in congeners are more likely to cause hangovers – so a scale of 'best' to 'worst' drinks to have in this respect would run: beer, vodka, gin, whisky, red wine, brandy. And don't mix your drinks, as this appears to make things worse.

Some (but not all) of a hangover's symptoms are caused by dehydration, so try to alternate alcoholic drinks with non-alcoholic ones, and drink a full glass of water before going to bed. If you wake up in the night, have another glass of water. But don't gulp down large quantities, as too much water (especially at one sitting) can dilute the levels of salts in the blood, and can even be fatal.

The morning after, I'd recommend more water and a glass of pure orange juice. Not only does it taste nice and fresh, it also helps replenish your vitamin C levels, which will have been depleted as your liver detoxifies the alcohol. Coffee won't make the discomfort go any quicker, but you'll feel more alert. There's no evidence that a veggie fry-up will make you feel better. In fact, if you're feeling queasy, a greasy, hard-to-digest meal is the last thing you need.

It's a good idea to top up your blood sugar levels, especially if you're feeling weak and wobbly. I'd recommend some wholemeal toast (no butter or spread) with some honey. The honey provides a quick-acting blood sugar boost, so you feel a bit more energetic, while the bread supplies slow-release energy, keeping your energy levels on an even keel.



THE CHEF

Jackie says...

With the party season approaching it's a good time to think about what food helps our body cope with the increased alcohol consumption.

Amino acid rich foods help metabolise alcohol. Lightly toasted seeded bread, with griddled asparagus, poached eggs and Hollandaise sauce would be a perfect pre-party dinner. Snacks such as carrot sticks and hummus, fresh fruit and nuts (especially almonds) are good choices to make while drinking.

We all know the old wives' tale about lining your stomach with milk, but there is some truth in this. A milk-based dessert will do the same job, and if you can include bananas even better, as they are rich in potassium. Milk thistle is a beneficial supplement to take both pre and post drinking.

The day after is when our willpower can be swayed but it's a good idea to step away from the fast carbs! What your body needs is protein and a vitamin boost, especially Bs and C and plenty of hydration.



THE DOCTOR

Simon says...

As a doctor with an interest in the beneficial effects of a healthy diet and lifestyle, when it comes to the dreaded hangover it goes without saying that avoidance is the best advice that can be given.

The exact physiological processes which lead to the typical symptoms of headache, dry mouth, nausea, sweating, anxiety and drowsiness are not exactly understood, but certainly the effects of alcohol and its by-product acetaldehyde, along with dehydration and electrolyte imbalances are considered to be factors which contribute to the unpleasant side effects of the 'morning after'.

Of course, drinking in moderation is the best way to ensure the relaxing and mildly euphoric pleasures of alcohol do not cause a morning hangover, and consumption with food, particularly based on healthy oils such as olive oil, and vegetables, is the best way to slow the absorption and reduce the likelihood of a hangover. In cultures where alcohol is consumed as part of a healthy way of life, wine is consumed with a meal and spirits with higher alcohol strengths and a greater tendency to cause hangovers tend to be taken as a digestif after the meal to counteract the increased risk of ill-effects.

In order to reduce the risks of further dehydration it is probably best to avoid smoking, excessive salt and diuretics such as caffeine when consuming higher amounts of alcohol, though there is no conclusive evidence of any particular food which can prevent, or indeed treat a hangover. Despite research into various remedies – from vitamin B6 to artichokes to a large veggie 'fry up' – there is no evidence to suggest that there is a magic cure.

MEET THE PANEL

■ **Dr Carina Norris** is a registered nutritionist, journalist and author. Carina believes in a 'real food' approach to eating; no faddy diets, freaky ingredients and it's got to be practical. Find out more at www.carinanorris.co.uk



■ **Jackie Kearney** is a vegetarian, and was a top four finalist in 2011's *Masterchef*. Jackie's ambition is to raise the bar in vegetarian and street food dining, and creates food that is exciting and delicious. Find out more at www.thehungrygecko.com [@thehungrygecko](https://twitter.com/thehungrygecko)



■ **Dr Simon Poole, GP**, author and broadcaster promotes the Mediterranean Diet as a healthy lifestyle choice. Find out more at www.tasteofthemed.com [@tasteofthemed](https://twitter.com/tasteofthemed)



WINTER WARMERS

Hearty, nutritious and easy on the pocket, soups are the perfect dish for warming you on cold winter nights

SLOW-COOKED FENNEL SOUP



Serves 4 as a starter, or lovely as a lunch with a salad
Ready in 45 mins

2 fennel bulbs (about 650g)
2 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, chopped
2 celery sticks, thinly sliced
2 garlic cloves, chopped
½ tsp fennel seeds, roughly chopped
1 lt hot vegan vegetable stock salt and pepper

1 Halve the fennel bulbs through the root, then cut the root out and do the best you can to roughly chop the rest (including stalks and fronds) into smallish pieces. They don't need to be pretty.

2 In a wide, heavy-bottomed pan, heat the olive oil and gently fry the onion, celery, garlic, fennel seeds and chopped fennel over a medium heat. Once they begin to soften pop a lid on, lower the heat and keep stirring every now and then – you want it all to get very soft, mushy and sweet, but without browning at all. After 30 minutes of very gentle cooking, pour in the stock and bring to a simmer. Give it a good stir and a bit of a season, then blitz to a smooth, creamy purée in a blender or food processor (or use a stick blender). Tip back into the pan, if necessary, to reheat.

3 Taste again before serving. Some little croutons go down well in this for a bit of textural contrast.

PER SERVING: 143 CALS, 7.36 FAT

ROAST TOMATO SOUP WITH SALSA PICANTE



Serves 4
Ready in 1hr

12 vine-ripened or gorgeous plum tomatoes, halved
1 red onion, cut into 6 wedges
2 shallots, halved
3 garlic cloves, unpeeled
good glug of olive oil
1 tbsp chopped rosemary
1 tbsp chopped thyme leaves
500ml hot vegan vegetable stock salt and pepper

For the salsa

½ pepper (red or green), cut into small dice

1 spring onion, halved lengthways then thinly sliced

1 garlic clove, minced
a thumb of cucumber, deseeded and cut into tiny dice

½ chilli, deseeded and finely chopped

½ tbsp sherry vinegar or red wine vinegar
splash of extra virgin olive oil salt and pepper

1 Preheat the oven to 190C/375F/ Gas 5. Put the tomatoes in a roasting tray with the red onion, shallots and garlic cloves. Do a bit of fairly liberal free-pouring with the olive oil (but not so it's swimming – about three tablespoons) and then scatter on the rosemary and thyme, giving it all a good season with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

2 After a brief toss, turn them all cut-side up, cover with foil and bake in the oven for 20 minutes.

3 Then whip the foil off, give them a shuffle and roast for another 15-25 minutes until the veg has softened and is just beginning to pick up a little bit of colour

4 Meanwhile, knock-up the salsa by mixing all the ingredients together in a little bowl. Make sure it's properly seasoned.

5 To finish the soup, pick out the garlic, squeeze it out of its skin, and just tip everything else into a blender or food processor (or use a stick blender) and blend with the hot stock – you'll probably need to do it in two batches. Tip it back into a bowl or pan to mix it all together, season to taste then serve up with a spoonful of the kicking salsa on top.

PER SERVING: 157 CALS, 11.56 FAT

VERY GREEN SPINACH AND PEA SOUP



Serves 4 as a handsome starter or hearty lunch
Ready in 1hr

splash of olive oil
2 celery sticks, halved lengthways then thinly sliced

1 leek, halved lengthways then thinly sliced and washed

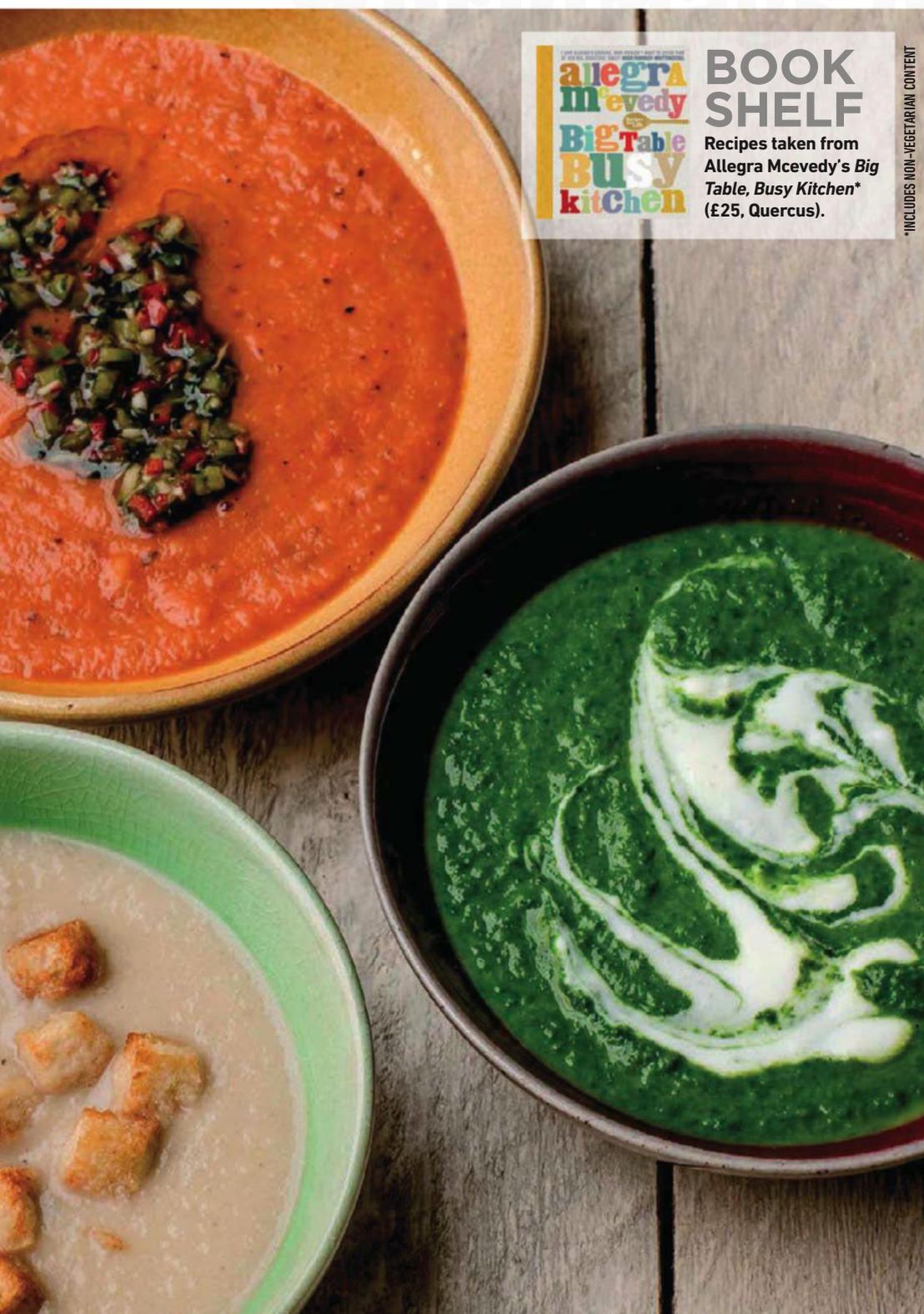
3 garlic cloves, chopped
small handful of parsley, stalks and leaves chopped small

1 lt half-strength veg stock
150g frozen peas, defrosted
500g spinach, washed (ideally 400g big spinach and 100g baby)



good grating of nutmeg salt and pepper
Greek yoghurt or crème fraîche, to serve

1 Heat the olive oil in a wide pan then tip in the celery, leek and garlic. Sweat them over a medium heat, stirring from time to time so



BOOK SHELF
Recipes taken from
Allegra Mcevedy's *Big Table, Busy Kitchen**
(£25, Quercus).

*INCLUDES NON-VEGETARIAN CONTENT

that they soften but don't colour. Add the parsley stalks and stir briefly before pouring on the veg stock and bringing to a simmer. Let it bubble gently for about 10 minutes, then stir in the peas, spinach leaves (keeping back a massive handful of big, or all the baby spinach, if using), nutmeg and some seasoning.

2 Bring back to a simmer and cook for just enough time to wilt the spinach and warm the peas through – fiveish minutes – then either chuck the reserved spinach into the blender and ladle the hot soup on top, or if using a stick blender directly into the soup, and blitz until totally smooth. Taste and adjust the seasoning. If you want to reheat, do so very gently as a fast boil will give it a grainy look. A blob of dairy rounds it off nicely.

3 A blended green soup should be a vibrant green, and there are a couple of tricks that will ensure your end product is pulsating with chlorophyll. You may cook all hell out of the vegetable base, but when it comes to the blending, put a big handful of baby spinach in at the last moment, either at the bottom of the blender before you ladle in each batch of the hot soup, or if using a stick blender, just directly into the soup. Whiz until it's completely disappeared into the soup, i.e. there are no little green flecks.

4 If you're making your soup ahead of time, you need to cool it immediately after blending to keep the bright green. Putting it directly into the fridge ain't on from a food safety perspective (it raises the temperature of the whole fridge), so instead half-fill your sink with very cold water – iced is even better – then float or sit a mixing bowl in it. Pour the soup from the blender directly into the bowl, and stir from time to time until the soup is cool. Removing the heat quickly like this keeps your soup good and verdant.

PER SERVING: 116 CALS, 6.5G FAT

"Fennel is one of my all-time favourite veg, though many people still regard it with a degree of uncertainty... Slow cooking reveals a sweetness that usually remains hidden and knocks out that full-on potency that makes it quite divisive. This soup is sophisticated but simple to make, with gentle but deep flavours and a texture that is silky and so sublime on a cold winter's day"

1 EAT A HANDFUL OF WALNUTS

It sounds so basic, but eating walnuts everyday is a great way to boost your mood. They contain

serotonin-boosting omega-3 fatty acids and magnesium, both of which help to stabilise mood. Try popping some on your salads or sneaking them into stir-fries. Also, enjoy more Brazil nuts because they very rich in selenium, which research shows may help prevent depression.

2 ADD SPINACH TO SOUPS AND STEWS

WHY DO YOU THINK POPEYE WAS SO HAPPY? BECAUSE HE ATE HIS GREENS AND BOOSTED HIS FOLATE LEVELS. IF YOU HAVE A DEFICIENCY IN THIS IT CAN LEAD TO DEPRESSION. TRY EATING SPINACH AND ORANGE TOGETHER, IT WILL BOOST YOUR VITAMIN C LEVELS.



3 CUT THE SUGAR

According to the organisation Food for the Brain, "There is a direct link between mood and blood sugar balance. All carbohydrate foods are broken down into glucose and your brain runs on glucose. The more uneven your blood sugar supply the more uneven your mood." To aid a sweet mood, try eating more honey.

4 HEAT THINGS UP WITH CHILLI

Chillies secrete endorphins which gives us feelings of euphoria and lessen the effects of stress. Chillies are also high in vitamin C (about twice that of citrus fruits). Chillies also have antibacterial qualities, and contain high levels of bioflavonoids; the antioxidants most common in apple juice. So, get more chilli in your grub tonight.



EAT YOUR WAY TO HAPPINESS

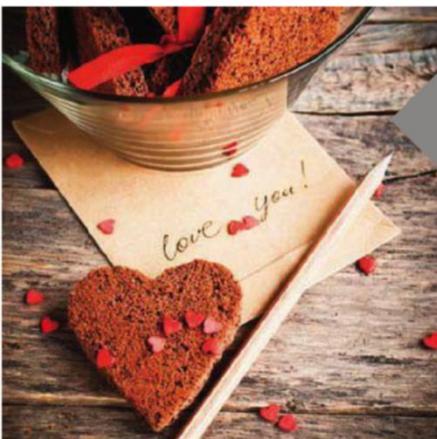
Even when the days are short and the nights are cold, you can always brighten your mood in the kitchen, says **Louise Miles**



SALT IS A REAL ZAPPER OF ENERGY SO TRY AND GET MORE FLAVOUR THE HEALTHY WAY BY ADDING SPICES. IF A MEAL REQUIRES LOTS OF SALT, IT JUST MEANS THAT THERE IS A LACK OF SEASONING.

6 BAKE ME HAPPY

According to the stats, baking is a great activity for those suffering from mood disorders. Although there is no scientific evidence to justify this, best-selling author Marian Keyes believes that it helped her. In her book, *Saved by Cake*, she writes; "I had to find ways of passing the time until I was restored to myself again. So I baked a cake – a chocolate cheesecake, as it happens. And I enjoyed making it so much that I baked another. And another."



7 REVISIT OLD APPLIANCES

Most modern kitchens are packed full of gadgets that are not always used.

To feel happier about your clutter, try reusing these appliances or give them to a friend for a new lease of life.





8 BE POSITIVE WITH B VITAMINS

Wholefoods are essential carriers of B vitamins. To maximise their effects, always eat fruits, nuts, seeds and brown foods including rice, pasta and even sugar. If you're struggling to eat these foods all the time, try drinking a glass of Berocca in the morning – it's packed with B vitamins and will help to top up your levels.

9 COOK OUTSIDE

It may sound bizarre, but cooking outside can really boost your mood. A winter barbecue gives you access to the all important Vitamin D. If it's chilly try giving your guests hot water bottles, blankets and, of course, get the chiminea going for extra warmth.



HAVE A CUPPA...

BUT MAKE GREEN TEA A MORE REGULAR CHOICE THAN BLACK TEA BECAUSE IT'S PACKED WITH POWERFUL ANTIOXIDANTS THAT HAVE BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH PREVENTING CANCER AND HEART ATTACKS. TRY IT WITH A DOLLOP OF MANUKA HONEY FOR ADDED BENEFITS.



11 A LICK OF PAINT

THE COLOUR OF YOUR KITCHEN CAN SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT IT AND HOW LONG YOU'D LIKE TO SPEND IN IT. WHEN I FIRST MOVED INTO MY APARTMENT IT WAS A MOODY PURPLE; IT WAS NOT AT ALL INSPIRING, ESPECIALLY ON A DARK WINTER'S EVENING. IT'S BEEN REPAINTED SINCE AND NOW IT'S A VERY LIGHT AND AIRY PINK. MY SPIRITS HAVE REALLY BEEN LIFTED BECAUSE THE ROOM SEEMS A LOT BIGGER AND THE DESIGN IS MUCH EASIER TO NAVIGATE.



12 LET THERE BE MUSIC...

Always keep a music device in your kitchen; be it a MP3 player, smartphone or radio. The sound of a few lively beats can really improve your surroundings. For a bit of fun, try matching your music to your food. We love putting on Gypsy Kings while making a paella; it somehow makes the food taste better. Maybe the music fuels your creativity..?



TAKE PHOTOS

Snapping some of your masterpieces will give you a real sense of pride and enhance your confidence in the kitchen. For the dishes you are really chuffed with, try posting them to Instagram and Pinterest and watch the complimentary posts roll in!

14 HIT THE LIGHTS

It might sound like such a small detail, but fluorescent lights in the kitchen are a real energy drainer. Try plugging in LEDs for a brighter impact and a more natural light. It will certainly help with common conditions such as Seasonal Affective Disorder.



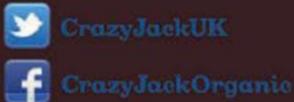
Hearty winter wholefoods



Delicious, wholesome cooking bases for more meal variety than you can shake a stick at!



There's a tasty recipe on the back of pack to kick-start your inspiration!



Endless possibilities in soup, stew, casserole, chilli, curry, dhal, bakes, fritters, salads and dips. Delve into Crazy Jack's recipe book at www.crazyjack.co.uk
Available from Tesco, Morrisons, Sainsbury's, Ocado or Amazon

Easy meat free cooking with

Mince with separate vegan gravy sachet...



vertical text: serving suggestion - cottage pie made with Fry's vegan mince

Food that speaks for itself...

Available on-line from Ocado and Goodness Direct
In the freezer cabinet of local health stores; selected products at Holland & Barrett

Free from... meat, fish, eggs, dairy products, GM ingredients, hydrogenated fats, cholesterol, artificial colours & preservatives

At many pubs, cafés, hotels and other caterers...
Listed with the UK's largest food service supplier - 3663. So available in pubs, clubs, cafés, hotels, schools, colleges, universities, care homes, hospitals and leisure centres!



Further details from Fry's Distribution 01489 574593
info@frysdistribution.co.uk www.frysvegetarian.co.uk

NEW SKILLS

This month, perfect your pastry, get more from your celeriac and source the most beautiful Chinese tableware



MASTER THE BAKED ALASKA!

I URGE YOU TO TRY THIS RECIPE AS IT IS MUCH SIMPLER THAN YOU MIGHT EXPECT, ESPECIALLY IF YOU BUY THE SPONGE BASE (A BIT OF A CHEAT BUT YOU ARE GOING TO DOUSE IN RICH RAISINY, ALCOHOLIC PEDRO XIMENEZ SHERRY) AND THE DELICIOUS GREEN & BLACK'S ORGANIC CHOCOLATE ICE CREAM. THE EGG WHITES OF THE MERINGUE ARE COOKED BY THE HOT SUGAR SYRUP SO THE MERINGUE NEEDS NO FURTHER COOKING, JUST A JOLLY GOOD BLAST FROM A BLOWTORCH TO BROWN IT.

CHOCOLATE ICE CREAM BAKED ALASKA



Serves 6-8
Ready in 1 hr

50g slivered almonds
15g icing sugar
1 tsp rum
20cm sponge cake
splash of Pedro Ximenez sherry
500ml tub Green & Black's
Organic Chocolate ice cream

For the meringue
360g caster sugar
30g glucose

80ml water
6 large free-range egg whites
1 tsp vanilla extract

1 First make the almond topping: Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4 and line a baking tray with baking parchment. Mix the almonds, icing sugar and rum in a bowl then spread them out evenly on the tray. Caramelize in the oven until golden brown; this takes about six minutes but you should be able to smell when they are ready. Set aside to cool.

2 Sit the sponge on a large plate (cut to size if need be) and sprinkle with a few tablespoons of PX

sherry until nicely boozed up but in no way sodden. Remove the ice cream from the freezer and put in the fridge to soften a little.

3 To make the meringue, gently heat the caster sugar, glucose and water until the sugar is dissolved. Increase the heat and, using a sugar thermometer, boil until the syrup reaches about 110C. At this point beat the egg whites in an electric stand mixer or with the hand-held mixer until stiff. Remove the syrup from the heat when the thermometer reads 121C. Turn the mixer to its lowest setting and beat the whites while pouring on the syrup in a thin stream.

Once all the syrup is incorporated, add the vanilla and continue to beat until cold.

4 Now remove the ice cream from the fridge and scoop into the centre of the sponge leaving a border of sponge of about an inch around the ice cream. Sprinkle the ice cream with the caramelised almonds then smother the lot with the meringue, ensuring it entirely covers the sponge and all the ice cream, leaving no gaps. A palette knife can be useful here. Fire up your blowtorch and colour the meringue all over. Serve immediately with a glass of lightly chilled PX sherry.

Perfect your pastry

CAMILLA STEPHENS, FOUNDER OF HIGGIDY AND AUTHOR OF THE HIGGIDY COOKBOOK SHARES HER TIPS FOR SHORTCRUST PASTRY



At Higgidy, we've had lots of practice making shortcrust pastry, so our trusted recipe from *The Higgidy Cookbook* is delicious and easy to handle.

Traditional shortcrust pastry is made up of two parts plain flour to one part fat (we use butter), plus a tiny amount of water. For the ultimate savoury flavour, we add cheese. This makes it taste great and gives the pastry a gorgeous golden colour when baked, but you can omit this if you prefer a more traditional approach.

For a richer pastry you can add a touch more butter and an egg yolk, or for a shorter, silkier texture you can use a combination of butter and lard. The pastry can be made easily by hand or in a food processor.

Once you've mastered the basics of shortcrust pastry you can experiment with sweet and gluten-free versions, and with adding extra flavours such as nuts, herbs or seeds. I like to add a pinch of grated lemon, lime or orange zest, to give sweet shortcrust pastry some zing.

The Higgidy Cookbook by Camilla Stephens is published by Quercus £16.99. For more information visit www.higgidy.co.uk

THE RIGHT TOOL FOR THE JOB

Make your Chinese recipes taste all the better with these beautiful pieces of tableware

SCRIBBLE CUPS £22, BITTEN LONDON

Just as perfect for sake as they are for green tea, these beautiful cups feature gorgeous patterns in blue. We love the gold trim too.



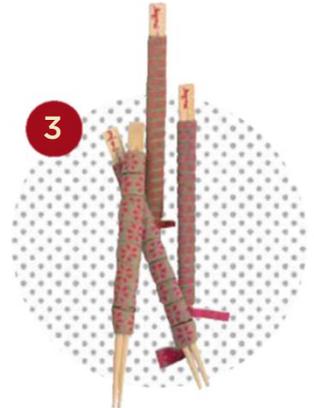
SUNFLOWERS JAPANESE BLOSSOM BOWL £4.95, DOTCOMGIFTSHOP

Available in a wide range of colours, patterns and sizes, these gorgeous bowls are ideal for mixing and matching.



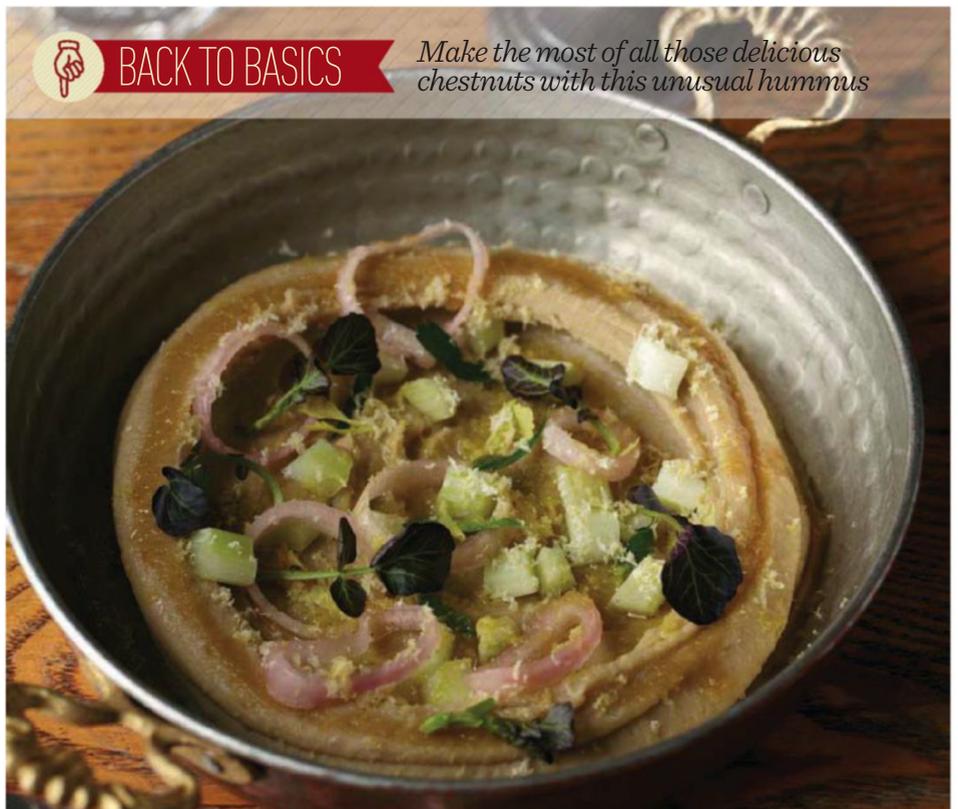
RIBBON CHOPSTICKS £4, WWW.SISTERSGUILD.CO.UK

These chopsticks are wrapped in four different designs of ribbon making them a superb little gift for your dinner party guests to take away with them.



BACK TO BASICS

Make the most of all those delicious chestnuts with this unusual hummus



CHESTNUT HUMMUS



Serves 4; Ready in 30 mins

• 500g vacuum-packed whole chestnuts (save some for

grating) • 250ml water • 25g butter • 10g sugar • 5g salt • 1 garlic clove • lemon juice • 100ml olive oil

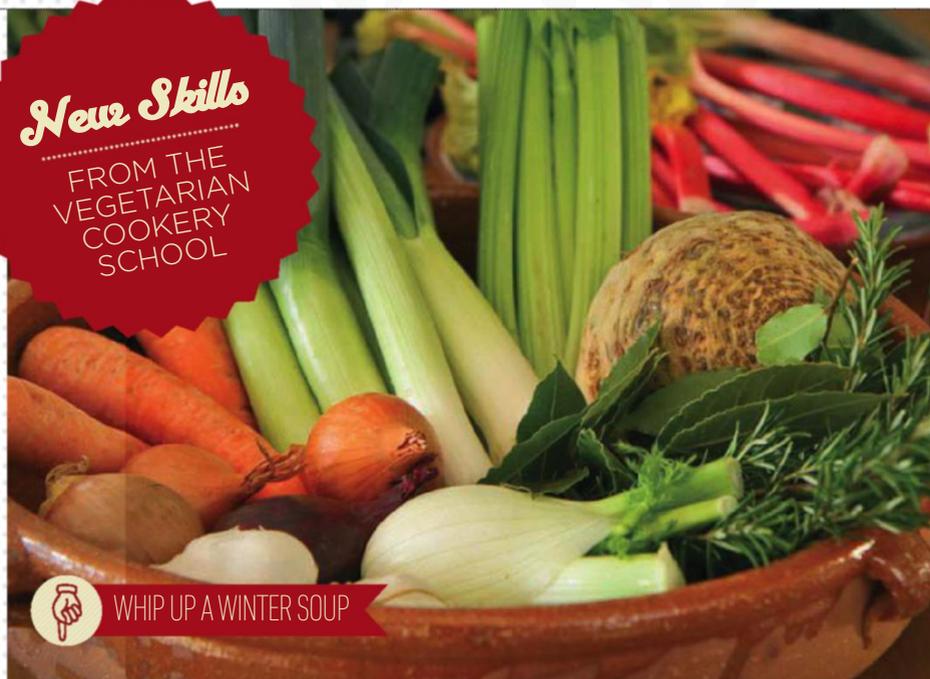
1 Boil everything except for the lemon juice and olive oil together until the chestnuts are soft.

2 Blend smooth with the olive oil, and check for seasoning, possibly adding a bit more water to make the right consistency, and lemon and salt to taste. Serve.

RECIPE TAKEN FROM JESS DUNFORD WOOD AT PARLOUR WWW.PARLOURKENSAL.COM

New Skills

FROM THE
VEGETARIAN
COOKERY
SCHOOL



WHIP UP A WINTER SOUP



VEGETARIAN COOKERY SCHOOL RACHEL DEMUTH, SHOWS JUST HOW VERSATILE A HEARTY SOUP CAN BE

Winter soups are the best and most convenient comfort food. Anyone can make amazing soup. Forget those bland tins, cartons of chilled soup and just refuse to even look at anything that comes in a packet! Make your own; it's easy.

HELPFUL HINTS & TRICKS

Soups are the ultimate one pot meal. Follow my advice for making yours better:

- Shop bought stock cubes are usually very salty but a homemade stock is easy to make and much tastier. Just put a quartered onion, two sliced carrots, a celery stalk, parsley stalks, a bay leaf and some black peppercorns, but no salt. Cover with water and simmer for an hour. Strain off your stock, use at once, or freeze in portions for next time.
- Soups are robust and can be reheated several times. But the best soup is always the freshly cooked batch.
- Fry the onions off really well,

for sweetness and flavour, until they are soft, translucent and beginning to caramelize.

- Add the garlic, only after the onions have cooked, or it will burn and taste horrible.
- In winter, make thick soups. Thicken by adding potato or other roots, any pulses, rice or grains like buckwheat or quinoa. Soak and cook dried pulses before adding them to your soup.
- Add your vegetables in order of their cooking time. Hard vegetables such as carrots, celeriac, beetroot or potatoes then vegetables like celery, courgette and red peppers. Leave soft greens and even fresh

green beans and peas until last.

- Add your delicate herbs at the last minute to enjoy the fresh flavour. If reheating your soup next day, always add new fresh herbs.
- For a chunky soup, cut the vegetables into bite-sized pieces. For a creamy smooth texture, cook the ingredients until just done, and then use a hand blender, taking care not to flick hot soup over yourself.
- And to give your soup that wintery taste, opt for root vegetables such as carrots, parsnips, potatoes and Jerusalem artichokes with leeks and celeriac and add lots of dark green vegetables such as cavolo nero, kale or spring greens.

CELERIAC SOUP



Serves 4

Ready in 40 mins

2 tbsp olive oil
1 small onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, chopped
500g celeriac, peeled and roughly chopped
250g leeks, washed and roughly chopped
1 lt vegan vegetable stock
1 tbsp lemon juice
salt and freshly ground black pepper
fresh parsley, toasted cumin seeds and croutons, to garnish

- 1 Fry the onion in olive oil until soft and translucent. Add the garlic and stir-fry until fragrant.
- 2 Add the celeriac, leeks and vegetable stock. Bring to the boil, turn down and simmer gently until the celeriac and leeks are cooked.
- 3 Purée the soup with a hand blender or in a food processor and add a little more water if too thick.
- 4 Add the lemon juice, season well and decorate with chopped parsley, toasted cumin seeds and croutons.

PER SERVING: 157 CALS, 9.5G FAT



HOW TO... SKIN A PEPPER



NECESSARY FOR A HOST OF RECIPES, DON'T BOTHER WITH JARRED PEPPERS

- 1 To remove the skin from your peppers, preheat your grill to high. Deseed your peppers and cut them into pieces as large as you can but still remain flat(ish) when placed skin side-up on a baking tray. Pop the baking tray (with your pepper pieces on) under the hot grill and cook until the skin is blistered and blackened. No oil required.
- 2 Transfer to a plastic bag and tie up. Set aside for five to ten minutes, or until the skin has loosened from the pepper.
- 3 As soon as the pepper pieces are cool enough to handle, simply peel the skin away from the flesh. Now you can use your skinned peppers for everything from romesco sauce to couscous salads.

PIZZA PARTY

Learn how to make artisan pizzas, just like acclaimed restaurant chain **Franco Manca** with these mouthwatering recipes



MIXED CHEESE
WITH RADICCHIO
BAKED PIZZA

“Franco Manca was built on the belief that, although there are many ways of eating, to be truly enjoyed food needs to be made with integrity and with authentic ingredients. When we opened the first Franco Manca restaurant in Brixton Market in 2008, we were fighting against the tide. Between 1985 and 1989, it had been a pizzeria owned by Franco Pensa, and was called simply Franco. A legendary place, loved by the locals and mentioned in a number of books, including Geoff Dyer’s *The Colour of Memory*, we were determined to honour its legacy. So we decided to call it Franco Manca. A common Italian surname, Manca also means ‘missing’, so Franco Manca means ‘missing Franco’ or ‘Franco is missing’.”

MIXED CHEESE WITH RADICCHIO BAKED PIZZA



Makes 4 pizzas
Ready in 50 mins (plus 1 hr 30 mins rising)

4 dough ball, left to rise for 1½–2 hrs
flour, for dusting

For the radicchio topping

150g (16 leaves) radicchio (Tardivo, if possible)
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
generous pinch of salt
2 tsp extra virgin olive oil
15g vegetarian washed rind cheese
15g vegetarian goat’s cheese, crumbled
20g vegetarian blue cheese, crumbled
75g vegetarian mozzarella, torn into 6 chunks
4 basil leaves, torn

- 1 Prepare the radicchio: In a large bowl, mix the radicchio with the olive oil and salt and leave to marinate for 40 minutes.
- 2 Place a rack on the highest shelf of an oven and turn the grill to its highest setting. When hot, place a greased 26cm iron pan on the stovetop, set to medium heat.
- 3 Sprinkle a little flour over your hands and on the work surface and open the dough ball by flattening and stretching the dough with your fingers, or by rolling the dough with a rolling pin. Pick the pizza base up and gently stretch it a little further over your fists without tearing it.

Drop this onto the hot pan, and allow it to start rising.

4 As soon as the dough firms up, drizzle the base with olive oil, then add all the cheeses, the basil and a quarter of the marinated radicchio leaves.

5 Cook the pizza on top of the stove for about three minutes, then transfer the pan to the grill for a further 3–4 minutes. Serve whole or in slices.

PER PIZZA: 1,648 CALS, 39.46 FAT

the dough

Makes 640g
Ready in 18 hrs

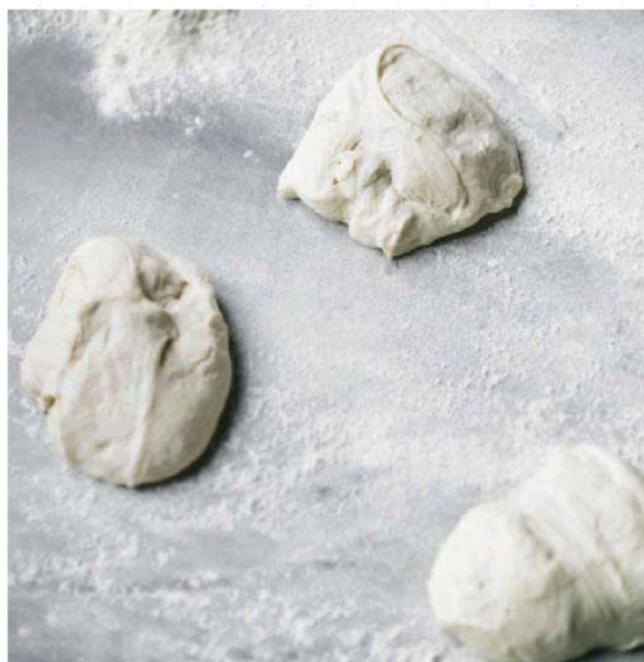
For the yeast version

250ml lukewarm (22C) water
0.2g dry yeast
1 tsp olive oil
380g flour
10g salt

For the sourdough version

250ml lukewarm (22C) water
30g starter
8g olive oil
380g flour
10g salt

- 1 In a bowl or jug, measure out the water and add the yeast (or sourdough starter). Stir or whisk in, then add the olive oil.
- 2 Place the flour and salt in a large, 2 lt ceramic bowl and combine the ingredients with your fingertips.
- 3 Pour the liquid into the flour in a few stages, mixing each time with stiff fingers. (Note: use left hand for pouring water if you are right-handed.)
- 4 Work lightly, using only your



COOK'S TIP

You can clean the dough off your hands by grabbing small amounts of flour and then rubbing your hands together. You can also stroke the dough off your fingers gently with a pot scourer, under running warm water.

- fingers to draw the dough together and mop up all the flour. Avoid getting dough on the palm of your hand. Knead the dough a little with your knuckles.
- 5** Once the ingredients have roughly combined you can rest the dough. This gives the flour time to absorb the water and will make the dough easier to knead.
- 6** After 15 minutes, use your fingers and knuckles to knead

the dough for about five minutes. Dipping your fingers in water will help keep the dough from sticking to your fingers while you do this.

- 7** Once kneaded, cover the bowl with clingfilm or a damp cloth and leave it to sit for one hour.
- 8** With a lightly oiled hand this time, fold the dough by drawing the four edges consecutively into the centre, and then pressing down on them. With the shape of your hands, form a large ball and then turn the mass over. Brush a bit more olive oil on top and cover the bowl again to store, making sure it’s airtight.
- 9** Leave the dough in an ambient temperature of 20–23C and in 16–18 hours, your dough will be ready. If it is colder (15–18C) it will take a little longer.
- PER 640G BATCH: 1,440 CALS, 596 FAT

“The baked and fried pizzas both start with a ball of dough that is opened (stretched) into shape: For pan baking, 160g balls will fit easily into the base of an iron pan. For pizzette (small, fried pizzas), cut the dough into 50g balls”

SHAPING THE BALLS

1 Tip the dough onto a floured surface and divide the developed dough mass into equal pieces with a dough cutter. Our dough recipe makes 640g, so that means dividing it by four.

Alternatively, you can weigh your balls on a set of scales.

2 Knock back the dough pieces by rolling them in a circle on a table until they form tight balls. When you do this, keep a tight grip around the edges of the ball with your fingertips while applying some pressure from the palm of your hand on top.

You may want to practise, but do not overdo the shaping of each ball, as you will stress and tear the dough.

3 Place these on a floured surface in an airtight container or in a deep baking tray. If using a tray, drape a dampened tea towel over it, but be sure to tuck the edges of the cloth under the tray, so the rising dough does not stick to the sagging cloth. At normal temperatures (18C) these balls will take up to two hours to prove. In a warm kitchen (24C), one hour will be enough.



the sauces

TOMATOES

“GOOD-QUALITY TOMATOES ARE KEY TO A RICH-TASTING PIZZA SAUCE SO TRY TO SOURCE THE BEST YOU CAN FIND. FRESH TOMATOES HAVE A SHORT SEASON IN SUMMER, ANYTHING BETWEEN SIX WEEKS IN TEMPERATE ZONES TO THREE MONTHS IN WARMER CLIMES. FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR, UNLESS YOU’VE MADE YOUR OWN PASSATA, WHICH WE HIGHLY RECOMMEND, YOU ARE BETTER OFF BUYING CANNED TOMATOES”

PASSATA

Makes 1 lt from every 5kg tomatoes
Ready in 30 mins

a large shopping bag of San Marzano or plum tomatoes
a few basil leaves, torn

1 Sort through the tomatoes, cutting off any black parts and discarding any that are damaged. Wash well and steep in boiled water for 2–3 minutes, then drain in a colander.

2 Pass the tomatoes through a food mill, collecting the pulp, which is now ready to be bottled. Add a leaf of basil for extra flavour. Use sealable bottles (for example beer bottles with a crown) or jars with lids.

3 To sterilise the jars of passata place them, unsealed, in a deep pan and fill the pan with cold water, almost to the rims of the jars. Bring to the boil, then remove the pan from the heat and carefully seal. If you have a thermometer, you can take the pot off the boil when the water has reached 90C.

4 Your passata will keep for a year if stored in a cool, dark place.

BASIC SALSA

Without fresh tomatoes, you can make an on-the-spot sauce using either bought passata or canned tomatoes. (Italian products tend to be better. When buying cans, go for whole, peeled tomatoes instead of chopped, as they’re better quality. The sauce will gain extra flavour if you reduce it slightly and add a little basil. We recommend you add garlic or chilli only to your pizzas (not to your sauce) as they do not complement all toppings, particularly in their raw state.)

AUBERGINE WITH CAPERS, ROASTED GARLIC AND PINE NUTS BAKED PIZZA



Makes 4 pizzas

Ready in 50 mins (plus 1 hr 30 mins)

4 dough balls, left to rise for 1 1/2 - 2 hrs
flour, for dusting

For the caponata topping

4 tsp capers in salt (or large, good-quality capers in brine)
4 large garlic cloves, whole, unpeeled
4 tsp pine nuts
12 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
2 large aubergines, cut into 4 thick slices, then cubed
16 basil leaves, torn
8 tsp tomato sauce
3 basil leaves, torn
60g vegetarian mozzarella, torn into 5 chunks
olive oil, for drizzling

1 Make the caponata: Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6. Soak the capers in water for half an hour or so. If using the unsalted variety, simply wash well and dry off.

2 Roast the garlic in its skin for about 10 minutes, or until soft and brown. Roast the pine nuts in a hot pan, watching carefully that they do not burn. Peel the garlic and reserve. In a small frying pan, warm the oil over a low heat and fry the capers for about 10 minutes. Add the aubergine and cook until tender. Take the pan off the heat and add the pine nuts, garlic and basil. Set aside – the flavours will infuse as the mixture cools.

3 Place a rack on the highest shelf of an oven and turn the grill to its highest setting. When hot, place a greased 26cm iron pan on the stovetop, set to medium heat.

4 Sprinkle a little flour over your hands and on the work surface and

“When the best fresh tomatoes are used for passata, no further cooking is needed and the sauce can be used as-is. Depending on the juiciness of your tomatoes, different quantities of passata will be yielded”

Makes enough for 4 pizzas
Ready in 10 mins

240g whole, peeled tomatoes
fine sea salt, to taste
fresh basil, torn

1 In a large bowl, squeeze the tomatoes hard through your fingers to crush.

2 If you are reducing your sauce, simmer in a pan over a low heat for five minutes.

3 Add a few leaves of fresh basil

and fine sea salt to taste. The flavour should all be in the tomatoes so be careful not to over-salt.

PER BATCH: 14 CALS, 0.1G FAT

open the dough ball by flattening and stretching the dough with your fingers, or by rolling the dough with a rolling pin. Pick the pizza base up and gently stretch it a little further over your fists without tearing it. Drop this onto the hot pan, and allow it to start rising.

5 As soon as the dough firms up, spread the tomato sauce over the base with the back of a metal spoon. Distribute 2 tbsp of caponata evenly over the top and finish with the basil, mozzarella and a drizzle of olive oil.

6 Cook the pizza on top of the stove for about three minutes, then transfer the pan to the grill for a further 3–4 minutes. Once ready, serve with an extra spoonful of caponata and chunk of mozzarella on the side.

PER PIZZA: 2,018 CALS, 77.5G FAT

BUTTERNUT SQUASH AND GOAT'S CURD BAKED PIZZA



Makes 4 pizzas

Ready in 50 mins (plus 1 hr 30 mins rising)

4 dough ball, left to rise for 1½ – 2 hrs
flour, for dusting

For the butternut squash topping

180g butternut squash, peeled and cut into small wedges
2 tbsp olive oil
sea salt
1 dtsp extra virgin olive oil
65g vegetarian mozzarella, torn into 6 chunks
2 tbsp goat's curd

1 Prepare the butternut squash: Preheat the oven to 220C/425F/Gas 7. Coat the wedges in the



AUBERGINE WITH CAPERS, ROASTED GARLIC AND PINE NUTS BAKED PIZZA

olive oil, sprinkle with salt and bake in the oven for 40 minutes, turning once. Reduce to 180C/375F/Gas 4 after 20 minutes. By the end, the squash should be a sticky, caramelized, mashed consistency, not hard at all. Set aside.

2 Place a rack on the highest shelf of an oven and turn the grill to its highest setting. When hot, place a greased 26cm iron pan on the stovetop, set to medium heat.

3 Sprinkle a little flour over your hands and on the work surface and open the dough ball by flattening and stretching the dough with your fingers, or by

“The sweet and pleasant flavour of butternut squash pairs well with a light, fresh goat’s curd. As this is a simple pizza, it really highlights the quality of your ingredients so make sure you have a good olive oil if possible”

rolling the dough with a rolling pin. Pick the pizza base up and gently stretch it a little further over your fists without tearing it. Drop this onto the hot pan, and allow it to start rising.

4 As soon as the dough firms up, spread the butternut mash onto the pizza with the back of a moistened metal spoon. Drizzle with olive oil and add the mozzarella. Dollop 1 tbsp of curd around the top of the pizza.

5 Cook the pizza on top of the stove for about three minutes, then transfer the pan to the grill

for a further 3–4 minutes. Once ready, dress with the remainder of the curd and serve in cut slices or whole.

PER PIZZA: 1,627 CALS, 376 FAT

BOOK SHELF

Recipes taken from Giuseppe Mascoli and Bridget Hugo's *Franco Manca: Artisan Pizza to Make Perfectly at Home** (£12.99, Kyle Books).

* INCLUDES NON-VEGETARIAN CONTENT

COOK'S TIP

An alternative method for preparing the butternut squash is to boil it in a little water for 10–15 minutes until cooked through. Then transfer to a bowl, add a little butter and salt and mash.

Make it!

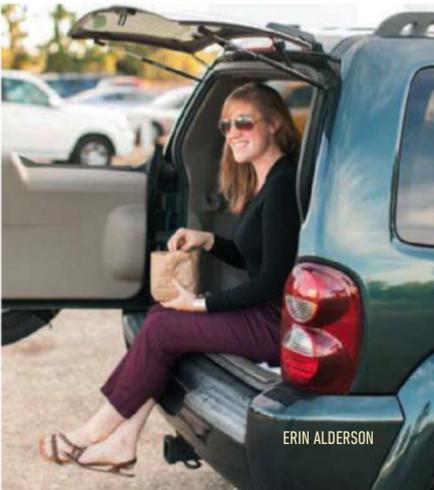
MAKING PIZZA
WITH FRIENDS IS
THE PERFECT
NIGHT IN

BUTTERNUT SQUASH
AND GOAT'S CURD
BAKED PIZZA

“Butternut squash might be tricky to prepare and takes time to cook but this pizza proves it’s well worth the effort”

THREE DIFFERENT WAYS to shop on a **BUDGET**

We asked three top veggie bloggers to reveal all (of the contents of their fridge) to find out the different ways people like to buy food



ERIN ALDERSON

ERIN ALDERSON
WWW.NATURALLY-ELLA.COM

I like to try shopping only once a week but that never seems to happen. I nearly always end up at the store for a new idea I want to try or I happen to forget something. I think I actually shop every other day.

Since I've moved to California, I'm in the land of fresh produce year round so I shop at the farmers' market and my local co-op.

My best shopping practice is putting my shopping list in the Evernote app so that it's already on my phone- I can never forget it! However, my worst practice is actually making the list in the first place - I'm much more of an on-the-whim kind of person.

Desert island ingredient

If I had to choose one ingredient from my fridge, it would be a tough one as I have so many favourite ingredients. However, I've been on a walnut oil kick recently. It's a great finishing oil for salads and I also use it in place of butter for some baking recipes to add a small hint of nuttiness.

In terms of what's most important to me when I'm shopping, I think it's a bit of everything. I do my best to eat local produce that was grown without pesticides which usually means it is fairly high quality. I'm also really into making as much as I can at home. Very few processed items make their way into my refrigerator and cupboards (I do have my



KATE TAYLOR

weaknesses though!)

And when it comes to budgeting, I shoot for somewhere between \$75-\$100 (£47-62) for my husband and I. If I go over, I go over. Food is important to keep up our energy and feel good, I try to not skimp.

I have two tips for avoiding food waste: Plan ahead and also have a few meals that you can empty out the refrigerator by making. Stir-fries, grain salads and egg grills are just a few of the ways I use produce that is towards the end of its life. I also freeze quite a bit to help extend the life.

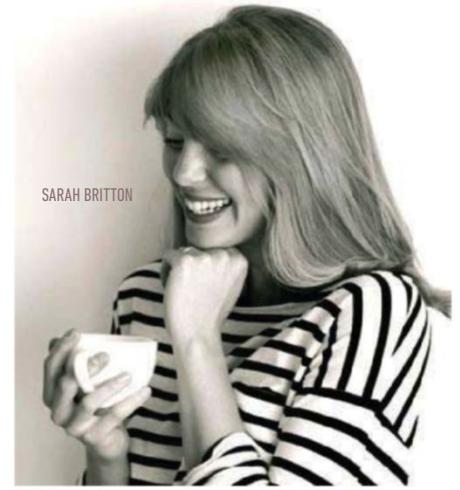
Shopping inspires my blog too. I'm always encouraged by what's in season. I've learned that most items just don't taste as good as when they are fresh. I take what's in season, pair it with a few of my favourite flavours, and enjoy!

KATE TAYLOR
WWW.COOKIEANDKATE.COM

I go food shopping several times a week. I never seem to remember everything I need! I shop at a local health food store and a couple of larger grocery stores. I can stock up on local eggs, milk, greens and coffee at those shops, which is convenient.

My best practice is that I don't buy much processed food, other than a few staples such as shop-bought salsa. My worst is that I often forget what I have in stock at home and buy either too much or too little.

In my fridge shot, you can just make out my favourite ingredient. Lately, I have loved



SARAH BRITTON

experimenting with white miso. It adds an incredible depth of flavour to everything it touches.

Quality first

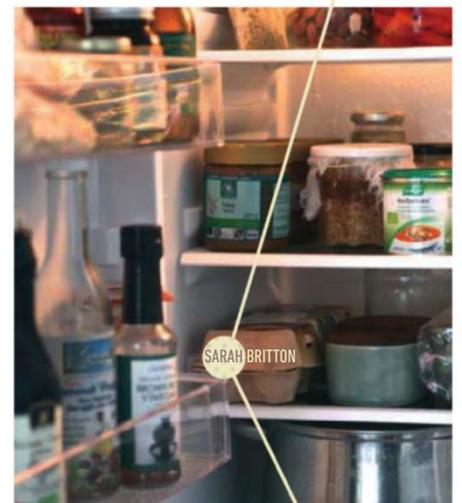
When it comes to my shopping priorities, quality comes first, I'd say, although it is tied to ethics, provenance and nutrition. I am usually just buying raw ingredients, which are less expensive than pre-made meals, so I don't mind paying a little more for better quality. I probably spend about \$75 (£47). I would buy less if I didn't have a food blog!

And I save a lot of money with leftovers. I eat leftovers like it's my job! I often freeze cooked grains, pasta and baked goods for quick meals later. I've also found some tricks for keeping herbs and greens fresh, like popping a paper towel in with the greens to absorb excess moisture.

Plus shopping helps me come up with new recipe ideas. Sometimes the sight of some gorgeous in-season produce will get me thinking about new recipe concepts or just remind me of a recipe I've been waiting to try!

SARAH BRITTON
WWW.MYNEW-ROOTS.ORG

I usually go shopping every day but it depends on what I'm working on. I shop at lots of different places - health food stores, grocery shops, green stands and gourmet markets. I also like to 'shop' in my own garden of course! Again,



it depends on my needs for the day. Plus sometimes my shopping trips turn into wild goose chases, especially when I'm looking for a very specific ingredient.

I am really frugal, so I suppose my best food shopping practice is knowing which stores sell certain things I need for less, and where the sales are. My worst practice is impulse buying at expensive shops! I'm such a sucker for superfoods.

At the moment, I'm really obsessed with tahini. Luckily in Denmark, I can buy unhulled sesame tahini for less than the cost of making it myself at home. I go through a jar almost every couple of weeks because it is so versatile. I use tahini for dressings and sauces, to thicken up a smoothie, to spread on toast or rice cakes and for making desserts.

Going organic

I am a stickler for quality and to me, that means buying organic or biodynamically grown products that are ethically sourced. As I mentioned, I am conscientious of cost, but I'm not willing to compromise on my food's quality. When food is really good, you don't really need to do anything to it, which makes for very simple meals!



To avoid waste, I try to plan my meals as best as I can to avoid wasting anything. A freezer definitely helps! If I know I won't finish something before it goes bad, I'll freeze it for another time.

Besides my garden and being out in nature, I get inspired by going to markets and different stores. Because I eat seasonally, it's important that I shop at places that carry very fresh, local

produce to spark my imagination. I get so many ideas just from just browsing through aisles of greens, freshly picked fruit, or basket overflowing with herbs and mushrooms.

Even if I arrive without an inkling of what to make that day, the food speaks to me, and I know that I can turn inspiration into something delicious. And that's got to be the most exciting thing about food shopping!

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GET SORTED!

The UK's largest social media cooking channel, Sorted has teamed up with Premier Housewares to create kitchenware that will make you a better cook



With its video recipes attracting over 2 million views each month, Sorted is the brainchild of a group of school friends who shared recipe ideas

initially amongst themselves and then a much wider community of aspiring cooks online through YouTube and social media.

With Sorted growing from strength to strength, the boys have decided to go one step further, by developing a cookware range with the rookie cook firmly in mind. Teaming up with Premier Housewares, the Sorted crew have created a stylish, good quality and efficient range of kitchenware to set up novices and keen cooks in their first kitchen covering everything from pots and pans to knives, aprons, scales and utensils.

Stylish and reliable

The Sorted cookware, designed in conjunction with and supplied by Premier, combines outstanding thermal conducting properties, green credentials with eco-friendly PTFE- and PFOA-free durable non-stick ceramic coating, and a comfortably solid, yet lightweight build. The pots and pans can withstand tremendous heat – up to 280C – without the risk of blistering or cracking, useful for the odd mishap when starting out, while the aluminium bodies act as super-efficient heat conductors, effectively reducing cookery time, taking some of the effort from the task in hand. The range is suitable for use on all hobs, gas, electric, halogen hobs and induction, as well as being dishwasher-safe.

With a no-nonsense contemporary design that co-ordinates with the cookware, the Sorted aprons look and feel the part. Created from 100% cotton, like the rest of the Sorted accessories, they are made to last. Uniquely, tying in with the Sorted online presence, each of the products in the range will be furnished with a QR code, which buyers can scan to access free video recipes, hints and tips tailored to their purchase.

The Sorted YouTube community is over 350k strong. A total of more than 30 million video views, gaining in excess of 2.3 million every month. Over 4,500 hrs of the video content is consumed globally each day.



WINTER VEGGIE BAKE



Serves 4
Ready in 1hr

1 mug of American long grain rice
1 butternut squash, peeled and diced
glug of olive oil
sprig of fresh rosemary, chopped
sprig of fresh thyme, chopped
1 large courgette, sliced
1 onion, sliced
2 garlic cloves, sliced
2 free-range eggs
chunk of vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese, grated
handful of pine nuts

- 1 Preheat an oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6 and bring a pan of salted water to the boil. Tip the rice into the water and cook for 10 minutes until plump and cooked, as per packet instructions.
- 2 Bung the squash into a roasting tray with a splash of oil, salt, pepper and the herbs. Roast for 20 minutes. Toss in the courgette, a little salt, pepper and oil in a bowl.
- 3 Lay them on a baking tray so there is no overlapping and roast for 15 minutes, or

char-grill them on a hot, cast iron griddle for a minute or so on either side. Gently sweat off in a frying pan for 10 minutes so that they are soft and sweet. Drain the cooked rice and tip into the bowl you used to toss the courgettes in oil. Stir in the grated cheese and leave to cool for five minutes.

4 Crack the eggs into the rice and mix together with the cooked onions and garlic. Press the rice into the bottom of a baking dish, then cover in a layer of courgette slices and scatter the top with the roasted squash. Finish with a handful of pinenuts and return to the oven for 10 minutes before serving.



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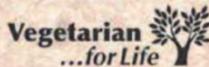
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EXPERT INSIGHT

NEW YEAR CAN BE STRESSFUL AND BUYING WINES FOR THE FESTIVE PERIOD IS NO EXCEPTION. BROADLAND WINERIES HAVE A FEW SUGGESTIONS TO HELP YOU GET THE MOST FOR YOUR MONEY.

As the party season kicks in you will see some fantastic deals on the high street and online. It may seem like an expensive outlay at first but buying wine by the case or in multiples really can save you pounds. Most retailers offer multibuy discounts and some even deliver for free. Stay warm and order from the comfort of your home. Look out for Chilean and South African ranges as they offer fantastic value for money and are particularly suited for parties.

- **Ready made** - Most people enjoy mulled wine but it can be expensive to make and quite time consuming. Why not offer friends a glass of ready-made mulled wine on arrival? There are some delicious great value mulled wines out there which simply need warming.
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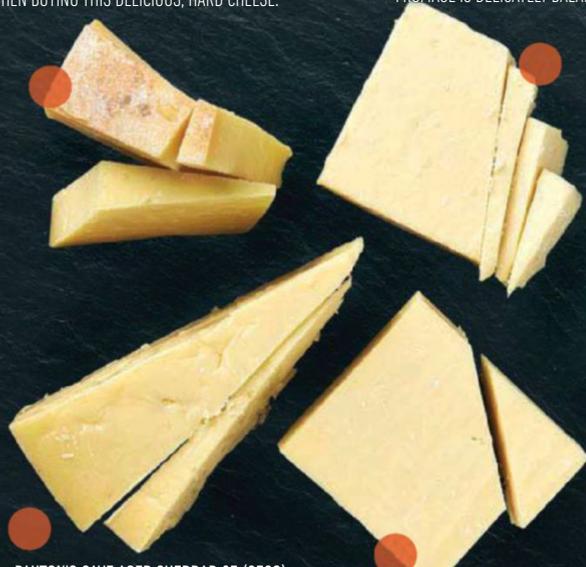
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MALTED HONEYCOMB



Makes about 30 pieces
Ready in 30 mins

sunflower oil, for greasing
2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
350g caster sugar
75g golden syrup
75g clear honey
1 tsp white wine vinegar
pinch of salt
1 tbsp malted milk powder
200g milk chocolate, chopped

- 1 Grease the baking tin with a little sunflower oil and line the base and sides with non-stick baking parchment. Half fill the sink with cold water. Sift the bicarbonate of soda into a small bowl and have a whisk and rubber spatula on stand-by.
- 2 Tip the caster sugar, golden syrup, honey, vinegar, salt and 75ml water into a 2 lt, solid-bottomed saucepan. Place over a low to medium heat, stirring occasionally. Once all of the sugar has dissolved, pop the sugar thermometer into the pan and bring to the boil. Continue to cook at a steady pace until the mixture reaches 140C/275F/Gas 1. Add the malted milk powder, whisk to combine and continue to cook to 150C/300F/Gas 2.
- 3 Now, working quickly, remove the pan from the heat and plunge the bottom of the pan into the sink of cold water for 5-7 seconds to stop the caramel cooking any further. Tip the bicarbonate of soda into the pan

and whisk for about five seconds until thoroughly combined. The caramel will foam quite alarmingly. Still working quickly, use a rubber spatula to scoop the mixture into the prepared tin in an even layer, but do not spread it out, otherwise you will deflate the honeycomb. Leave for a couple of hours to cool and harden.

4 Scoop the chocolate into a heatproof bowl and melt over a pan of barely simmering water. Do not allow the bottom of the bowl to touch the water. Stir until smooth, remove from the heat and leave the chocolate to cool ever so slightly.

5 Turn the honeycomb out of the tin, peel off the baking

parchment and break into bite-size chunks. Drop a couple of pieces at a time into the melted chocolate to coat, then lift out of the chocolate using a fork, allowing any excess to drip back into the bowl by tapping the fork against the bowl. Set the chocolate-coated honeycomb on a clean sheet of parchment and repeat until all of the pieces are coated. Let the chocolate harden before serving.

PER SERVING: 103 CALS, 2.6G FAT



HOT CHOCOLATE DUNKERS



Makes about 12
Ready in 15 mins

200g dark, milk or white chocolate
splash of chosen alcohol (optional)
toasted almonds or hazelnuts, finely chopped
chocolate sprinkles

You'll also need: 12 birch wood tsp or coffee stirrers; 12 mini paper cake cases

1 Chop the chocolate and melt in a heat-proof bowl set over a pan of barely simmering water. Stir until smooth and remove from the heat. If you are making these for adults, now would be the time to add the alcohol.

2 Divide the melted chocolate between the paper cases. Push a spoon or stirrer into the middle of each dunker so that it stands upright, then scatter the chocolate with your choice of toppings.

3 Leave the dunkers to set solid before either wrapping in cellophane as gifts or serving.

4 Heat one mug of milk per dunker in a saucepan and whisk furiously until frothy. Pour into mugs, peel the paper off the dunkers and drop the dunkers into the mugs of milk. Stir slowly until the chocolate melts and drink immediately. Store for up to two weeks in an airtight box in a cool place.

PER SERVING: 131 CALS, 8.4G FAT

BUTTERED SALTED CARMELS



Makes about 40
Ready in 30 mins, plus 4 hrs cooling

sunflower oil, for greasing
150g light muscovado sugar
125g golden syrup
100g unsalted butter, diced



250ml double cream
150g caster sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp sea salt flakes or smoked sea salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp vanilla bean paste

You'll also need: sugar thermometer; 17cm baking tin

1 Grease the base and sides of the baking tin with sunflower oil and line with non-stick baking parchment.

2 Place the light muscovado sugar, golden syrup, butter and double cream in a small saucepan and place over a gentle heat to melt the butter and dissolve the sugar. Stir until smooth and once the mixture is hot, remove the pan from the heat.

3 Place the caster sugar in 2lt saucepan with 2 tbsp water and set over a low heat to dissolve the sugar. Do not stir the syrup, but gently swirl the pan to ensure that the sugar dissolves evenly; use a pastry brush dipped in hot water to dissolve any sugar crystals that

form on the sides of the pan. Bring the syrup to the boil and continue to cook steadily until it turns an amber-colour, swirling the caramel in the pan to colour evenly.

4 Slide the pan off the heat and carefully pour the hot cream mixture into the caramel. It will hiss and splutter as you do this, so exercise caution. Stir the mixture until smooth and return the pan to a medium heat. Pop the sugar thermometer into the pan and continue to cook on a low-medium steady heat until the caramel reaches 121C/250F. Working quickly, slide the pan off the heat, add the salt flakes and stir briefly to combine. Pour the hot caramel into the prepared tin and leave until completely cold and firm (at least four hours or overnight) before cutting into pieces with either a hot or lightly greased kitchen knife.

5 Wrap the caramels in twists of cellophane or baking parchment and store in an airtight box or storage jar for up to two weeks.
PER SERVING: 87 CALS, 5.3G FAT

PEPPERMINT CREAMS

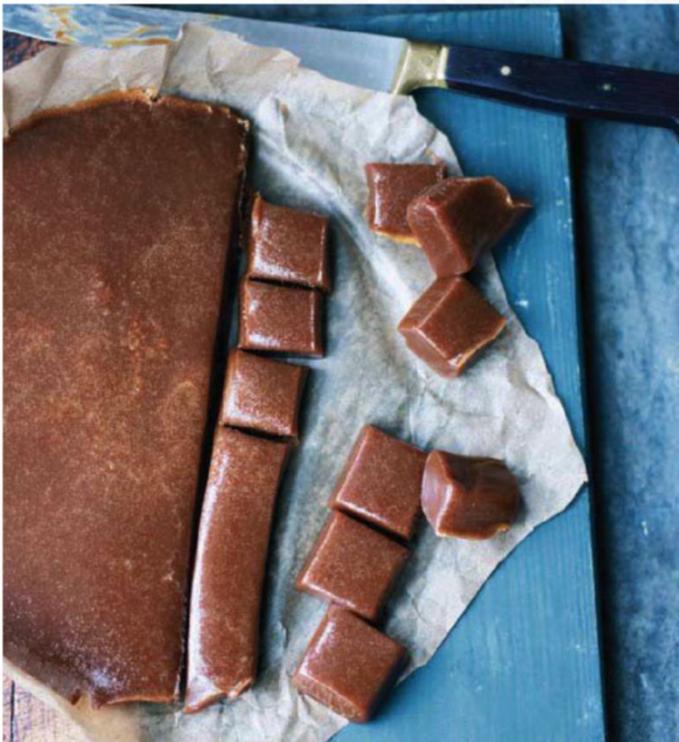


Makes about 30
Ready in 1 hr, plus setting time

350g caster sugar
1 tbsp liquid glucose
a pinch of cream of tartar
1 tsp peppermint extract
icing sugar, for dusting
200g dark chocolate, chopped
crystallised mint leaves, to decorate

You'll also need: sugar thermometer; 3cm square or round cookie cutters

1 Tip the caster sugar into a small saucepan and add the liquid glucose, cream of tartar and 100ml water. Slowly heat the mixture to dissolve the sugar, stirring from time to time. Pop the sugar thermometer into the pan,



bring to the boil and continue to cook steadily until the syrup reaches 114C/238F/Gas ½. Remove from the heat, pour into a medium-sized bowl, add the peppermint extract and leave to cool at room temperature for 15-20 mins, until the mixture has thickened with a skin covering the surface.

2 Using a hand-held electric mixer, beat the syrup until it thickens and becomes a smooth, thick, white paste. This will take about 3-5 mins at slow-medium speed. You may need to turn the fondant out of the bowl once it starts to become very thick and dough-like and knead by hand until silky smooth and cold. Flatten the fondant into a disc, cover with clingfilm and chill for a few hours or overnight.

3 When ready to continue, lightly dust the work surface with icing sugar and roll the fondant out to a thickness of 2-3mm. Using the cookie cutter, stamp out rounds or squares and place these on a parchment-lined tray. Gather the offcuts together, knead until smooth and re-roll and stamp out more shapes. Pop the tray in the fridge to chill for 20 mins while you melt the chocolate.

4 If you want your peppermint creams to have a more professional air about them, follow the instructions for tempering chocolate (see Cook's Tip). Otherwise, simply melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of barely simmering water, making sure the bottom of the



bowl doesn't touch the water. Stir until smooth, remove the bowl from the pan and cool slightly.

5 Using a dipping or dinner fork, submerge one fondant shape at a time into the melted chocolate, lift out and tap the fork on the side of the bowl to allow the excess chocolate to drip back into the bowl. Carefully place a peppermint cream on a clean sheet of parchment, gently press the tines of the fork into the chocolate to make ridges on the surface and scatter with crystallised mint leaves. Repeat with the remaining fondant shapes. Leave the creams to set firm before serving. To store, the creams will keep in a cool place for 1-2 weeks in an airtight box between layers of baking parchment.

PER SERVING: 90 CALS, 2.26 FAT

ROSE TRUFFLES



Makes about 20

Ready in 30 mins, including overnight cooling

COOK'S TIP

To temper chocolate, tip 100g of the remaining chocolate into a heatproof bowl and place over a pan of barely simmering water, making sure the bottom of the bowl doesn't touch the water. Pop the tempering thermometer into the chocolate. Melt the chocolate, stirring until it is smooth and the chocolate reaches a temperature of 50C/120F. Remove the bowl from the pan, add the remaining 50g chocolate and stir to combine. Leave to cool to a temperature of 27C/80F, stirring frequently to speed up the cooling process. Return the bowl to the pan of hot water and reheat the chocolate to 31C/88F. Please note these temperatures are for dark chocolate only.



1 tbsp dried rose petals
70g caster sugar
350g dark chocolate (64 per cent cocoa solids), finely chopped
2-3 drops rose oil, organic and food safe (optional)
crystallised rose petals

You'll also need: 18cm square baking tin; chocolate tempering thermometer; 2cm round cutter

1 Start by making the rose-infused syrup. Place the rose petals in a saucepan with the sugar and 125ml water and heat gently to dissolve the sugar. Bring to the boil, simmer for one minute and then pour the syrup and petals into a bowl and leave to cool. Cover and leave overnight.

2 Line the baking tin with clingfilm. Place 200g of the chocolate in a mixing bowl. Strain the syrup into a saucepan (discarding the petals) and add the rose oil, if using. Gently heat the syrup until just boiling, then pour over the chocolate. Leave undisturbed for two minutes, then stir until silky smooth. Pour the

ganache into the prepared tin, spread level with an offset palette knife and leave until cold before covering and chilling until firm.

3 Temper the chocolate according to the instructions in the Cook's Tip. Turn the ganache out of the tin and on to a board covered in baking parchment. Using the cutter, stamp out round truffles from the ganache block. Any offcuts can be rolled into balls in your (clean) hands.

4 Taking one truffle at a time, place it on the tines of a dipping or dinner fork and submerge into the tempered chocolate. Lift the truffle from the chocolate, tap the tines of the fork on the side of the bowl and allow the excess chocolate to drip back into the bowl. Carefully slide the truffle off the fork and on to a clean sheet of parchment. Top with a piece of crystallised rose and repeat with the remaining truffles. Leave the truffles to set firm before packaging. To store, in a cool place for one week between sheets of baking parchment in an airtight box.

PER SERVING: 109 CALS, 5.86 FAT

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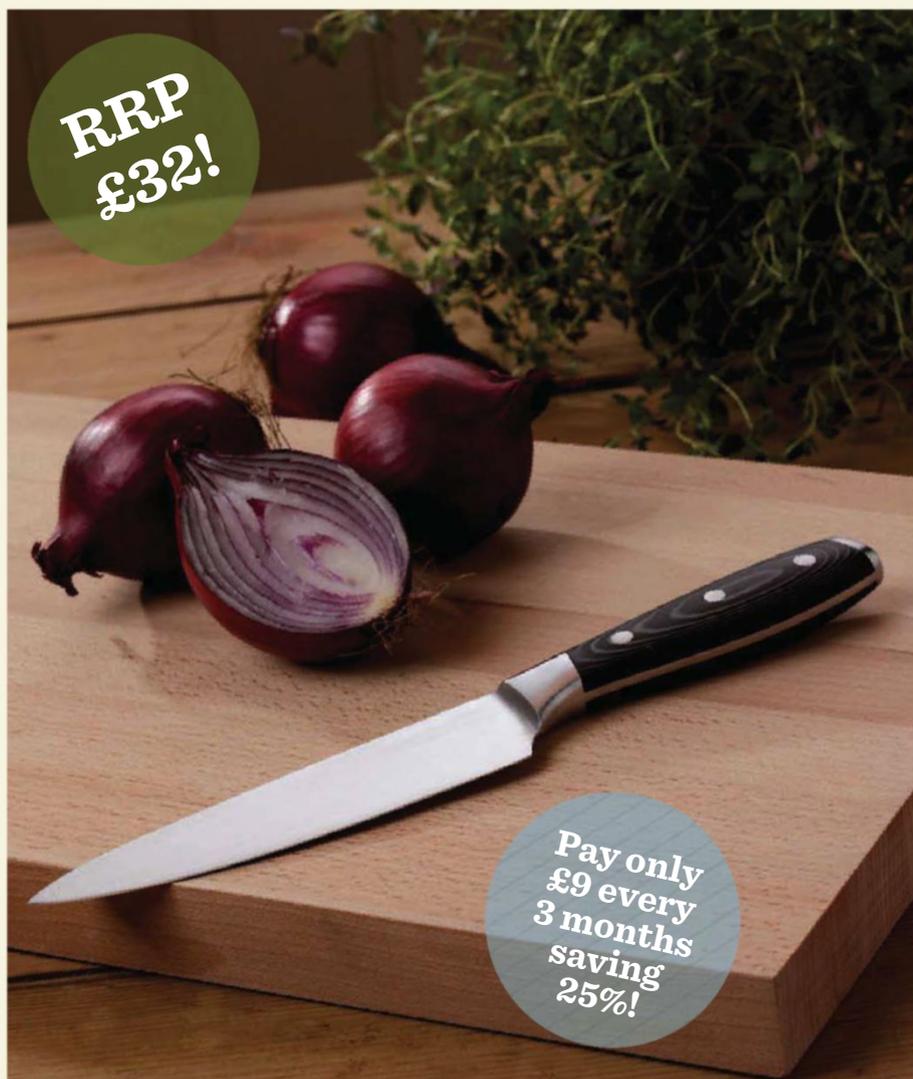


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Cocktail Hour

Everyone should know how to stock a cocktail cabinet. Here, we show you how

What to stock

For us, there are a few spirits and liqueurs that no cabinet should be without.

■ Rum is vital for a host of cocktails – white for Mojitos and dark for Pina Coladas. This fermented sugarcane juice is fast becoming a very fashionable drink and rum bars are springing up everywhere serving a selection of this

predominantly Latin American and Caribbean spirit. M&S Guatemalan Rum (£25) will look just the part in your cabinet and it's distilled above clouds in Guatemala meaning it ages slower than in other Latin American climes and making for a deliciously smooth drink.

■ No drinks cabinet would be complete without vodka. It's an almost flavourless spirit making it essential for a host of cocktails from Bloody Mary's to simple vodka and cranberry juices. While a plain is absolutely a must-have, a flavoured one is sure to get guests talking. The Chase Marmalade Vodka (£35.80, Waitrose) is infused with fresh Seville orange peel and is refreshing over ice, or fabulous in a Breakfast Martini.

■ There's nothing better (or more sophisticated) as a host than being able to offer guests a fantastic single malt whisky. Glenrothes Select Reserve Malt Whisky (£38, Sainsbury's) is unlike other whiskeys in so much as it is bottled when it's ready, rather than at set time frames, making for a superior bottle. And, for a vintage whisky, offers great value for money.

■ Gin has been in vogue for years now, whether it comes simply with tonic or as a Martini. We're very taken with Martin Miller's Gin (£25, Sainsbury's). Its clean taste is perfect for a G&T – add a few juniper berries and zest a lime for distinctive drink.

■ Finally, a flavoured liqueur is a must for adding a little va-va-voom to your cocktails and triple sec is great place to start. Made from the peels of sweet and bitter oranges, it's surprisingly high quality. (Tesco Finest* Triple Sec £12.)

FURNISH IT!

Be sure to get yourself a little cocktail kit – you'll need a muddler (for mixing ingredients), a jigger (for pouring out the measures) a strainer (for sieving out solid ingredients) and of course, a shaker. We got our Retro Glass

Mesh Cocktail Shaker for £14.99 from www.creamsupplies.co.uk. And a packet of sparklers in your cabinet wouldn't go amiss either – Talking Tables (www.talkingtables.co.uk) sell a selection of shapes in gold and silver. Prices start at £4.80.



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All products are made from 100% recycled aluminium, have a patented handle locking system and are perfect for even heat distribution, with no hot-spots. They are all dishwasher safe, have low energy consumption and feature 'Silencio' silicone trimmed glass lids with inbuilt steam vents.

The pans are made with a PFOA free Greentek non-stick coating and are suitable for induction and all other cook tops. The entire assortment is ovenproof up to 260C/500F/Gas 9 and contains a ceramic titanium surface which is metal utensil safe. Designed and manufactured in Denmark it provides perfect food release and really easy cleaning.

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Every Scanpan product meets strict demands, not just on quality of use and durability, but also environmental sustainability.

Scanpan is fully committed to environmentally responsible methods of manufacture. 100% recycled aluminium is used in Scanpan squeeze cast production. Although using recycled material is more expensive for the company, it uses 90% less energy than extracting new aluminium bauxite ore. The same is true of product packaging; again 100% recycled cardboard is used.

Combined with the extended longevity of Scanpan's products, the use of recycled materials helps Scanpan reduce its carbon footprint and ensure that we make the most of the resources available. PFOA chemicals used to bond the non-stick coating to cookware are potentially damaging to health and the environment. Scanpan was the first company to develop a true non-stick coating that uses no PFOA.

Unlike some other cookware brands, this patented Greentek technology uses no PFOA in any stage of the manufacturing process. This allows safe and healthy fat-free food preparation.



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1. P IS FOR PROVENANCE

Some areas of the world are naturally outstanding for growing coffee, imparting their environmental uniqueness into the flavour of the bean. In the very same way that different areas produce distinct varieties of grapes for wine, some corners of the world are far better for coffee growing than others.

Not only are Percol's beans grown in the best countries in the world for gourmet java, it sources mainly from small farms run by the indigenous populations. Where possible Percol, opts for organically grown beans and buys on Fairtrade terms plus all Percol products support Good For Life Charity, raising money for mothers and children in coffee growing communities.

2. SLOW DOWN

Coffee beans are the seed of the coffee plant, found inside a reddish or purple fruit referred to as the 'cherry'. Some coffee producers harvest their cherries too soon leading to a less smooth and flavourless cup.

Percol, on the other hand, let their farmers (who have nurtured and watched over their plants from the beginning) decide when the cherries are just right. Each cherry is carefully hand-picked by the farmers to ensure that only cherries that are perfectly ripe, developed and full of flavour proceed to the next stages.

3. REASSURINGLY CARING

Coffee simply tastes better when you know it's been grown in harmony with its environment, rather than against it, so you'll always score extra flavour points!

Although you have the reassurance from the Soil Association that some of Percol's coffees are organically certified, it's useful to know that even those that don't show the certification are, in many cases, organically grown. That's because some of the small holder farms that Percol source their coffee from do not have the money to apply for the costly accreditation. Plus, in many cases the coffee is grown in the shade (which is important as it avoids the unnecessary clearing of land), the beans are pesticide and fertiliser free and the farm will often undergo sustainable crop rotation. We think this makes for a much more satisfying cup of coffee!

4. THE PERFECT PROCESS

Once harvested, coffee beans need to be roasted. It is this process – that sees the green beans change in colour, taste, smell and density – that gives the coffee its characteristic flavour that we know and love. Temperatures and roasting times vary and you can often tell how long the beans have been roasted for by their colour; generally the

higher and/or longer the roast, the darker and stronger the coffee.

Percol only uses the most sophisticated processing methods; ensuring that the coffee is expertly roasted to suit the bean and packed in a protective atmosphere to preserve quality and freshness, avoiding the potential for oxidation which quickly draws out the coffee flavour.

There is no denying it: Percol produces some of the best tasting ground and instant coffee money can buy. And with all the TLC that goes into its coffee – from seed to cup – it's no surprise it tastes so good. With over 40 top industry and consumer awards for taste and quality, it's safe to say that the experts agree too.

Visit www.percol.co.uk for more information



PERCOL COFFEE IS AVAILABLE FROM TESCO, SAINSBURY'S, WAITROSE, MORRISONS AND ASDA FROM £3

COOK VEGETARIAN TOP PICKS

Here, you'll find an exciting selection of all the best veggie food, fab appliances and helpful gadgets that we've stumbled across this month....

THE PERFECT GIFT

The Special Edition Gift Collection from Booja-Booja (£12.95) is the ultimate Christmas treat. Each elegant box is vibrant, velvety smooth to the touch and full of delectable organic chocolate truffles. Two truffle selections each contain four flavours, including new delights such as tipsy Cherry Cognac, chewy gooey Almond Caramel and puddingy Rhubarb & Vanilla truffles.

There are also two indulgently opulent single flavour boxes of award-winning Fine de Champagne and Hazelnut Truffles. A gift to treasure and share, these truffles are, quite simply, the cat's pyjamas and they're dairy- and gluten-free too so can be enjoyed by just about anyone! **Available in independent health food stores across the UK, Ocado and goodnessdirect.co.uk**



WAKE UP TO THIS...

G.A.T. has been making coffee ware for more than 25 years, the products typifying two Italian priorities; espresso and style. GAT Cherie is dressed in distinctive creamy brown and white, with a playful coffee bean-shaped top hat to complete the outfit.

Crafted from stainless steel, G.A.T. Cherie coffee pots are suitable for use on gas, ceramic and electric plate hobs and come in four sizes, (single, 3, 6 and 9 cup) to create between one and nine espresso shots. **Visit www.topgourmet.co.uk**



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THE MORNING AFTER

With the party season on its way, look after yourself from the inside with the new Liver Kind from Veganicity.

100% vegan and registered with the Vegan Society, and suitable for all dietary choices, Liver Kind is a comprehensive formulation containing key lipotropic nutrients which help safeguard nutrient intake and protect the health of the liver. It's high in vitamins, minerals, amino acids and digestive herbs that help detoxify the



body and eliminate harmful chemicals.

Liver Kind, which also supports the immune system and helps proper digestion, is part of the popular Veganicity range of nutritional supplements that are suitable for vegans, vegetarians and everyone else! **For more information, visit the website at www.veganicity.com/Liver-Kind**



UP YOUR NUTRITION

Why not try the new white chia seed which is available both whole and milled in two different pack sizes. Chia is packed full of omega 3, is high in fibre and also a great source of protein.

Or if you prefer, try out the new flavours of Linusprout sprouted flax powder which include superfood goji berry, festive cinnamon or sunflower & pumpkin seed, all great with breakfast, yoghurts, smoothies and more! They are also gluten and lactose free and contain no additives or preservatives. **Available from independent health food stores. For more information, visit the website at www.granovita.co.uk**

SUPERSTAR WINE

When We Dance (2011) is a delicious organic and vegan-suitable Chianti from Sting and Trudie Styler's beautiful Tuscan estate, Tenuta Il Palagio.

They bought the estate in 1999 and have painstakingly restored it to its former glory, producing fantastic olive oils, honeys and wine. Named after one of Sting's songs, this red is predominantly made from the Sangiovese grape, giving the wonderful traditional flavours of red cherry and herbs. We'd drink this with a simple roasted tomato pasta dish with fresh herbs and pretend we're in Tuscany! RRP £11.99. For more information, visit www.vintageroots.co.uk



BEST KEPT SECRET

Secret Sausages have 90% less fat, 50% fewer calories and 35% less salt than meat sausages. Eat just three of them, and you've got one of your five-a-day too!

Plus, they are Vegetarian Society approved, Halal and Kosher friendly and gluten-free! Secret Sausages are Scottish owned and sources the highest quality ingredients from as close as is commercially viable.

The sausages are supplied chilled and ready to cook. The unique casing makes them cook like a traditional sausage. They can be grilled, fried, oven roasted and included in traditional sausage meals. Available in six delicious flavours: Lincolshire, Chilli and Coriander, Rosemary and Garlic, Cumberland, Honey Bee and Cheese & Spring Onion. **Visit www.secret-sausages.com for more information.**



CHOP AND CHANGE

Some things are so obviously meant to be that you have to wonder why it took so long to create them – introducing your latest kitchen revelation; the Stellar SK105 Chopping Board with Knife Honer. Living up to Stellar's impressive reputation for combining quality and functionality with style. While the chunky wooden block speaks of the durability needed in a busy family kitchen, the honer ensures that your blades will last as long (if not longer) than your chopping board!

For more information, visit www.stellarcookware.co.uk.



NEW CRACKERBREAD FLAVOURS

Deliciously versatile, Ryvita® Crackerbread makes a light, crispy alternative to bread.

This enduring favourite works with absolutely anything and contains a mere 19 calories per slice. The best part? It's now available in two tasty new flavours: Ryvita® Cheese Crackerbread and Ryvita® Pepper Crackerbread.

For more information, visit www.ryvita.co.uk



ALL WASHED UP

Exclusive to the Vegetarian Society, the bright and cheerful designs on these tea towels has been adapted from the award-winning National Vegetarian Week 2013 artwork. They are made from high quality, organic, unbleached cotton and are printed in a water-based non-toxic ink which does not harm the environment.

Featuring different coloured fruit and vegetables, they are perfect for livening up any kitchen. They make fantastic gifts for friends and family too! **For more information, and to see what other Vegetarian Society goodies are on offer, visit www.vegsoc.org/shop**





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GIVEAWAYS

To enter this month's giveaways, visit www.cookveg.co.uk/giveaways or send a postcard to Chloe Hunt, Cook Vegetarian, 25 Phoenix Court, Hawkins Road, Colchester CO2 8JY. Always state the prize you want to win

ESSENTIAL KITCHEN TOOLS

This month, Brabantia is offering four £70 hampers to Cook Vegetarian readers. The prize includes a window lid canister (1.4lt and 1.7lt) with magnetic measuring spoon, a window lid canister (2.2lt) with magnetic spaghetti measure and the digital kitchen scales in matt steel.

The handy window lid means the canister's contents are always visible. You can also create your own labelled storage system thanks to the customised labels. Brabantia's digital kitchen scales give pinpoint accuracy with a built-in kitchen timer and large capacity – up to 5000g/11 lbs! For more information, visit www.brabantia.com.

ITALIAN GOODIES

To celebrate the launch of Filippo Berio's commemorative olive oil tin, the company is giving away two luxurious Italian hampers* – packed full of vegetarian goodies, and of course the limited edition tin which features a beautiful



design of the 'Lady of Viareggio'. It makes a chic addition to the kitchen and can be used time and time again.

Now, as part of the brand's relaunch, and for the very first time, Filippo Berio's image and signature will appear on the bottle range, a reminder of the olive oil virtuoso. Find the products in your local supermarkets. For more information, visit www.filippoberio.co.uk.



BRIGHTEN UP YOUR MORNING



To mark the launch of the Brighter Breakfast range, Yakult is giving away four of these very tasty prizes!

Each luxury hamper worth over £60 includes a black fluted breakfast tray, and a delicious range of goodies, from preserves such as honey and marmalade, to indulgent treats such as French Madeleines, organic coffee hazelnut chocolate spread – and even a bottle of indulgent Champagne!

Enter now for your chance to win – and don't forget to visit www.yakult.co.uk/breakfast for the new and exclusive Brighter Breakfast range. There are delicious recipes including cherry coconut almond granola, eggs Florentine and pancakes with ricotta, honey and figs.

COOKERY SCHOOL VOUCHERS

The Chopping Board is really pleased to offer Cook Vegetarian readers the chance to win one of five £50 cookery course vouchers.

The school has been created for people who are passionate about food and interested in learning new skills in the kitchen. It aims to bring together the largest selection of cooking schools and cooking classes from around the UK into one location online, allowing you to search, select, compare and book the cooking course that is right for you.

The vouchers can be redeemed against any of the courses with course locations throughout the UK.

For more information, visit www.thechopping-board.co.uk



TERMS & CONDITIONS

This competition is open to all UK residents aged 18 or over, excluding employees or agents of the associated companies and their families. One entry per person. The prizes detailed in each competition cannot be exchanged for goods, or towards the purchase of goods at any retail outlet. Entries must be on the coupon provided (or whichever means of entry form provided). It cannot be exchanged for cash, or replaced if lost or damaged. Illegible entries and those that do not abide by these terms and conditions will be disqualified. Prizes must be taken as stated and cannot be deferred. The decision of the judge is final and no correspondence will be entered into. CLOSING DATE: 28th December 2013. Winners will be notified by 28th January 2014, a list of winners will be available in writing on request from Andrea Dickson, 21/23 Phoenix Court, Hawkins Road, Colchester, Essex. CO2 8JY

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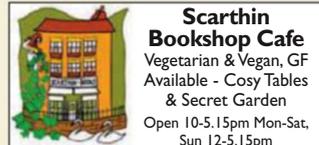
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NOTES

from the allotment

This month, **Alys Fowler** looks into the gifts that can come from the garden

I am not a great present buyer, I forget, I get bored easily with shopping and I mostly end up buying what I would like to receive, which is woolly socks and books. I also fail to do good things with wrapping paper. This time of year never bodes well for this reason.

From the garden...

Still, the garden is very forgiving, always offering up something to give away whether it's something for a vase or something for the kitchen. Everyone likes flowers, but many allotments and gardens don't have a great deal over winter and those that are around, violas, winter pansies and the like, aren't the best thing for picking.

However, if you don't go mad cutting everything back there are always pretty fading seed heads, a little ever greens from a nearby tree, or a few small branches off an exuberant crab, some pungent sage leaves, a little rosemary or parsley, a few pretty twigs and a ribbon. Even a huge bunch of kale with the prettiest of ribbon will do and you have a lovely last minute gift for the host.

For the foodies...

I find that jams are always welcome, but chutneys rather less so. I guess because people tend to make them when there is a glut and thus everyone always has too many jars. If the jar is full of vodka though, most are pleased. Spiced crab apple vodka is very easy to make. Fill a wide necked jar (0.5l is best) with crab apples and hefty amount of sugar (about a quarter of the

space), add a vanilla pod, a small quill of cinnamon, a few cloves, perhaps even a chilli. Then fill it with vodka and shake it every few days to make sure the sugar dissolves. After a month, open and enjoy.

A beautiful box of true quince, Cydonica or Japanese Flowering quince nestled in tissue paper is a heady gift. Once opened it will perfume the house with its fine scent and then once everyone has had their fill the contents can be eaten. I think both sorts of quince are very pleasing in a compote with apples and cinnamon.

Salt of the earth

I love to use herb salts, particularly when roasting. We eat a lot of warm salads with roasted veg and a good herb salt can make all the difference.

Salamoia Bolognese is a traditional Italian herb salts made with roughly 100g salt, 10g rosemary, 5g sage and a big fat garlic clove. Finely chop the herbs and garlic together and add to the salt and store. The salt preserves the flavour of the fresh herbs and garlic. You can experiment with other flavours. You can add fresh basil, sesame, chili, lemon zest, seaweed milled, dried tomato skins (left over from bottling tomatoes). Chilli and tomatoes works particularly well as a rub for oven roasted chips.

Still if you have none of these things to hand, then there is always the internet. The independent seed producers Real Seed Catalogue does lovely collections of seed for vegetable growers, neatly wrapped. I have yet to meet someone unhappy by a paper bag full of all the promise to come.



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