

Monday 15th April 2019

Dear Customer,

I hope this finds you well. It's a bit nippy at the moment. But how glorious the reawakening of nature, the blooming of spring.

Here are a few tasty recipes you could try with this week's ingredients:

Pasta alla Genovese

500g potatoes	450g linguine pasta
200g French bean, cut in half	100g fresh basil
100g vegetarian Parmesan or substitute	1 clove garlic, peeled
200ml olive oil	

Peel the potatoes, slice into ¾ " slices and then quarter into chunks. Put in a large saucepan with enough salted water to take the pasta later and bring to the boil. Cook the potatoes until tender, adding the pasta and French beans to the same pan so they all finish cooking at the same time. While this is bubbling away, whizz the pesto ingredients in a food processor. Before draining the saucepan reserve ½ a cupful of the cooking liquid. Tip the drained potatoes, beans and pasta back into the dry pan. Add the pesto from the processor and enough of the cooking water to give a runny sauce. Mix well and serve immediately. You could also use pre-prepared pest of course.

French Bean and Potato Curry

200g French beans, cut in 1cm pieces	3 large potatoes, diced in 1cm cubes
10g ginger	2 garlic cloves
2 tbsp vegetable oil	1 tsp cumin seeds
½ tsp turmeric powder	½ tsp red chilli powder
6 cherry tomatoes, chopped	1 tsp tomato paste
½ tsp garam masala	½ lime or lemon
salt	

Grind the ginger and garlic cloves into a paste in a pestle and mortar. Set aside. Heat the vegetable oil in large saucepan on a medium heat. Add the cumin and saute for ½ a minute then add the diced potatoes and saute for 2 minutes. Add the salt, turmeric and chilli powders to the pan and saute for a further 2 minutes. Add the ginger and garlic paste, stir well and saute the potatoes for a further 2 minutes. Add the green beans and saute for a minute. Then add the chopped tomatoes and tomato paste, stirring well. Remove the pan from the flame and leave aside for 1-2 minutes. Add salt to taste. Prior to serving, sprinkle garam masala and the juice of the ½ lemon and lime.

French Bean, Potato and Halloumi Bake

700g potatoes, chopped into bite-size chunks	cloves garlic, skin-on and bashed
3 tbsp olive oil	200g green beans, halved
225g halloumi, cut into 2cm cubes	2 squeezes lemon
2tbsp basil, roughly chopped	

Preheat oven to 200°C / 180°C Fan / Gas 6. Put the potatoes in a large roasting tray with the garlic. Add the olive oil, season and toss well. Roast for 30 mins. Remove from the oven, add the beans and halloumi and toss to combine. Everything should be in a single layer. Return the tray to the oven for 15 mins until the beans are tender and the cheese is starting to caramelise. Discard the garlic. Add a good squeeze of lemon juice, toss everything again then transfer to a serving dish. Scatter with basil and some black pepper.

Honey and Courgette Tea Loaf

225g grated courgettes	3 Hen Nation eggs
100g caster sugar	100g soft brown sugar
250ml groundnut oil	1 tbsp honey
1 tsp ground ginger	1 tsp vanilla
375g self-raising flour	

This makes either one large cake or 2 loaf-sized ones. Preheat the oven to 170C and prepare two loaf tines with butter and parchment paper. In a large bowl whisk the eggs until light and fluffy then add the sugar, vanilla and honey. Whisk vigorously again then add the oil and whisk again, ideally with a mixer. Add the flour in stages and mix in well. Add the grated courgette and fold in until combined. Divide equally between the two tins and bake for 45 minutes.

My old friend Richard was coming up to stay for the weekend. The impending visit was the impetus I needed to spring clean. I hoovered, dusted, polished, cleaned windows, lugged stuff about from room to room. I was on my knees before he even got off the train with barely the energy to cook him a meal. I'm sure he would far rather have had some nice home-cooked food than a sparkling bathroom mirror.

We went over to Whitby. Unbeknown to me, it was Goth weekend. Thousands of Dracula-worshipping, ghost-like figures wandering the cobbled streets in Victorian dress. They were amazing. We visited the beautiful ruined Abbey, that was less amazing as for some reason they had put three giant, inflatable pink and turquoise serpents in it. A machine whirred annoyingly and their heads bobbed about. Depicting what? Juxtaposed against the Abbey, perhaps the beginning and end of civilisation.

Now that Parliament and political broadcasting have disappeared for Easter and Brexit is back in its burrow, as detestable as it all is, I'm already feeling the withdrawal symptoms. Can't live with it, can't live without it. I may have to go and have a punch-up in Richmond's Georgian market place.

I hope you have a very Happy Easter,

Kind wishes,

Isobel