



Monday 28th October 2019

Dear Customer,

After the deluge, and again having to move the sheep away from the river, it is a beautiful and sunny Sunday. I'm not generally a fan of autumn as it's too close to Christmas, but today it has been glorious. I walked under a horse chestnut tree with yellow translucent leaves, glowing, and soaked in sunlight. A reminder that life's pleasures are in these small moments. Nature gives us many such moments. It also gives us a generous repertoire of autumn root vegetables which we've been running through these last few weeks with Jerusalem artichokes, celeriac, beetroot and parsnips. And now the one you've all been waiting for..... the swede. It contains vitamin A, vitamin E and B vitamins, as well as being a good source of potassium, calcium, phosphorus manganese, folate and more. But it is particularly notable for its high vitamin C content which remains almost totally unchanged upon cooking, and it's magnesium content which actually increases when cooked. It was widely cultivated during the Renaissance across Europe. In the 18th century the Scottish botanist Patrick Miller received a swede plant as a gift from King Gustave III of Sweden, marking its introduction into Great Britain. Et voila.

Here are a few tasty recipes you could try this week:

Baked Onions and Swede

1 swede, peeled and cut into 2-3cm cubes	2 tbsp olive oil
1 rosemary sprig, leaves finely chopped	6 thyme sprigs
50g butter or margarine	3 onions, thinly sliced
2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced	2 bay leaves
250ml vegetable stock	

Preheat the oven to 200°C / Gas 6. Put the swede in a roasting tin with the oil. Add the chopped rosemary and leaves from 2 thyme sprigs, plus salt and plenty of black pepper, then toss together well. Cook in the oven for 45 minutes, stirring a couple of times, until soft and tinged with gold in places. Meanwhile, melt the butter or margarine in a large saucepan. Add the onions, garlic, bay, leaves from 2 more thyme sprigs and a generous pinch of salt. Cook over a medium heat, stirring often for 20 minutes, until the onions are soft and golden. Stir the onions into the swede. Add the stock, a pinch of salt and a generous grind of black pepper. Scatter the remaining thyme leaves over the top and return to the oven for 30-40 minutes, until the stock has become thick and syrupy. Remove from the oven, taste and adjust the seasoning.

Swede and Carrot Mash with Roasted Garlic

1 bulb garlic	100ml olive oil
500g carrots, peeled and cut into 2cm cubes	600g swede, peeled and cut into 2cm cubes
25g butter or margarine	

Preheat the oven to 200°C / Gas 6. Cut the garlic bulb in half horizontally, place on a sheet of foil, drizzle with 1 tbs of the oil and season with sea salt and pepper. Wrap the foil around the garlic and place on a baking sheet in the oven for 40 minutes, until golden and soft. Place the carrots and swede in a large pan of water and bring to the boil. Simmer for 20 minutes until soft, then drain and allow to cool in the colander for 5 minutes. Return the carrots and swede to a clean saucepan. Squeeze in the roasted garlic, throwing away the papery skins, and add the butter or margarine, then purée using a stick blender.

Black Bean Chilli Pie

1 chilli	2 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, chopped	1 red pepper, cut into bite-sized pieces
2 garlic cloves, crushed	1 tsp fajita spice
2 x 400g tins plum tomatoes	2 x 400g tins black beans, 1 undrained
750g swede, peeled and cut into chunks	280g potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks

Preheat the oven to 200°C / Gas 6. Heat 1 tbsp oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat. Cook the onion with a pinch of salt for 5 minutes, until starting to soften. Add the pepper and garlic and cook for another 7 minutes, adding the fajita spice for the last 2 minutes. Finely chop the chilli. Add the tomatoes to the pan, mash a little with a wooden spoon; add the black beans (including the liquid from 1 can) and chopped chilli. Simmer for 15-20 minutes until thickened, season. Meanwhile, cover the swede and potato with cold water in a medium pan, add a pinch of salt and cover with a lid. Bring to the boil then simmer for 15 minutes, until soft. Drain, then return the swede and potato to the pan. Mash with a potato masher, stir in the remaining 1 tbsp oil and season. Pour the bean mixture into an ovenproof dish (about 1.8 litres in volume) and top with the swede mash. Bake for 25-30 minutes until the top is crisp and golden.

It was Ernest's 70th birthday yesterday. I walked into town to buy him a card. In the local art gallery in Finkle street there were racks and racks of them but only one stood out, a 3D picture of a turtle with YOU OLD GIT written on it. I tried to resist but couldn't. I bought a card with a cow on too as back-up in case I changed my mind, but I didn't. Well he is an old git. I bought him some chocolates and flowers and a book called 'Wilding' by Isabella Tree. He received them with a half grunt, a demi-mmm, seemed bemused by the flowers. I didn't allude at all to what he has said since I've known him, that he only wanted to live 'threescore years and ten'. 'Well you say that now but you won't say that when you get there' I'd say. Of course this was man's expected life span in the days when the phrase was coined..... and what Yorkshire Dales folks have clung onto ... that's your lot, it's all you're getting... ..'the days of our years are threescore years and ten..' That's just horrible.

But life flies by. I feel like I'm wasting mine at the moment. I'm an ethical entrepreneur, I'm waiting for my next big idea...waiting and waiting. Perhaps I won't have another one. After I got into trouble taking too many risks, I consciously switched off the part of my brain which produced ideas. I had no choice.... it worked.... I haven't had an idea since. Ernest suggested perhaps as you get older your batteries run out. Well, that is the worry. Ernest has mastered the art of doing almost nothing, and that is the overriding vibe in the whole town – revelling in living in such a pretty town with such magnificent views and stunning landscapes one can just walk into. I'm really not ready for that, I need a greater purpose. Will carry on looking...

I hope you have a good week,

Kind wishes,

Isobel