



Monday 4th November 2019

Dear Customer,

I hope this finds you well. It's all a bit murky up here, foggy and dripping. We were thankfully spared the gales and heavy rain which hit further south though so didn't have the emergency of running the sheep back to the farm.

So the 12th December, the election. I entered it into my diary.....lest I forget ! And there suspended in the corner of the page, a circle, a full moon, the 'cold moon'. Beautiful timing. A moonlit night, wolves howling, bats beating, and leading us nicely into Friday 13th when the results will be disgorged. The perfect backdrop to the most terrifying election of our lives.

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

Garden Vegetable Soup

<i>1 medium onion, roughly chopped</i>	<i>2 leeks, roughly chopped</i>
<i>2 cloves garlic, chopped</i>	<i>olive oil</i>
<i>3 potatoes</i>	<i>2 courgettes</i>
<i>100g frozen peas</i>	<i>200g green eg spinach, kale</i>
<i>1.4 litres hot vegetable stock</i>	<i>few sprigs mint</i>

Put 2 tbsp olive oil in a large saucepan. Add the onion, leeks and garlic, put a lid on slightly askew and cook until tender. Peel the potatoes and chop into 2cm chunks along with the courgettes. Add to the saucepan and season. Pour in the hot stock and turn the heat up to high, bring to the boil then let simmer for 10 minutes. Add the greens and peas and continue cooking until all is tender. Blitz with a blender and serve scattered with fresh mint and croutons. To make delicious croutons, spread chunky pieces of bread on a baking tray, drizzle with olive oil and bake in a hot oven for 10-15 minutes, or until golden and crisp.

Broccoli Pasta

<i>head broccoli, chopped</i>	<i>50ml extra virgin olive oil, plus 2 tablespoons to serve</i>
<i>3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced</i>	<i>½ tsp chilli flakes</i>
<i>300g pasta</i>	<i>50g pine nuts, toasted</i>
<i>handful of fresh basil leaves</i>	<i>salt and freshly ground black pepper</i>

Cook the broccoli in boiling salted water until tender. Meanwhile, heat the olive oil in a separate pan and cook the garlic and chilli for 2-3 minutes or until the garlic is golden brown. When cooked, scoop out the broccoli with a slotted spoon and add to the pan with the garlic and chilli along with 60ml of the broccoli cooking water, reserving the remaining water. Using the back of a fork, crush the broccoli with the garlic to form a coarse purée. Return the pan containing the broccoli cooking water to the heat and bring to the boil. Add the pasta and cook to al dente. Drain and tip into a large serving bowl. Top with the broccoli purée and drizzle over the additional olive oil. Scatter with the toasted pine nuts and basil leaves. Toss well and season with black pepper.

Charred Leek and Broccoli Egg Bake

<i>2 tbsp olive oil</i>	<i>240g steamed leeks</i>
<i>200g broccoli, blanched</i>	<i>6 Hen Nation eggs, lightly beaten</i>
<i>200ml plain full-fat yoghurt</i>	<i>½ tsp chilli flakes</i>
<i>zest of 1 large lemon</i>	<i>100g Lancashire cheese</i>

Preheat the grill to high. Pat dry the leeks and broccoli and oil them. Grill for 5 minutes, or until charred. Or, cook in a frying pan over a high heat until charred. Set the oven to 170C /335F / Gas 3½. Mix the eggs, yoghurt, chilli flakes and zest, season thoroughly with salt and pepper, then beat with a whisk until well-combined and frothy. The more you beat it, the more it will puff up when baked. Grease a baking dish and pour in the egg mixture. Then lower in the leeks and broccoli and sprinkle with the cheese. Bake for 10 minutes or until the mixture is just starting to set. Serve with a simple salad dressed with vinaigrette.

Potato and Courgette Tian

<i>2 onions, sliced</i>	<i>1 clove garlic, crushed</i>
<i>2 tbsp olive oil</i>	<i>2 courgettes</i>
<i>3 large potatoes</i>	<i>3-4 tomatoes</i>
<i>1 tbsp thyme leaves</i>	<i>75g Gruyere, grated</i>

Preheat the oven to 180C/ Gas 4. Grease a large ovenproof dish. Fry the onions and garlic in 1 tbsp of oil for 3 minutes, until just starting to turn brown. Spread over the bottom of the dish. Cut the potatoes, courgettes and tomatoes into 1cm slices. Arrange on top of the onions, overlapping in a single layer. Drizzle with the rest of the oil and sprinkle over the thyme. Cover with foil and bake for 35-40 minutes. Remove the foil, scatter with the cheese and bake for 15 minutes more, until the cheese bubbles.

When I was in West Country I visited David Govier who grows and bunches all our spinach, cavolo nero and kale amongst other things. I turned up without much notice, actually with no notice as my phone had no signal to warn him, and found him on a south facing slope. He was in the middle of the kale crop stripping away the outer, tougher leaves from each plant, allowing the new growth to come through. The stripped leaves with all their goodness would be ploughed back into the earth to nourish it.

The farm, 270 acres of it, lies a few miles from Crediton, reached down lanes bordered by the typical, formidable Devon hedges, impossible to see through or over. He has lived on the farm since he was 6 and has taken it over from his father Bernard. They were very early organic farmers, starting the conversion in 1983 and becoming fully organic in 1988.

As we were chatting the postman turned up at the bottom gate, David told him to chuck the parcel over into the field. New clothes apparently, he was going to Serbia on holiday the next day. The postman was going too, and a man who drove past on a combine harvester, all going to Serbia, all part of a local cycling group of boys who had grown up together. He was raging about Brexit and politicians and raged a bit about car parking charges in Crediton, suggesting he should join the local council, but that he was probably too angry and would cause too much trouble.

I didn't stay long, left him to finish stripping the kale and get ready for his trip. His bunched greens are in the bags this week.

Kind wishes,

Isobel