



Monday 16th December 2019

Dear Customer,

I can see patches of white glittery snow over on the hills, winter on the horizon. It's Sunday, just 10 days to Christmas, and here are a few Christmassy recipes you could try:

Braised Red Cabbage

1kg red cabbage	450g onions, small diced
450g apples, small diced	1 clove garlic, finely chopped
1/3 whole nutmeg, grated	¼ level tsp ground cinnamon
¼ level tsp ground cloves	3 level tbsp brown sugar
3 tbsp wine vinegar	15g butter or margarine

Preheat the oven to 150C/ 300F/ Gas 2. Cut the cabbage into quarters, remove the core and discard then finely chop the quarters. In a large casserole arrange a layer of shredded cabbage then a layer of onions and apples with a sprinkling of the garlic, spices and sugar. Continue alternate layers until everything is in. Pour the wine vinegar in and add dots of the butter or margarine on top. Put a lid on the casserole and let it cook very slowly in the oven for 2 or more hours, stirring everything round a few times during the cooking. It can be cooked a few days advance and reheated to serve.

Honey-Glazed Roast Carrots and Parsnips

500g carrots, peeled	500g parsnips, peeled
2 tbsp olive oil	4 tbsp clear honey
2 tbsp wholegrain mustard	

Preheat the oven to 220C/ Gas 7. Place a roasting tray in the oven to heat up. Meanwhile, slice the carrots and parsnips lengthways into halves or quarters so that they are evenly sized. In a large bowl, whisk together the olive oil, honey and mustard. Add the vegetables to the bowl and toss thoroughly to evenly coat in the glaze. Place on the hot tray and roast for 30 minutes until the vegetables are tender and caramelised.

Celeriac Soup with Toasted Hazelnuts

2 tbsp olive oil	knob of butter or creamy margarine
1 onion, finely diced	2 celery sticks, chopped (optional)
1 clove garlic, finely chopped	1 celeriac, peeled and diced
1 medium potato, peeled and diced	1 bay leaf
1 tbsp lemon thyme leaves	1 litre vegetable stock
100g blanched hazelnuts	2 tbsp crème fraîche
½ lemon	

To toast hazelnuts, preheat the oven to 180°C/ Gas 4. Spread the nuts over a baking tray and place in the oven for about 5 minutes until golden. Meanwhile, heat the oil and butter or margarine in a medium saucepan. Cook the onion, and celery if using, for 3-4 minutes until beginning to soften. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute more. Add the celeriac, potato, bay leaf and thyme and cook for 1 minute. Pour over the stock, cover and simmer for 20 minutes until the vegetables are very tender. Remove the pan from the heat and take out the bay leaf. Add about three quarters of the hazelnuts, then chop the remaining nuts and set aside. Blend the soup with a stick blender until smooth, stir in the crème fraîche and blend again. Add a squeeze of lemon then ladle into bowls. Serve scattered with the reserved hazelnuts.

My fingers are quivering over the keyboard with the voice of my late father whispering in my ear 'don't write about politics or religion'. Religion, that's very easy, politics less so. But actually, I am sick of it, I can't take any more. I'm obsessed, possessed.... imprisoned by it. I should have gone to sleep after the exit poll but there was never any question of that, I needed to see every single result come in, well all but St Ives. I went to sleep at around 6.20am....didn't want to. Then I wake up and watch every piece of analysis on every channel and watch online anything I may have missed and late into the night. I've got square eyes and my brain hurts, I'm exhausted.

I came down this morning and there's my MP Rishi Sunak being interviewed by Andrew Marr. Hi re-election was a dead cert. He, the new 'One Nation' poster boy, me, his stalker. He's getting too tantalisingly close to power for me not to be. I suspect he will end up Health Secretary before long. And now I have one hell of a headache trying to work out how this 'levelling up' of the North can happen, I'm aching all over as if it's my problem to solve, blowing fuses brainstorming. I've got some ideas, but thought I'd better write this before I start writing to him.....again.

That 'red wall' that was, it is all around me. I drive through it going places and if you don't know the areas, they are seriously poor and thrive only on the community spirit which bound them together when their pits were closed. Since Thatcher closed them nothing has ever come to replace them, no industry, no jobs. Out of sight, out of mind, even for Blair and it was literally on his doorstep. I just hope the pledge to them will be honoured after they spilled their blood on those ballot papers. These are certainly interesting and unprecedented times.

If this is your last delivery before Christmas, I hope you have a good one. And I want to thank you hugely for all your support, for sticking with us, for putting up with me, and for being as ever, our fantastic customers.

Happy Christmas

Isobel

PS For weeks commencing 23rd December and 30th of December, if you are a Wednesday delivery your order will come to you on the day before, so on the Tuesday. Thursday deliveries will be delivered on Friday and Friday deliveries will be delivered on the Saturday. The Jumbo Christmas Vegetable Bag £29.50 and Christmas Fruit Box £29.50 are available for delivery week commencing 23rd December. With lots of variety they will include generous family portions of all you will need to tide you over the festive period.