



**Monday 12<sup>TH</sup> January 2020**

Dear Customer,

It's Sunday morning, the sun is shining and it feels quite spring-like. Maybe winter won't come, it would be good to have a year off.

Celery is very underrated cooked and as a side dish. It's so versatile and tasty, and nutritious, full of vitamin K in particular, for healthy bones, as well as folate, B vitamins, calcium, magnesium, vitamins A and C. To braise it, cut into 4" pieces and arrange in a single layer in a frying pan. Season and dot with butter or margarine and cover with 225ml of good stock. Cover the pan, bring to the boil, then simmer for 30 minutes and serve with chopped parsley. To roast it, simply chop and spread in a single layer on foil in a baking tray, drizzle with oil, season with salt and pepper, and using your hands make sure the pieces are all well-coated. Roast, turning occasionally at 400F/ 200C/ Gas 6 for 15-30 minutes depending on how crunchy or tender you want it. You could sprinkle with lemon juice to serve.

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

**Roast Beetroot with a Tahini and Ginger Dressing**

500g beetroot, trimmed and cut into wedges  
4 thyme sprigs  
½ lemon, juice  
1 tsp finely grated ginger  
¼ tsp ground turmeric

4 tbsp olive oil  
2 tbsp tahini, well stirred  
1 tsp honey or maple syrup  
1 garlic clove, crushed

Preheat the oven to 190°C / 370F / Gas 5. Toss the beetroot wedges with 2 tbsp olive oil, season and spread out in a roasting tin. Roast for 20 minutes. Stir in the thyme and roast for 20-25 minutes, until the beetroot is tender. Put the remaining 2 tbsp oil in a food processor with the tahini, lemon juice, honey or maple syrup, ginger, garlic and turmeric. Add 100ml lukewarm water, season and blend until smooth. This makes a thick dressing, so loosen it with a little extra water, if liked. Spoon the dressing over the roast beetroot and serve.

**Roasted Beetroot, Coconut and Ginger Soup**

500g beetroot, scrubbed  
1 onion, finely sliced  
30g fresh root ginger, cut into matchsticks  
1 tbsp lemon juice  
small handful dill leaves

2 tbsp olive oil  
2 celery stalks, finely sliced  
1 litre vegetable stock  
4 tbsp coconut coconut cream or yoghurt, plus extra to serve

Preheat the oven to 200C / 390F / Gas 6. Cut the beetroot, unpeeled, into bite-sized chunks. Toss with 1 tbsp oil, season, and roast for 30 minutes, tossing halfway. Meanwhile, heat the remaining 1 tbsp oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat. Sauté the onion, celery and ginger for 10-15 minutes, until softened and starting to caramelize. Stir in the cooked beetroot, then the stock and bring to the boil. Season, simmer for 5 minutes, then take off the heat and leave to cool for 10 minutes. Transfer to a blender with the lemon juice, coconut milk yogurt and most of the dill. Whizz until smooth, adding more lemon juice and seasoning to taste, and a little water to loosen if needed. Serve with a spoonful more yogurt and a scattering of dill.

**Roast Celery and Blue Cheese Tart**

6 large celery stalks, trimmed and peeled  
2 x 215g packs frozen shortcrust pastry sheets, defrosted  
100g organic blue cheese, crumbled  
150ml organic milk

2 tbsp olive oil  
2 tbsp fresh thyme leaves, 1 tbsp finely chopped  
150ml organic double cream  
4 Hen Nation eggs, lightly beaten

Preheat the oven to 190°C / 370F / Gas 5. Slice each celery stalk into 3 even lengths. Transfer to a roasting tin, toss with the oil, season and spread out in a single layer. Roast for 45 minutes until just tender and beginning to brown. Meanwhile, lay both pastry sheets out on a lightly floured work surface. Overlap the long sides of each sheet. Scatter with the 1 tbsp finely chopped thyme and roll the pastry out slightly thinner to seal the join, embed the herbs and make a wider rectangle. Use to line a deep 23cm tart tin with a removable base, pressing the pastry into any fluting and leaving at least 3cm overhanging around the edges. Prick the base and chill for 30 minutes. Sit the pastry case on a baking tray and line with baking parchment filled with baking beans. Bake for 25 minutes, until the pastry no longer looks wet, then remove the paper and beans and cook for 5-10 minutes more until it looks just cooked. Trim the pastry. Turn the oven down to 170°C / 340F / Gas 3. Arrange the roasted celery in the pastry case and scatter with the cheese and remaining thyme. Mix together the cream, milk and eggs in a jug and season. Carefully pour into the tart case and return to the oven for 35 minutes..

It's now Monday and storm Brendan is with us, howling and pouring with rain. The sort of weather many of us spend on the internet. But the internet can be a master of feeding anxiety, fuelling it like a rocket. For example, something popped up on my screen, a man had his 2-yr old spaniel stolen from his van. He was completely devastated saying that the dog was his life. It's unimaginable. I look at Lainey, if someone stole her, I would never get over it. Apparently 3000 dogs a year are stolen in the UK.

I am hoping to go to France in the spring so googled to find out how many dogs get stolen in France, a massive 70,000 dogs a year and rising. Looking at Lainey through the eyes of a dog snatcher, she is absolutely beautiful, trusting, affectionate, and in her prime - a good factory farm breeding dog, or good bait. In France they are even stolen for laboratories and for meat and skin. I look at Lainey through the eyes of a dog eater, she looks fleshy and appetising with big juicy thighs. All in all, she's an attractive and versatile proposition and I'm feeling tortured. So, can't go to France with her and can't go to France without her.

I hope you're having a better week than I am,

Kind wishes,

Isobel