



Monday 23rd November 2020

Dear Customer,

I hope this finds you well, and a little more optimistic now there is a tangible end to this nightmare with vaccines nearly at the ready. What brilliant scientists we have in the world. Of course, there are many question marks still remain. What are the ramifications of a vaccine that protects those vaccinated but leaves them still infectious to others. At least it means those known to be vulnerable can be protected but it isn't the whole solution. And the new Oxford one which is only 70% effective, it's good but would hardly give one enough sense of protection to go about life as normal again. That said, we will start to hone them, we will start to bear down on this monster.

It's Monday morning, grey but dry and quite a lot nippier. This weekend was bright and sunny but I missed it, having spent the weekend in bed with a migraine. You just have to try and sleep, and sleep again and again until you can eventually drag yourself out of bed. The excessive sleep means no doubt problems getting any sleep at all for the rest of the week. In and out of consciousness leads to strange dreams. At one point as I lay in my dishevelled bed, I was an email, with a header above the pillows, about to be sent.

All that hence this short note this week.

Here are a few tasty recipes you could try:

Beetroot Pasta

400g beetroot
half a lemon
1 tbsp capers

fresh herbs eg parsley, dill, thyme or tarragon
200 - 300g pasta

Cook the pasta for 3 minutes less than the packet instructions. Reserve some of the water when you drain it. Grate the beetroot coarsely. Heat a tablespoon of oil in a deep frying-pan (big enough to later add the pasta), and when the oil is hot, add the capers. Fry the capers for a minute or so and then add the beetroot. When the beetroot has softened and is starting to collapse, add the pasta with a large splash of pasta water. Season with salt and pepper. Simmer the pasta in the beetroot sauce until the water has evaporated and the pasta is fully cooked. Add more of your reserved pasta water if it dries out too quickly. When the pasta is cooked, squeeze over half a lemon and the chopped herbs and combine.

Roast Beetroot with Ginger and Tahini Dressing

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

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

Preheat the oven to 190°C/ 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, or until the beetroot is tender. Put the remaining 2 tbsp oil in a small blender or food processor with the tahini, lemon juice, honey or maple syrup, ginger, garlic and turmeric. Add 100ml lukewarm water, season and blend until smooth. Loosen it with a little extra water if liked. Spoon the dressing over the roast beets and serve with some griddled flatbreads.

Kale and Bean Stew

4 tbsp olive oil
3 carrots, peeled and finely diced
450g tin cannellini beans,
2 bay leaves
1 tsp ground black pepper
removed

2 leeks, halved, washed and finely sliced
8 cloves garlic, finely chopped
3 tbsp dried mixed herbs
450g tin cherry tomatoes or chopped tomatoes
140g finely shredded kale, stems
2 tsp sea salt flakes

Topping

2 tsp olive oil
1 lemon, finely grated zest

6 tbsp breadcrumbs
40g flat leaf parsley, finely chopped

Warm a large saucepan over a medium heat. Add the oil, leeks, carrots and garlic. Stir and put the lid on. Leave the veg to sweat over a low heat for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the drained beans, dried herbs, bay leaves, tomatoes and a cup of boiling water to the saucepan. Boil for 10 minutes then add the kale. Simmer for 15 minutes more. Add the salt and pepper. Before serving, warm the oil in a clean frying pan over a high heat, then fry the breadcrumbs until golden and crisp. Leave to cool slightly then mix with the lemon zest and parsley. Serve the stew, removing the bay, sprinkled with the crumbs.

Roasted Beetroot Coconut and Ginger Soup

500g beetroot, scrubbed
2 leeks, finely sliced
1 litre fresh vegetable stock
4 tbsp coconut cream

2 tbsp olive oil
30g fresh root ginger, cut into matchsticks
1 tbsp lemon juice
small handful dill leaves

Preheat the oven to 200C/ Gas 6. Top and tail the beetroot and cut into bite-sized chunks (there's no need to peel them). 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 leeks and ginger for 10-15 minutes, until softened and starting to caramelise. 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 cream and most of the dill. Whizz until smooth, adding more seasoning and lemon juice as required, and more water to loosen, if needed. Serve with a scattering of dill.

Kind wishes,

Isobel