



## Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Dear Customer,

It's a still, misty Sunday evening. I've just been out with my torch to walk Lainey on Westfields. The moon was full and with a bewitching, smoky aura. The owl was hooting. It really is a beautiful world. As much as we try, we will never destroy it. It will outlive our puny race. Our debris will become a strata in the rock and earth's creatures will rise and evolve again in all their glory, free from their shackles, free from persecution. Good riddance to us, the sooner we're wiped out the better.

In the meantime, here are a few tasty recipes you could try this week:

### Caramelised Fennel Pasta

1 tbsp olive oil	1 tsp fennel seeds
1 large fennel, thinly sliced, any fronds reserved	1 tsp sugar
360g linguine or other pasta	½ orange, zest
1 tsp white wine vinegar	10g dill, fronds roughly chopped
20g toasted pine nuts	

Heat the oil in a frying pan over a low heat, then add the fennel seeds and fennel with a pinch of salt. Cover and cook for 10-15 minutes until soft. Add the sugar and cook for a further 10 minutes until golden and caramelised. Meanwhile, cook the linguine to al dente, reserving a cup of the cooking water before draining. Tip the pasta into the pan of caramelised fennel and stir in the orange zest, vinegar and most of the dill. Add enough of the reserved cooking water to coat everything and make a light sauce. Serve in bowls with the remaining dill, reserved fennel fronds and the pine nuts scattered over.

### Potato and Cauliflower Curry and Garlic Naans

2 tbsp sunflower oil	4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 medium onion, thinly sliced	1 tbsp chopped ginger
½ tsp ground turmeric	2 tsp ground coriander
1 tsp ground cumin	500g potatoes, quartered
2 tbsp tomato purée	150ml natural yogurt
1 tsp garam masala	1 cauliflower, trimmed and cut into florets
25g butter or margarine	25g fresh coriander, finely chopped
2 plain naans	

Heat the oil in a large saucepan, add half the garlic, and all the onion and ginger. Cook gently for 3-4 minutes until softened, then add the spices and seasoning and cook for a minute. Add the potatoes and stir to coat in the spices. Stir in the tomato purée and 300ml cold water and bring to the boil. Cover the pan and simmer for 10 minutes until the potatoes are almost tender.

Stir the yogurt and garam masala into the pan juices. Add the cauliflower to the pan (the liquid will not cover this, but it will cook in the steam), recover and simmer gently for 15-18 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the cauliflower is really tender. Meanwhile, make the garlic naan wedges. Preheat the oven to 200°C / Gas 6. Heat the butter or margarine with the remaining garlic and half the chopped coriander until melted, and brush over one side of the naan. Pop in the oven for 3-4 minutes until piping hot, then cut into wedges. Garnish the curry with the remaining chopped coriander and serve with the naan wedges.

### Carrot Soup with Crispy Chickpeas

1kg carrots, peeled	2 tbsp olive oil
1 large onion, finely chopped	4 cloves garlic, peeled and halved
1 tsp cumin seeds	½ tsp coriander seeds
750ml vegetable stock	25g butter or margarine
Natural yogurt, or non-dairy alternative, to serve	
For the Chickpeas:	
½ x 400g can chickpeas, drained	1 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp ras el hanout	

Preheat the oven to 180°C/ Gas 4. Chop the carrots into thick batons and add to a roasting tin. Drizzle with a tbsp olive oil and a pinch of salt, toss to coat and roast for 40-45 minutes until tender and beginning to caramelize. When the carrots are nearly done, warm the remaining oil in a large saucepan. Add the onion, garlic, cumin and coriander seeds and sauté for 10 minutes, until the onion is soft. Add the roasted carrots, then cover with the stock and 500ml water. Bring to a simmer, then cook for 15 minutes. Remove from the heat. Meanwhile, combine the chickpeas, olive oil, ras el hanout and a pinch of salt in a small bowl and toss to coat. Spread on a baking tray and roast for 15-20 minutes until golden and crispy. Blend the carrot mixture with the butter or margarine and blitz until smooth and silky. Serve with a swirl of natural yogurt and scattering of chickpeas.

I had a surprise visit from my brother. He was passing Richmond en route to see his accountant. He didn't come in. We stood in the garden in the drizzle for 20 minutes. 'I don't know when I'll see you again?' I said. 'When there's a vaccine', and he was off. I'm getting used to not seeing anyone much and never going very far. It's not too bad really. I've found a new French property website Le Figaro Immobilier which is keeping me occupied. I'd wondered where all the normal French houses were. I cancelled my new subscription to New Scientist. That was such a relief. I couldn't cope with it relentlessly dropping through the letter box. A bit disappointed though not making the grade to be a nerd.

It can feel remote here, out on the edge of existence. So quite novel to learn that part of Whitehall, half the Treasury, is probably moving 20 minutes away to a new site at Teeside Airport. I'll be able to pop in and see them. They're on it, the 'levelling-up'. That's what comes of having a Chancellor of the Exchequer as your MP. I've been wondering whether to ask him if he will officially open my new barter website [www.nocashclub.com](http://www.nocashclub.com). The name's a bit unfortunate though. Might give it a go.

Out of one lockdown and into the next with harsh Tiers all round. Hope you have a good week,

Kind wishes,

Isobel