



Monday 25th January 2021

Dear Customer,

We've seen the back of the snow finally and are enjoying some sunny, crisp afternoons. The days are lengthening and the aconites and snowdrops are coming into bloom. Sun and flowers, such a tonic.

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

Baked Turnips with Almonds and Aioli

turnips, peeled and cut into 1cm wedges	2 tbsp olive oil
40g skin-on almonds	25g chives, finely chopped
For the Aioli	
1 Hen Nation egg yolk	1 tbsp lemon juice
1-2 garlic cloves, crushed	75ml olive oil
50ml sunflower oil	

Preheat the oven to 220°C/ Gas 7. Put the turnips on a baking tray, toss with the oil and season. Roast for 20-30 minutes, until golden and tender to the point of a knife. Put the almonds on a separate tray and roast for 6-7 minutes, until a shade darker and aromatic. Set aside to cool then cut into slivers. Meanwhile, make the aioli. Put the egg yolk, lemon juice, garlic and a good pinch of salt in a bowl. Slowly drizzle in the olive oil, then the sunflower oil, whisking continuously. Once all the oil is added it should be very thick; to make it thinner, whisk in warm water ½ tsp at a time, until it reaches your desired consistency. Season with salt or lemon juice, if needed. Arrange the turnips on a serving dish, scatter over the slivered almonds and chives, then serve immediately with the aioli.

Buttered Turnip and Carrot Mash

turnips, cut into 2cm pieces	4 carrots, cut into 2cm pieces
knob of butter or margarine	½ tsp freshly ground nutmeg
¼-½ tsp cayenne pepper	2 tbsp finely chopped flat leaf parsley

Put the vegetables in a large saucepan and cover with cold salted water. Bring to the boil and simmer for 25 minutes, until very tender. Drain well, return to the pan and leave to steam dry for 5 minutes. Mash roughly, then beat in the butter, spices and most of the parsley; season and serve, sprinkled with the remaining parsley.

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.

Oh these days. It's been a year now. In so many ways, like a bereavement, working our way through the stages of grief – the shock, the emotional distress, the anger, the sadness, the resignation. Our old world has departed and left us in this strange new one to which we try bravely to adjust. The stoicism is palpable. We never did know the future but now we really don't know it.

I'm sure we are each changing, daily, almost imperceptibly, little adaptations as we confront these new realities and muddled horizons. We don't know yet what the sum of those changes will produce but metamorphosing we certainly must be. And in the end of course our human spirit will prevail.

I never believed Chris Whitty last year when he said we would have to live with this forever. I thought that as a novel virus he couldn't possibly know. Then I thought that he was right after all. But is he ! We don't know that. It is still possible that over time as it mutates, it will weaken and peter out. I will hang onto that hope. But even if it doesn't, we will make sure we still live happy and fulfilling lives, we will just do it differently.

Despite everything I feel very lucky to live in a country where free speech is not just tolerated but encouraged. So disturbing has it been seeing the latest scenes in Russia and Hong Kong. Almost as disturbing is that the BBC and other news channels broadcast the faces of protestors. In the heat of the moment the individuals concerned give full face interviews without thinking of the ramifications for their safety. There is no attempt to blur their faces, disguise their identities before they broadcast to the world. Where dissent is met with imprisonment and torture it is neglectful to say the least.

I guess we are all finding our own ways to get through this period, this lockdown, these January blues with bells on. Whether it's spending an inordinate number of hours on social media, looking for an escape on Right Move, eating chips and biscuits, or indeed some Zen mindfulness or learning, whatever it takes to get us through. But we are getting through.

Well that's my chirpy Sunday morning sermon. I hope you have a good week,

Kind wishes, Isobel