



Monday 15th February 2021

Dear Customer,

It's Sunday and we're waiting for the thaw again. Temperatures are set to rise this afternoon and hopefully that will be the back of winter. My car has a foot of snow on it and icicles running round the bottom like a fringe. It always seems to start though. Gone are the days when they needed the shelter of a garage. I bet it won't start now. The washing machine still isn't fixed. I'm nearly out of all forms of jeans and trousers. The choice to go walking this morning was either a skirt or a shrunken pair of woollen leggings which only make it to just below the knee and whose waist elastic has gone. Being -4C I opted for the leggings which I had to pull up every 6 paces. Tomorrow the plumber arrives with the heating element, the car will probably have defrosted enough to go to the recycling bins – the highlight of the month.

Here are some tasty recipes you could try this week:

Aubergine and Lentil Ragù

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| 1 aubergine, cut into 2-3cm chunks | 2 tbsp olive oil |
| 1 onion, sliced | 2 garlic cloves, crushed |
| pinch ground allspice | ½ tsp ground paprika |
| 1 heaped tbsp tomato purée | 100g cooked whole chestnuts |
| 250g cooked Puy lentils | 300ml vegetable stock |
| 4 sun-dried tomatoes, thinly sliced | 350g dried spaghetti |
| 25g basil, leaves picked | |

Preheat the oven to 200 C / Gas 6. Toss the aubergine with 1 tbsp oil, season and spread out on a baking tray. Roast for 20-25 minutes, turning halfway, until golden. Meanwhile, heat the remaining 1 tbsp oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat and fry the onion until soft and starting to colour. Add the garlic, fry a couple of minutes then add the spices and tomato purée and fry for 2 minutes more. Crush the chestnuts with the back of a fork and stir into the pan with the lentils, stock and sun-dried tomatoes. Bring to a low simmer and cook for 4-5 minutes. Cook the pasta to pack instructions then drain. Stir the roasted aubergine through the ragù, season, then toss with the pasta. Serve scattered with a few basil leaves.

Aubergine and Pineapple Curry

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| medium aubergine | a tin pineapple chunks |
| 2-3 cloves of garlic | a tin coconut milk |
| 3 tbsp curry sauce | 1 tbsp dark soy sauce |
| 3 tbsp crunchy peanut butter | 1 tbsp sunflower oil |
| 1 tsp mustard seeds | 2 tsp lemon juice |

Chop the aubergine into chunks. Heat the oil and add in the mustard seeds. Once the seeds have popped, add the aubergine chunks. Mince the garlic and add to the aubergines with curry sauce and half the coconut milk. Mix and cook for 5 minutes. Add the rest of the coconut milk, peanut butter, the pineapple chunks and soy sauce. Mix well and allow the aubergines and pineapples to soften. Add the lemon juice and simmer for a further 5 minutes. Garnish with coriander and serve it with rice.

Broccoli Frittata

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| a small head of broccoli, cut into small florets | 1 tbsp olive oil |
| one clove garlic, crushed | an onion, finely chopped |
| 3 Hen Nation eggs | 75g cheese |

Cook the broccoli in boiling water for about 4-5 minutes until tender. Drain and pat dry. Heat the oil in a small, deep, non-stick frying pan and add the garlic and onion. Cook for 5-6 minutes until the onion is tender, then add the broccoli and toss together. Whisk the eggs in a bowl, season, add the broccoli and onion, season and

stir well. Tip the mixture back into the pan and spread out evenly. Cook gently until the bottom is set and then grate over the cheese and put under a hot grill until golden and bubbling.

I got an email this weekend from a TV filmmaker in Germany. He's making a documentary about ethical wool in Europe. I checked the channel - ZDF, one of the main ones. I'm really grateful but I can't stand being on camera, photographed, talking on the radio. By the way, Zoom, who knew you could be a cat ! To be honest, I had enough of it. I just did so much in the early years of Izzy Lane. I remember Katherine Hamnett saying to me 'publicity, publicity, publicity' was the key - saying the same thing over and over and over again. So I just kept saying the same thing over and over again to the point it practically bored a hole in my brain. I had to tell myself, 'come on, you're doing it for the animals', just keep saying it. That was always the case, it was about them, for them, not me. The sheep are ageing, it's all quieter - phew.

So the email "...we would like to shoot a part of our documentary with you and talk about your philosophy and vision....."

I haven't got a philosophy or a vision. Or if I have, I can't remember what it is. I can hardly string a sentence together. I'm a pandemic troglodyte. On top of that I've visibly aged 30 years since last January, I'm haggard, I've got a wallpaper scissor haircut, my tooth is still wobbling, my trousers are falling down. I'm barely in a fit state to be seen at the recycling bins let alone on national TV. I used to be quite - erm - fashionable. But how are they planning to film and when. Being in lockdown can come in quite handy.

We have lots of Izzy Lane customers in the EU, particularly Germany. At least did. Several of the last parcels sent out there have been missing for a month, one got immediately returned. Of the only two parcels to actually make it so far, one in Germany and one in France, they were charged 70 euros and 65 euros in customs charges for £145 sweaters. Both times I refunded to them. We will have to stop sending. So much for the free-trade agreement.

But seriously, I am of course grateful to have the opportunity to speak out for farm animals. They have no voice of their own.

I'm worried because I haven't seen any rats or mice this winter, or last either. I was always catching them in the house and humanely relocating them - usually to Ernest's barn with some guinea pig food. I scattered a big bowl of greens and carrots around the rabbit holes on Westfields last night. The wildlife has such a struggle for survival, everything is stacked against them.

I hope you have a good week,

Kind wishes, Isobel