



Monday 5th April 2021

Dear Customer,

Happy Easter ! I hope you had a nice holiday of sorts. I can't believe it's April already, how the weeks fly by.

Here are some tasty recipes you could try with your 'psb' this week:

Purple Sprouting Broccoli on Polenta

2 tbsp olive oil	75g quick cooking polenta
½ tsp salt	20g butter or margarine
1 clove garlic	250g cherry tomatoes, quartered
pinch chilli flakes	200g purple sprouting broccoli
30g black olives, sliced	

Lightly oil a loaf tin. Bring 375ml water to the boil in a small pan. Add the polenta and salt. Stir over a low-medium heat for 6-8 minutes, then stir in the butter or margarine. Scrape into the loaf tin so that the polenta is about 1.5cm deep. Smooth the surface with a spatula; leave to cool for 15 minutes. Meanwhile, heat 1 tbsp olive oil in a small pan with the garlic and a pinch of salt. Cook on a low heat for 3 minutes, then turn up the heat and cook until the garlic takes on a little colour. Add the tomatoes and chilli and simmer for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until it's saucy. Season and add a pinch of sugar, if needed. Heat the remaining 1 tbsp oil in a frying pan. Cut the cooled polenta into wedges and fry for 3-4 minutes on each side, until crisp and golden. Meanwhile, steam the broccoli until just tender. Divide the polenta between plates, top with the broccoli and a generous spoonful of sauce. Sprinkle with the olives to serve.

Purple Sprouting Broccoli with Satay Sauce

½ tsp groundnut oil	2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped	20g fresh root ginger, finely chopped
½-1 tbsp light brown soft sugar	2 tbsp smooth or crunchy peanut butter
100ml coconut milk	1 tbsp light soy sauce
lime or lemon, juice	
purple sprouting broccoli, trimmed and any thicker stems halved lengthways	

For the sauce, heat the oil in a small frying pan with the garlic, chilli and ginger over a low heat and cook for 1 minute. Stir in the sugar and cook for 2 minutes more, until melted and caramelised. Use a hand whisk to blend in the peanut butter, coconut milk and soy sauce with a pinch of salt. Warm through, remove from the heat and add some lime or lemon juice to taste. Keep warm. Steam the broccoli spears over simmering water for 6-8 minutes, until just tender. Divide between plates and accompany with dipping bowls of the sauce, or spoon it directly over the vegetables. Serve with rice or noodles to make it a main course.

It's Sunday morning and apart from some wind the weather has been absolutely glorious. It has been sunny, it's like a different world. My back garden is quite sheltered and I spent several hours yesterday lying out, listening to the birds. At one point I could hear the voice of a neighbour 4 doors down wafting over the fences. She sounded exactly like Margaret Thatcher. I wondered how strange I'd never noticed that before but then I'd probably never heard her voice before disconnected from her head.

I ventured out into the big, wide world, to Kiplin Hall the Jacobean mansion, grounds now open again. The car park was full so I entered with some trepidation expecting crowds. I walked through the walled garden, no-one, past the raspberry bushes and out the door next to the potting shed onto the woodland walk. Not a soul. The woods were full of primroses, daffodils, wood anemones and violets. Even some bluebells were starting to flower. I walked across the parkland, through the avenue of lime trees – still no-one. I looped round the lake, just one man fishing. I re-entered the formal grounds, walked round the gardens then saw them. They were all there queueing up at the wood-fired pizza van. I gave that a miss but made a mental note to tell my friend who has a tea-room up the Dale that she should start selling pizzas.

It's Sunday and the newspapers are full of speculation about being able to go on holiday from 17th May. One look across the globe and it's a grim picture isn't it, the virus is seething everywhere like a rot. It's truly horrible. The South African and Brazilian variants are rife in Europe. One wonders what the choice might be, where might be green-lighted – Turkmenistan, Tonga or North Korea perhaps – failing that, an oil platform in the North Sea.

Before I put the newsletters as a job lot onto our website, I usually give them a quick scan over. I check for anything libellous or mean. I check for hocus pocus and quackery – the blood of six toads and a tablespoon of arsenic to cure a cold... that sort of thing. I fish out a few glaring grammatical mistakes but leave most of them in, not quite sure what to do about them. But what a horrible batch of letters I have inflicted on you over these last few months. Reading them back-to-back like that, it's not good reading. Toads, snow, more snow, more toads, more snow and the dregs of the pandemic. I'm sorry.

So after genetically engineered crops, the next thing coming down the line is 'Geoengineering' – 'the deliberate large-scale intervention in the Earth's natural systems to counteract climate change.' For starters, there's Albedo Enhancement – increasing the reflectiveness of the clouds and land surface so that more of the sun's heat is reflected back into space. Space Reflectors – blocking some of the sunlight before it reaches earth.

And my favourite, Stratospheric Aerosols – introducing small, reflective particles into the upper atmosphere to reflect sunlight before it reaches the surface of the earth. What about Yorkshire ! Surely, we should look at the causes of climate change and address that instead. Will they be able to re-call these stratospheric aerosols if we start tanking towards another ice age. Will they be biodegradable or space microplastics. There are some things you just shouldn't mess with. Have we given up on trying to deal with the causes climate change, think it's easier to change the climate than the man. They are probably right.

By the way, after my note last week, thank you so much for the generous and lovely Google reviews, we really, really appreciate it. Especially as we only had one.

Kindest wishes,

Isobel

PS Monday morning and woke up to snow