



Monday 28th June 2021

Dear Customer,

I hope this finds you well. We had a beautiful spell of partial-sun when it felt like summer but these last days have been rainy and grey. It's humid and oppressive but it's good growing weather and midges like it. I can't believe it's almost July in this time-warp of a pandemic.

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

Pak Choi Noodle Stir-Fry

250g fine rice noodles	2 tbsp vegetable oil
2 garlic cloves, crushed	1 tsp fresh root ginger, chopped
1 fresh chilli, deseeded and chopped	2 small pak choi, shredded
1 tbsp soy sauce	

Soak the rice noodles in boiling water, off the heat, for 10 minutes, forking over occasionally to loosen the threads. Drain and toss with 1 tbsp oil. Heat the remaining oil in a wok and fry the garlic, ginger and chilli for a minute. Add the pak choi and turn in the hot oil for 3–4 minutes till it collapses a little. Stir in the noodles and toss over the heat till steam rises. Sprinkle with soy sauce and serve.

Griddled Pak Choi, Soya Beans and Sesame Butter

2½ tbsp sesame seeds, toasted	35g butter or buttery margarine
2 tbsp soy sauce	1 tbsp rice wine vinegar or lemon juice
200g frozen soya beans, defrosted and patted dry	2 x pak choi, trimmed
½ tbsp groundnut or vegetable oil	

Crush 2 tbsp toasted sesame seeds in a pestle and mortar, then tip into a small saucepan. Add the butter or margarine, soy and vinegar or lemon juice. Warm through gently to melt. Add the soya beans, stir and keep warm. Put a griddle pan over a very high heat until smoking hot. Slice each pak choi in half from top to bottom. Toss with the oil. Place on the griddle in a single layer, in 2 batches if needed, and cook for 2-3 minutes on each side. Serve with the buttery beans spooned over and scattered with the sesame.

Courgette Fritters with Roasted Tomatoes

3-400g tomatoes, halved lengthways	2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
3 tsp vegetable oil	80g self-raising flour
2 Hen Nation eggs	2 tsp hot sauce (optional), or fresh herbs
40g small capers, drained	400g grated courgette, pressed in a clean tea towel for 5 minutes

Preheat grill to medium. Place the tomatoes, cut-side up, on a tray lined with parchment. Mix the garlic and 1 tsp oil, brush over the tomatoes then season. Grill for 10 minutes. Turn the grill off and keep warm. In a bowl, whisk together the flour and 2 eggs to make a thick batter. Stir in half the capers and all the grated courgette, some hot sauce or fresh herbs, then season. Heat 1 tsp oil in a non-stick pan then add the batter in six spoonfuls. Fry for 2½ minutes on each side, until golden and puffed. Keep warm with the tomatoes. Serve the fritters and tomatoes, scattered with the remaining capers and more hot sauce or fresh herbs.

So it's 'goodbye Matt', 'hello Sajid'. He'd been looking like a man on the edge of burn-out, and dizzy in love, for a while now. Sounds like he'll be making a quick getaway from the plates and frying pans whizzing past his ears and stumbling off into the sunset with Gina. Nothing quite like a new romance to take your mind off the 150,000 people dead: 2 million Long Covid sufferers; an NHS waiting list and coronavirus variants stretching to infinity. Love is all you need.

What a big, scrambled mess everything is. Double-vaccinated Andrew Marr has just had Covid. Far more people are dying who've been double-vaccinated than those who haven't been vaccinated – but then most people have been vaccinated. You sift through it all, contemplate what the virus is up to faced with a vaccinated population. 'The data's looking good' they say. The data is looking horrible. You try and rationalise, find clarity, but we are feeding on mere scuffled-up scraps of information. It's a hopeless task. We are 1½ years on, and still no-one knows much at all. As for foreign holidays, nobody would want us. Why would they, from our variant-incubating hothouse. The idea of facing another winter like the last without the interlude of a sunny carefree holiday, is for many, hard to bear.

And now to something completely different. Something positive. It comes in the form of long-time amazing Farmaround customer Rachie Ross. She is organising a theatrical plea to the world leaders at COP26 in Glasgow in the form of a Coat of Hopes. The Coat will make its way on foot from Newhaven to Glasgow, worn by Coat pilgrims. It will pass through 300 communities who will have created patches with messages of hope for the future. The patches will be sewn on as it passes through, and the coat will grow and grow. Rachie is to be interviewed by the BBC on arrival in Glasgow. '

'The Coat is a creative collaboration, a national symbol of grief, hope and desires for the land, wildlife and ecosystems that we live within and love. It will carry the individual hopes and dreams of those who have contributed, as patch makers and as groups.' And as a nation.

Please do check out her website www.coatofhopes.uk for it as she's looking to get more people involved and spread the message.

I hope you have a good week,

Kind wishes,

Isobel