



Monday 12th December 2022

Dear Customer,

I hope this finds you well, and that life and holiday plans aren't being disrupted too much by the snow and strikes.

Here are some tasty recipes you could try this week:

Cider Roasted Cabbage

January King cabbage 200ml cider

Preheat oven to 220°C/Gas 7. Cut the cabbage into 8 equal wedges. Brush each wedge generously with olive oil, and season well. Lay the wedges in a roasting tray and bake for 20 minutes, turning once to colour evenly. Add the cider to the roasting tray and bake for another 10-15 minutes, turning once, until tender. Serve with the remaining cider juices tipped over the top.

Cabbage with Sesame and Caraway

4 tbsp toasted sesame oil 1 small onion, finely sliced
pinch of caraway, poppy or sesame seeds January King cabbage, finely shredded
1 tbsp white wine vinegar sea salt

Heat the oil in a wok. Add the onions and caraway and fry until starting to soften. Add the cabbage and fry, turning continuously until the cabbage is cooked but still has a little crunch, about 4 minutes. Add the vinegar and salt to taste. Turn a few more times and serve.

Minestrone Soup

1 tbsp olive oil 1 onion, finely sliced
2 garlic cloves, crushed 2 carrots, peeled and finely diced
1 leek cleaned, sliced lengthways and finely sliced ½ small swede or 1 parsnip, peeled and finely diced
400g tin chopped tomatoes 1 tbsp tomato purée
1-1.2 litre veg stock 1 tsp dried mixed herbs
60g dried orzo pasta (or other small pasta) 150g cabbage, finely shredded
fresh parsley, chopped (optional) salt and pepper

Heat the oil in a large saucepan and add the onions. Cook on a gentle heat for 10 minutes, until softened. Add the garlic and cook for another couple of minutes. Add the carrots, leeks, swede, tinned tomatoes, tomato purée, 1 litre stock and dried herbs.

Bring to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the pasta and cook for another 5 minutes, then add the cabbage and simmer for another 3-5 minutes. Add a little more stock to thin the soup if necessary and season. Add a little chopped parsley to serve.

After much reflection I've decided against getting a log burner. Instead, I've found a place in India on Etsy to buy made-to-measure velvet curtains very affordably. I am planning to get some massive ones to section off the area where I sit, work, watch TV and stare out of window. I will try and keep that bit warm with an electric fire and not put the central heating on at all. I can take them back down in the spring. My new smart meter has long since stopped giving a gas reading and nor does the meter itself, so I have no idea what my usage is. Ignorance is bliss....until the bill lands.

It's been below zero for days now. We had a sprinkling of snow, but the frost and ice are ongoing. It's cold but beautiful and is also good news for brussel sprouts which need the frost, enhancing their flavour just in time for Christmas. Much of nature does need it. I wish the media wouldn't hype it all up so much, they make us neurotic and probably make us use more energy. Winter and cold are normal aren't they, and it's only during the last 60 years that we have had central heating - with the exception of the Romans. We've been too cossetted, we're getting soft, going for summer temperatures inside and out, throughout the year. We live in the Northern hemisphere a long way from the equator, winter always hurt. To have any heat was a result of the hard labour of gathering wood and chopping logs. Everyone had to get up and get dressed in the cold. Not only does our heat come at the flick of a switch but timers are set to ensure we step out from the warmth of bed into more warmth. I'm not sure it's that good for us. We are now forced to harden up, put on the layers and do winter as winter was meant to be done. We'll miss it when it's gone.

Christmas is nearly upon us. It has snuck up while we've been engrossed by the football.

I hope you have a good week,

Kind wishes,

Isobel