



Monday 9th October 2023

Dear Customer,

It's a sunny, mild and blustery Tuesday morning. A good day to be out walking. It's not very good typing weather.

The season is changing. We have eked the watermelons out for as long as we could but this is the last week. We have rose Jack Salute grapes in the bags, and it is the start of the pomegranate season. The leeks, onions, carrots and Marfona potatoes are from our grower near Berwick in the Scottish Borders. Our tomatoes and Padron peppers are from Herefordshire. Our salad leaves are from Cambridgeshire. The shallots which some of you will have in the bags this week are from shallot country – Brittany.

Here are a few tasty recipes you could try:

Carrot and Leek Cobbler

3 medium carrots, cut into chunks
80g butter or margarine
450ml vegetable stock
220g self raising flour
1 tsp mustard powder
splash milk

450g leeks, cleaned and chopped into 4cm lengths
20g plain flour
fresh parsley or thyme, chopped
1 tsp dried mixed herbs
1 Hen Nation egg, beaten
grated cheese

Preheat oven to 180°C / Gas 4. Steam the carrots and leeks for a few minutes until just tender. Drain and place in an oven proof casserole dish. In a saucepan melt the butter/ margarine and add the plain flour. Stir for a minute to let it cook. Gradually add the stock until you have a smooth sauce. Season to taste, add the chopped herbs and pour over the veg. Cover and place in the oven for about 15 minutes. Then remove from the oven and increase to 200°C/ Gas 6. To make the topping put the self-raising flour, mixed herbs and mustard powder in a bowl. Season, mix well, then add the butter / margarine and rub together until the mixture looks like fine breadcrumbs. Add the egg and a splash of milk and combine to make a dough. Roll out on a floured board to about 2cm thick. Cut into round shapes using a scone- cutter or cut into squares. Place on top of the veg mixture and top with grated cheese. Return to the oven for about 15-20 minutes, until the scone topping has risen and is cooked through.

Mediterranean Leeks

olive oil
2 to 3 carrots, cut into ¼-inch rounds
Handful chopped parsley
1 tsp paprika
2 tbs rice

450g leeks, cleaned well and sliced into ¼-inch rounds
3 large garlic cloves, minced
1 tsp cumin
2 tsp cayenne pepper
juice and zest of 1 large lemon

In a medium saucepan heat a good dash of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the leeks, carrots, and garlic and season with salt, black pepper, and the spices. Toss and cook for about 5 to 7 minutes, stirring regularly until the leeks and carrots soften just a bit.

Add 450ml of water, the rice, and lemon juice. Bring the water to a boil, then lower the heat and let simmer for 15 to 20 minutes or until the rice is cooked and the vegetables are tender. Let the leeks and carrots cool down to room temperature, then stir in the fresh parsley, lemon zest, and another good drizzle of olive oil.

Apple Fairy Cakes

300g plain flour
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
½ tsp ground nutmeg
60g yoghurt
100g light soft brown sugar

2 tsp baking powder
2 tsp ground cinnamon
200ml milk
60ml vegetable oil
2 Hen Nation eggs

2 large apples, finely diced

50g porridge oats

Preheat the oven to 200°C / Gas 6. Line fairy cake tins with paper cases (24). Put the flour into a bowl with the baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and spices then whisk thoroughly to combine. Put the milk, yoghurt, oil, sugar and eggs in a separate, larger bowl and whisk to combine. Add the flour mixture and most of the apples and oats to the wet ingredients, stirring to combine but don't over-stir. Divide the mixture between the cases. Sprinkle over the remaining apple and oats. Bake in the preheated oven for 20–25 minutes until well risen, golden brown and firm to the touch.

The Tory conference is saturating the news, I'm sick of the sight of every single one of them. I read with interest how Richard Walker, head of Iceland and an environmentalist, left the party on the eve of the conference. He'd been planning to get a seat at the next election but had had a warning that he wasn't allowed to speak out on the environment. It answers a lot about why it is never a topic of discussion. Everyone is gagged. Zac Goldsmith of course had to leave the party. Is any mention of the future of life on this planet, any mention of nature, such a vote loser. It must be.

Plastic knives and forks banned from takeaways, coming a mere 5 years after Theresa May announces a ban on plastic cotton wool buds and drink stirrers - these things, so fundamental to our existence – what sacrifice. In half a decade, that's all we can manage to give up.

I went across to Wensleydale at the weekend where the annual hedge shredding has gotten underway. Roadside hedges, hedges between the fields, which were beautiful, dense in foliage and laden with berries, the winter food for birds, now bare splintered wood. Most farmers don't want wildlife, they irritate them, they shoot them and destroy their habitats.

The new report on 'the State of Nature' is out. No surprise that we are still one of the most nature depleted countries in the world as habitat loss and persecution continue unabated. There are 10,000 species now at risk of being lost from Great Britain, many facing total extinction. Can you imagine the difference the 1.3 million acres of grouse moors, most of which lie in our National Parks, would make, if given over to nature. It makes one weep.

For Christ's sake Starmer, 'say something' ! So far, he's saying nothing.

I hope you have a good week.....Best wishes, Isobel