



**Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

Dear Customer,

After a touch of frost and a crispy night on Saturday, storm Debi has now arrived. The 60mph winds are stripping the last leaves from the trees and the driving rain is giving the windows and my car a good pressure wash – handy, as they really need it. It's Monday morning and Braverman has been sacked. Out the corner of my eye I have just seen David Cameron walking up Downing Street. Blimey ! Is this Sunak slithering towards the centre, coming for Starmer. There's a whole load more toads he will need to extricate first. Not that I want to insult toads. It's do or die for him. Local polling shows him losing his seat here, with Lib Dem Daniel Callaghan, being hot favourite.

Here are a couple of tasty recipes you could try this week:

### **Butternut Squash Curry**

1 onion, diced oil for frying

2 garlic cloves, finely chopped 25g fresh ginger, peeled and grated

1 red chilli ½ butternut squash, peeled and chopped in 2cm dice

1 tsp cumin 1 tbsp turmeric

1 tsp coriander 400ml coconut milk

1 tin chickpeas, drained 3 tomatoes, or tinned plum tomatoes

salt and pepper 250ml hot vegetable stock

150g basmati rice fresh coriander, chopped

Fry the onions for 10 minutes to soften. Roughly chop the tomatoes. Add the garlic, ginger, chilli and squash to the onions, fry gently for 2 minutes. Tip in the cumin, turmeric and coriander and fry for 1 minute. Add the coconut milk, stock, chickpeas and tomatoes. Simmer for about 30 minutes until tender. Cook the rice then remove from the heat and fluff up with a fork.. When the curry is ready check the seasoning and finish with coriander.

### **Stuffed Butternut Squash**

1 butternut squash olive oil

150g couscous ½ onion, chopped

1 red pepper, finely chopped 1 garlic clove, sliced

½ tin tomatoes or 200g tomatoes 1 tsp sugar

bag spinach splash balsamic vinegar

50g toasted pine nuts fresh herbs, e.g. chives, parsley, mint, coriander, chopped

50-100g cheese, crumbled salt and pepper

Preheat the oven to 180°C/ Gas 4. Cut the squash lengthways, remove seeds, brush with olive oil, season and bake for 30 minutes until cooked through. Scoop out a little of the flesh, dice it and put to one side. Prepare couscous by seasoning in a bowl and rubbing olive oil through it with your fingers. Cover with boiling water then seal the bowl with clingfilm and leave for 5 minutes to steam. Fluff up with a fork. Sweat the onion and red pepper in oil for 5 minutes, then add the garlic and cook for a few more minutes. Add the tomatoes and sugar and reduce down for 10-15 minutes. Blanch the spinach for a minute then squeeze out the water, chop roughly. Add to the tomato sauce, mix through adding couscous and vinegar, toasted pine nuts, herbs and finish by folding through the squash and cheese. Season, return to the squash case and bake for 10 minutes.

Therese Coffey has just resigned. That was the one I was looking forward to. Apart from that all is quiet up here far from the madding crowd. We have just the one set of traffic lights to contend with as we go about our daily business, and even those are only if we are exiting the town towards the dreaded Scotch Corner and A1. 'We are so lucky' all the dog walkers and walkers say, surrounded by stunning views in all directions. As if we arrived here by chance, a roll of the dice.

We hear the occasional faint sound of machine guns and explosions wafting across from the ranges, the reminder that the big, cruel world is out there. Actually, last week it wasn't so faint, I was walking up a path traversing military land and there was a huge explosion, I nearly threw myself to the ground. Soldiers were on exercise, camouflaged, somewhere close. I turned back. What was interesting, was that Lainey didn't do a runner. She was about to, she sprinted 10ft, but immediately stopped when she realised I wasn't next to her, so all must be ok. She's like my shadow, always trotting next to me. If she disappears and I start to panic and scour the landscape, I always find her in the blind spot behind my foot. The house at the bottom of my garden started letting explosions off, fireworks, she looked at me to see if I was worried, I told her 'no, it's fine', so she just stood and watched them with me. She copies everything I do.

All the sheep are doing fine, another winter approaches. I've been busy sending Izzy Lane parcels out – living vicariously through them when I check the tracking on Parcel2Go and see them 'Leaving the UK', or out for distribution in San Francisco or Berlin – like watching the airport flight board. When I used to collect my parents from the airport I would always burst into tears of relief when 'landed' appeared.

We have such a short selling period, from September to Christmas. We have to try and get the money in to pay for their keep for the next year. The flock is diminishing as I knew it would. These were the years I dreaded, when all the sheep became elderly at the same time. I rescued the first 5 Wensleydales back in 2003. It was then in 2006-2007 that I went mad and rescued about another 700 – many of them lambs. With similar life spans, it would be like having 700 dogs getting old simultaneously. Time marches on. We won't be doing any more full collections. We won't have enough volumes of wool to justify all the design and manufacture costs - hard to cover at the best of times. If there's anything you want, I would love as ever, offer you my Farmaround customers, a 20% discount on everything across the board, using discount code FAR23 [www.izzylane.com](http://www.izzylane.com)

Fingers still disconcertingly tingly. Gale still howling outside.

I hope you have a good week,

Kind wishes, Isobel