



Monday 22nd January 2024

Dear Customer,

It's Tuesday and I'm late again. It's the storms. They are really distracting. Today it's Jocelyn who's bashing us. The sheep have been moved away from the river, from the flood plain, and up to the farm. It really is vile outside. The horizontal rain has even penetrated through my bedroom wall – there's a round damp patch. I was sorting out all the last months of letters and recipes to put on the website and giving them a quick glance over. I noted that since the end of June the weather has been miserable. Basically, May and June were ok and that was it. - just 2 months.

We have celeriac in the bags this week from the Scottish Borders packed with vitamin B6, vitamin C, folate, potassium and fibre, and very tasty. You could try a celeriac remoulade - grate the celeriac then mix it with a mustardy mayonnaise: 7 tbsp mayonnaise; 3 tbsp Dijon mustard; the juice of a lemon and salt and pepper.

Here are a few other tasty recipes you could try:

Braised and Smashed Celeriac

1 celeriac	olive oil
dried or fresh thyme	2 cloves of garlic, minced
3-4 tbsp water or vegetable stock	sea salt and black pepper

Peel the celeriac, then slice about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch off the bottom of it and roll it on to that flat edge, so it's safe to slice. Slice and dice it all up into $\frac{1}{2}$ inch-ish cubes. Put a casserole-type pot on a high heat, add 3 tbsp olive oil, then add the celeriac. Add a good scattering of thyme and the garlic and some sea salt and black pepper. Stir around to coat and fry quite fast, giving a little colour, for 5 minutes. Turn the heat down to a simmer, add the water or stock, place a lid on top and cook for around 25 minutes, until tender. Season to taste and either keep as is in cubes to serve, or rough it up with a fork, or even mash it completely.

Whole Roasted Celeriac

1 medium celeriac	olive oil
coarse sea salt	fresh or dried thyme
3 garlic cloves	margarine or butter, to serve

Preheat oven to 200°C / Gas 5. Wash the celeriac well to remove any dirt, using a vegetable scrubber if you have one). Pat dry.

Place on a large sheet of foil on a baking tray. Rub it all over with olive oil, sprinkle liberally with salt and add a few thyme sprigs and garlic cloves. Wrap the foil tightly around the celeriac to seal it. Roast until nearly tender inside, then unwrap the foil from the top and roast for a further 20-30 minutes, so the skin crisps up and the celeriac feels soft and tender inside. To serve, cut open and add a large knob of margarine or butter, like a baked potato.

Celeriac and Carrot Soup

450g celeriac, peeled and chopped	400g carrots, peeled and chopped
1 onion, peeled and chopped	900ml vegetable stock
1tbsp olive oil	salt and freshly ground pepper

Heat the oil in a large heavy based pan. Fry the onion until soft. Add the celeriac and carrots and stir fry for about 5 minutes.

Add the stock and seasoning and mix well. Cover the pan with a lid and bring the soup slowly to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for about 20minutes. Tip the soup into a blender or whizz until smooth. Adjust the seasoning and re-heat as required.

I always feel guilty spending so much time working on the computer as Lainey gets so bored. I'm always on it until mid-late afternoon. I'd often thought about offering to do a bit of dog sitting to get her some company in the mornings. Then a lady put a notice on the local Facebook page for someone to walk her dog. I contacted her and she came round with Layton, an 8-yr old golden labrador, to see how he got on with Lainey. A blind date. Two dogs with one thing in common..... separation anxiety. It seemed to go quite well, they chased each other round the house, he only tried to mate her twice. We then arranged that Layton would be dropped off here this morning for a couple of hours so they could play. He was fine for 2 minutes then became distressed – crying and scratching at the door to get out, go and find his mum. I couldn't concentrate on my work. Lainey kept trying to entice him to play, tried putting her squeaky rubber gingerbread man in his mouth, tried everything to get him to chase her. He wasn't interested, lay on the floor dejected. So she gave up and lay on the back of the sofa, dejected.

Have you been watching Traitors ? I'm addicted. So pleased they got Paul out. It's nice to have something fresh to watch for a change and some fresh faces rather than the tedious recycling of 'celebrities' for quiz shows and every other show. They have a short list of ex sports stars, ex Z-list popstars, comedians etc. that they source from. Soap stars baking, politicians as chat show hosts, X Factor winners doing interior design shows; reality TV stars as presenters, all of them doing travel shows. It goes on and on doesn't it. And while I'm at it - Matt Baker's Travels with his Parents. Bradley and Barney Walsh. 'Oh come on !' Nepotism at its finest. I'm sure there's some fantastic young talent out there who will never ever get an opportunity in this closed shop, this small gene pool. It's so boring, all part of the great 'dumbing us down into morons' project. And while I'm still at it, Pointless is now an impossible watch since finding out that Alexander Armstrong is a hunt and shooting supporter. And 'lovely' Phil Spencer has been photographed smiling next to the corpse a beautiful stag that he shot dead. So that's 'Love it or List it' out too. Yes, good advice thank you. Better to read a good book

Anyway, I'm afraid that's as interesting as it gets. It's January 😞.

Kind wishes,

Isobel

PS We aren't getting many bags back for recycling at the moment. Please could you try to leave them out for your driver to collect if they are still in good state. Thank you