

Monday 25^h March 2013

Dear Customer,

Another dreadful week weather-wise. I actually don't think I can take much more of it. I think we must by now be suffering severely from vitamin D deficiency. I think we accept that we have winters, and are programmed to deal with them. But, we are also programmed to expect to emerge into a spring and that a winter is preceded by a summer. If this is our new climate..... God help us. Normally when we are knee deep in snow, there are hoards of children sledging down the hill opposite my house. This time, just one solitary sledger. What a happy, optimistic child that must have been.

Here are a couple of tasty recipes you could try with this week's round butternut squash:

Spicy Butternut Squash Risotto

2 tbsp olive oil
1 large onion, peeled and finely chopped
1 red chilli, finely chopped
½ tsp cinnamon
300g Arborio rice
approx. 750g-1kg butternut squash, peeled and diced into 1" pieces
100ml white wine
1 litre hot vegetable stock
4 tbsp grated Parmesan
salt and freshly ground black pepper

Gently warm the olive oil in a wide pan. Add the onion and cook for 4-5 minutes or until softened. Add the chilli and cinnamon, stir and cook for 1 minute. Add the rice and stir until all the grains are coated in the oil, they should be translucent. Add the squash and the wine and bring quickly to the boil. Whilst stirring, add the hot stock, 2 ladles at a time. Make sure the stock is totally absorbed before adding any more. This will take approximately 15-20 minutes. At the end of this time the rice and squash should be tender but still have a slight bite. Stir in the Parmesan and season to taste. Leave to stand for 5 minutes before serving on warmed plates.

Butternut Squash Curry

4 tbsp sunflower oil
3 onions peeled, halved and thinly sliced
4 cloves garlic, peeled and thinly sliced
2 tsp grated fresh ginger
1 small green chilli, deseeded and thinly sliced
2 tsp ground coriander
2 tsp cumin
2 tsp garam masala
750g-1kg squash, peeled, deseeded and cut into 2cm chunks
100g red lentils
700ml vegetable stock
400g tinned chopped plum tomatoes
handful fresh coriander, tough stalks removed, chopped

Heat the oil in a large, heavy-bottomed saucepan over a medium heat. Add the onions and sauté with a pinch of salt until softened and turning golden, stirring frequently, about 15 minutes. Add the garlic, ginger and green chilli, and cook, stirring for about 5 minutes. Add the ground coriander, cumin and garam masala, stir for one minute, then toss in the cubes of squash and lentils and stir until coated. Pour in the stock and tomatoes. Simmer, part-covered, until the squash and lentils are very tender, about 30 minutes, stirring from time to time. Stir in about two-thirds of the coriander, taste and check the seasoning – adding salt and pepper if desired. Serve with basmati rice and thick yoghurt, if desired. Scatter with rest of coriander.

I hope you are well and keeping warm,

Kind wishes,

Isobel