



Monday 5th September 2016

Dear Customer,

September has opened with some beautiful, warm weather. If you are just back from your holidays I hope you had a lovely time wherever you went. Pencils sharpened, satchels packed and ready for a new term. I must admit, it's a bit depressing seeing that X Factor and Strictly have started again already – all eyes on Ed Balls of course – the big annual clock ticking, XF and S means it's 20 to Christmas. Anyway, I won't dwell on it.

Here are some simple and tasty recipes you could try this week:

Pasta with Aubergine and Tomato Sauce

1 small onion	2 cloves garlic
½ bunch basil	400g aubergines
4-6 tbsp olive oil	1 x 400g tin chopped tomatoes
500g dried pasta	80g ricotta cheese

Peel and finely chop the onion and garlic. Pick the basil leaves and finely chop the stalks. Trim and cut the aubergine into 2cm slices. Heat the 3 tbsp of oil in a pan and sweat the onion, garlic and basil stalks for 7 minutes. Add the tomatoes, season well and bring to a steady simmer. Cook for about 20 minutes. Meanwhile, fry the aubergine in the remaining oil until golden then stir into the tomato sauce with most of the basil leaves. Cook the pasta according to packet instructions, drain then stir through the sauce. Divide between plates and crumble over some ricotta and scatter over the reserved basil leaves before serving.

Crunchy Roasted Broccoli

head broccoli, in medium florets	olive oil
clove garlic, finely chopped	½ small red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped (optional)
balsamic vinegar	

Preheat the oven to 200C/ 180C Fan/ Gas 6. In a roasting tin toss the broccoli and some olive oil with the garlic and chilli and lots of seasoning. Roast for 12-15 minutes until just beginning to soften but still with some crunch. Drizzle over some balsamic vinegar, toss gently to coat then serve immediately.

Carrot and Courgette Soup

50g butter or margarine	225g carrots, peeled and sliced
225g courgettes, trimmed and sliced	600ml stock
1 bay leaf	1 tbsp tomato puree
1 tsp. honey	1 tsp fresh coriander
salt and pepper to taste	

Melt the butter in a saucepan. Add the courgettes, cover and cook on a low heat for 10 minutes until the vegetables begin to soften. Add the stock, bay leaf, tomato puree, honey and coriander to the saucepan. Simmer for 30 minutes. Remove the bay leaf and puree in a blender or with a handheld mixer. Season with salt and pepper. Serve.

Potato Gratin with Caramelised Onions

2 tbsp olive oil	2 onions, thinly sliced
2 thyme sprigs, leaves picked	120ml double cream
140ml milk	1kg potatoes, peeled or scrubbed and sliced
oil for greasing	70g crème fraiche
70g hard cheese, grated	

Set the oven to 200C/ 180C Fan/ Gas 6. Heat the oil in a large frying pan. Add the onions and thyme, cover and cook over a gentle heat for 10-15 minutes until softened and caramelised. Pour the cream and milk into a large bowl and season well. Add the potatoes and mix to combine. Grease an ovenproof dish then layer in half the potatoes. Spread the onion mixture on top the layer the remaining potatoes. Press down with your hands. Pour over the milk mixture which should come just level with the potatoes. If not, add a little more milk until it does. Cover with foil then bake for 1½ hours until tender. Remove from oven and leave to cool. When cool, spread the crème fraiche on top, sprinkle over the cheese and cook for 30 minutes until the cheese is melted, the top is crisp and golden brown and the gratin piping hot.

And that's that. It's Monday morning and I have an urgent appointment at the barn to sort more fleeces out. I have been asked to move them as the corn harvest is in and they are worried the fleece bags could be 5-star rat accommodation while they feast on the corn. But in fact the rats don't go in the bags, believing they are full of sheep.

Hope you have a good week,

Kind wishes,

Isobel

IMPORTANT: PLEASE NOTE THAT WE HAVE A NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER 01748 850700