

Monday 10th July 2018

Dear Customer,

I was adamant that on my return I would stop complaining about the Yorkshire weather – anything is better than perpetual intense sun and heat. However, it took about 24 hours to be fed up with the grey skies, rain and cold wind once more. So here I am immediately complaining about how miserable it is and looking at the weather chart 'London vs Richmondshire - 10C lower.....always. It's about 17C today but with the wind chill feels like about 9C. I just bumped into a neighbour. 'Cold isn't it !' I muttered. 'What do you expect, it's July' he said.

We have kohlrabi in the bags this week. They can be grated raw into salads, used as an alternative to celeriac in a remoulade, or simply dressed in a garlicky, lemony vinaigrette. You could peel it and cut it into cubes then steam it lightly until just tender and dress with melted butter or olive oil, a squeeze of lemon juice, some chopped parsley and salt and pepper. You could cut it into thick batons, saute in butter or margarine until slightly softened and add some white wine to it and simmer until tender, stirring in a bit of dill or tarragon. You can also add it to stews and soups.

If you fancy a gratin with your kohlrabi you could try this:

Kohlrabi and Potato Gratin

200ml double cream

2 sprigs lemon thyme, leaves only

500g potatoes, peeled and very finely sliced

3 tbsp Parmesan or other cheese

100ml milk

2 garlic cloves, crushed

1 kohlrabi, peeled and finely sliced

salt and pepper

Preheat the oven to 180C/ Gas 4. Grease a gratin or baking dish with a little butter. Put the cream, milk, lemon thyme and garlic in a pan to heat until steaming. Turn off the heat and leave to infuse for 15 minutes. Layer the potatoes and kohlrabi in the gratin dish, seasoning each layer. Pour over the infused cream. Cover with foil and bake for about an hour or more until the veg is tender. Remove the foil and scatter over the cheese. Bake until golden.

It is peculiar how holidays can be enjoyed more retrospectively than in real time. For much of it I wasn't having a particularly good time and would only have rated it 5/10. However, now returned I would rate it more as 7/10 or 8/10. I guess the view is rosier when not under mosquito attack or suffering from heat stress.

I sometimes think that I'm the most neurotic person on earth so it was with some satisfaction that I seem to have Eurotunnel down to a tee. As soon as we drive on, I climb into the back with Myfa. I start sorting money out - separating euros from sterling, I clean my handbag out, I collect rubbish from all the crevices in the car, pour a cup of tea from the flask. My friend was sitting in the front seat doing nothing. That was the fatal error. On no account can you allow yourself to think about where you are. She started completely freaking out – she didn't say much but I could feel her imagination at work – the scenarios, the fire breakout, the train breakdown, the migrant blockade, the tunnel collapse..... the mile of sea above our heads. I took a moist cloth and started cleaning the dust off the dashboard and before I knew it we burst into sunshine. Oh what joy that for a change it wasn't me.

That's a great travel companion. I only got over flying when I saw my boyfriend at the time's on-board terror – the white knuckles, the tears streaming down his face, air hostesses coming over to me to ask me if he was ok. Flying for me then became a breeze.....until we split up.

Kind wishes and hope you have a good week,

Isobel