



Monday 6th June 2022

Dear Customer,

It's Monday and raining again. I'm fed up with the Met Office. They keep giving false hope. One minute we are looking at 3 horrible days, then a 2-week stretch of glorious summer weather. Three days later, we are looking at 3 more horrible days then a 2-week stretch of glorious weather. And so it goes on. The glorious stretch keeps getting kicked down the road. They should just be honest, that they haven't got a clue. Law of averages, occasionally they will be right.

So from the disappointingly grey and grizzly Yorkshire Dales, here are a few tasty recipes you could try this week:

Honey-Glazed Turnips

400g turnip, cut into medium chunks knob of butter or margarine
1½ tbsp clear honey 2 bay leaves
3 thyme sprigs

Put all the ingredients in a large frying pan with 120ml water and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer, cover and cook for about 15 minutes or until the turnips are soft to the core and slightly translucent. Remove the lid, turn up the heat and cook for 5 minutes more, gently turning the turnips from time to time, until the liquid has evaporated and the turnips are coated in a syrupy glaze. Season with salt and pepper.

Caramelised Leek and Potato Galette

30g organic butter 450g leeks, trimmed and finely sliced
4 garlic cloves, crushed 1 tbsp thyme leaves
50g walnuts, finely chopped 500g block puff pastry
plain flour, for dusting 300g potatoes, unpeeled and thinly sliced
100g organic Brie, roughly torn

Preheat the oven to 200°C/ Gas 6. Heat half the butter in a frying pan and add the leeks. Cook over a medium-high heat until softened and browned in places – about 10-12 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cook for a few minutes more, before adding the thyme and walnuts. Season and set aside. Roll the pastry out on a lightly floured work surface to a 30cm square. Transfer to a baking tray, prick all over with a fork then spread over the caramelised leeks, leaving a 2cm border. Top with the sliced potato then roughly fold in the pastry border. Dot with the cheese and the remaining butter, and bake for 30-35 minutes, or until golden and the potatoes are tender; cover with foil after 30 minutes if it's browning too much.

Cream of Turnip and Potato

400g tin cannellini beans, drained and rinsed 1 litre vegetable stock
1 tablespoon olive oil 2 medium onions, chopped
450g potatoes, cubed 400g turnip, peeled and cubed

Put the vegetable stock in pan, bring to the boil and add the cannellini beans. Cool, then purée with a hand blender until smooth. Return to heat and keep at a low simmer. Heat a large saucepan over medium heat. When hot, add the olive oil. Toss in the onions and sauté until the onions are softened, about 5 minutes. Add the potatoes and turnip, stir for a couple of minutes, then add the puréed bean broth. Raise the heat slightly and bring to a slow boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover the pan, and cook until the vegetables are tender, about 40 minutes. Remove from heat and season with salt and black pepper.

I hope you had a good long weekend. I caught bits of the Jubilee concert and pageant on TV. Quite emotional some of it. Bocelli's Nessun Dorma was devastating. He looked so slight and elegant and fragile, his mother having just died. I think he reached her in heaven. And took us all with him, to another realm.

The pageant was like seeing one's life flash before one's eyes. A measure of the years and a reminder that we have 'more that unites us than divides us', as we live life and pass through these decades together.

I planned yet again to get to the coast on Saturday until a text from my brother that he was going to call in on me. I hadn't seen him for a while. I was glad I was finally going to be able to give him his Christmas presents. While he was here, builder number 3 turned up to look at the job, though this time a friend, and a master craftsman, so I know the work will get finished properly. My brother took this opportunity to leave. I asked him to hang on, and I brought out his Christmas presents. But he wouldn't take them, said he would get them next time. I pleaded with him. No idea why. 'What in November-time?' 'No, before then' he said.

But yesterday, I did go seaward bound. Loaded with a flask of tea and some biscuits, I headed east on the country route to Saltburn. I passed through dozens of villages – some laden with bunting and with parties on the greens or the visible remnants of them. Others mournful and lacking. Proportionate to their community spirit, or patriotism, perhaps. The tide was out, the vast beach was almost deserted. I walked a couple of miles with Lainey running in and out of the shallow parts. I'm quite pleased she doesn't like swimming, just paddling. I never trust those currents. I'd parked my car right on the front and then sat for an hour or so staring out to sea drinking my tea. A lady sat in a red car next to me eating chips, staring out to sea. They'd been done in beef dripping, I'd already asked. Then she went off and came back with an ice cream and sat and ate that, staring out to sea. On the way home I took a detour through the area I knew well, where my family moved to from Nottinghamshire when I was 11 and remained the family home. I drove past our old house and stopped. I stopped at the church, maybe for only the second time since my mum died in 1996 and walked up the path where we'd followed her coffin. You get used to the loss, but deep down, actually not so deep down, the pain never diminishes.

Kind wishes and hope you have a good week, Isobel