

Monday 16th December 2013

Dear Customer,

This is the last normal week before everything goes screwy, another year drawing to a close and then it will be 2014. 2014, the year of our 20th Anniversary. I was just a nipper, we're growing old together some of us. The weather has been incredibly mild but I suppose we have it all to come. Winter may arrive with a vengeance in January. I just hope we won't have to wait until June again for spring. In this mildness we have ruby chard from Doncaster.....yes Doncaster – curve ball. We have Jonnie Watson's cauliflowers and cavolo nero and your Yorkshire Moor carrots and Marfona potatoes. The baby Hass avocados, sweet potatoes and Ohanes grapes are from Andalucia.

Cauliflower Casserole

1 cauliflower in florets
½ tsp salt
2 tbsp Parmesan, grated
4 tbsp dry breadcrumbs

4 plum tomatoes (tinned)
¼ tsp pepper
4 tbsp hard cheese (eg Gruyere, Emmental), shredded
2 tsp butter, melted

Preheat oven to Gas 4/180C/350C. Steam or boil cauliflower until tender. Arrange it in a buttered, shallow baking dish. Chop the tomatoes over the cauliflower. Sprinkle with the salt and pepper. Mix the cheeses in a bowl and sprinkle over the cauliflower and tomatoes then spread the breadcrumbs on top, drizzle with the melted butter and bake for 20-25 minutes or until the top is golden.

Cavolo Nero, Potato and White Bean Soup

350-400g cavolo nero
1 tbsp olive oil
1 litre vegetable stock
400g tin of cannelloni or butter beans
2 tbsp cream (optional)

250g potatoes, diced
1 large onion, diced
2 cloves garlic, crushed and chopped
salt and pepper

Pull the cavolo leaves away from the stalk and slice into 1 cm strips. Gently soften the onion in the oil, add the garlic and after 2 minutes add the stock, cavolo and potatoes. Simmer for 25 minutes. Blend half the soup and return it to the pan with the beans. Simmer for 5 minutes. Add seasoning and the cream if using. Serve, Hearty and delicious !

Because I know how fascinated you are by my poorly teeth, the update after last week's letter is that I went to the dentist on Friday and it is my wisdom tooth- that's where the problem is. I was urged of the chair to ' come and look at the x-ray' and the big hole of decay. I just stood speechless and stared. The decay was closing in on the nerve, I could clearly see the pain. We stood in silence – me, the dentist and the dental nurse. She was letting me adjust to what we all knew was coming.

“ I recommend we take it out”.

She knew the gravity of those words. They wanted to do it there and then – I said I needed time to prepare, to work myself into a state of terror. Not now at 8pm on Friday night. We discussed how that could be managed given that I won't have the anaesthetic – she said she could bring her acupuncture needles and I said I'd bring some blocks of ice. I got my prescription for amoxicillin, it's sitting unopened in the fridge next to half an onion. We agreed on the 6th January. I've thought on and am going to recommend that she has a go at doing the root canal which she said was impossible because of the angle. I am so lucky to have found this dentist. I don't think she feels as lucky.

I received a letter, I was caught doing 37mph on a deserted industrial estate in Plymouth. In the letter was an invitation to go on a Speed Awareness course in Bodmin. Bodmin. It's probably 400 miles away, I reckoned I could get there in just over 4 hours if the roads were clear. Days later I read the small print and found I could book the course in Darlington, or Darlo. I ended up deciding to just take the points given a chunk of points had expired recently – I've still got room for another two lots before the chauffeur. The website designers who are working on that new business idea I had earlier in the year came round to update me the other day. One of them was telling me about his wife, that she wanted to be a policewoman but then became a speech therapist. That was close, it's one thing feeling excruciatingly illegal when you pull alongside a police car but imagine feeling like that all the time.

When I am feeling melancholy, the best place for me is a bleak moor. So today, I was up on that moor. Not much energy for a long walk, I sat on a flat stone while Myfa let her hair down and streaked across the horizon back and fore chasing scents. She topped off the afternoon with a roll in a dead crow.

I hope all is well with you and Christmas preparations going well if you're having it. If this is your last delivery before Christmas, then you're off, I truly hope you have a lovely one.

Kindest wishes,

Isobel

And lest you forget, here it is pour la troisieme fois. I hope you understand it because I don't. Diane does though:

Your Christmas delivery dates are as follows:

If your usual delivery day is Tuesday 24th we will be delivering to you on Sunday the 22nd December

If your usual delivery day is Wednesday 25th we will be delivering to you on Monday 23rd December

If your usual delivery day is Thursday 26th, we will be delivering on Tuesday 24th December

Your New Year delivery dates:

If your usual delivery day is 31st December – your delivery will be as normal

If your usual delivery day is Wednesday 1st January we will be delivering to you on Thursday 2nd January

If your usual delivery day is Thursday 2nd January we will be delivering to you on Friday 3rd January