

Monday 28th July 2014

Dear Customer,

I hope you are well. We have Jonnie Watson's Ambo potatoes, spinach, yellow courgettes and Batavia lettuces in the bags this week – grown in the fertile Tadcaster basin. Our turnips, broad beans, Patty Pan squash, purple mange tout and peas are from Royal Oak Farm near Ormskirk. Here are a few ideas you could try with your succulent, new season turnips:

Crunchy Turnip Bake

450g turnips	450g potatoes
1 clove garlic	25g butter
1 tbsp fresh thyme	1 bay leaf
500ml double cream	

Preheat oven to 200C/ 400F/ Gas 6. Rub a large baking dish with butter. Peel and thinly slice the potatoes, garlic and turnips. Put half the turnips and potatoes into a bowl and add the thyme, garlic and seasoning. Heat the cream with the bay leaf, but do not allow to boil. Layer the vegetables in the baking dish and top with the remaining slices of turnips and potatoes. Pour over the hot cream and dot with butter. Bake in the oven for 50 minutes

Sweet Caramelised Turnips

450g turnips	1 tsp brown sugar
1 tbsp olive oil	½ mug water
sea salt	chopped nuts (optional)

Peel the turnips and chop into medium-sized chunks. In a large saucepan heat the olive oil and add the turnips. Fry for around 10 minutes until starting to brown. Add the brown sugar and continue to cook for a further 30 seconds to allow the turnips to start to caramelise. Add the water and some salt to taste, bring to a simmer, and cook for 10 minutes until all the liquid has been absorbed and the turnips tender. Serve hot sprinkled with chopped nuts if using.

Spiced Sauteed Turnips

450g turnips	1 tbsp poppy seeds
½ tbsp. paprika	2 tbsp butter or margarine
2 tbsp red wine vinegar	sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Peel the turnips and cut into chunks. Put the butter in a large saucepan and heat until starting to brown. Add the turnips and stir well until all the pieces are coated. Add the poppy seeds and saute for 8-9 minutes until light brown. Add the paprika and stir well to coat everything. Add salt and pepper to taste. Add the red vinegar and cook until all the liquid has been absorbed, for around 4-5 minutes and the turnip is tender.

Well, what can I say other than 'I am lost in music. I don't know where this has come from or why but the God of Pop is in charge now. That first song was not the one-off I'd hoped it would be – they're coming out my ears. I can feel twenty years' worth circulating and trying to make their way out.

On Tuesday I went to my producer's studio. It was strange but so familiar putting on the ear phones, adjusting the height of the microphone, singing – laying down the guide tracks. It was great. Did I meet my tortured soul? No, I just danced for 6 hours non-stop. It was a good work-out. I brought the tracks home and am completely neurotic about them. One minute I adore them and the next minute I am sunken with despair, something's not right and I have to listen to the track over and over again worrying. Everything has to be perfect. I'm getting worse and worse analysing every drum beat, every note on every instrument and picking everything to pieces. At some point my producer will have to say "stop". But I am mindful this is a tough business, every songwriter on the planet wants to write for the big-selling artists, and as it's where the money is, it is very tightly controlled. Your songs have to be exceptional and the production and arrangements can make or break them. He's coming to my house today to set up some recording equipment I bought 10 years ago when I felt desperately creative and wanted to give the song-writing another go, I'd just spent £'000's on it but I pushed it all straight under the bed – didn't touch it, couldn't stand the sight of it. I thought I'd write a book instead. I wrote four pages, very funny, loved it, had a panic attack and decided it was time for me to leave London. Anyway today he's going to set my recording gear up and teach me how to use it so I don't have to play my new songs down the BT answerphone anymore.

When I practice 'new song no. 1' at home I feel sure that my neighbour doesn't hear me playing the piano and she doesn't hear me singing the verses, but that the heart-breaking chorus, with its extraordinary 2 octave vocal leap, flies out my house and straight through her kitchen window. It will come at her every 60 seconds as I repeat and repeat ad infinitum. I think the Coast-to-Coast walkers have to duck to avoid getting hit and exploding as they pass. I think I need to make one of those warning signs to put out on the road. "Beware of a certain chorus".

Well at least I haven't been having that vegetable/recording studio dream in reverse and filling your bags with 'a kilo of lead vocals, 250g of saxophone breaks, 500g of drum rolls, 2 verses etc....'

Anyway, I shall attempt to refrain from filling every future newsletter with music.

Last night I went up to bed with a cup of tea, pulled the duvet back and there was a huge spider in the bed. I swished it out but then couldn't see it running across the carpet, I shook my pillows, took the duvet off the bed, it had vanished. I got into bed concerned, then went to take a sip of tea and the spider was dead, floating in my mug.

I hope you aren't getting too boiled alive, sautéed or stir-fried in this weather.

Kind wishes,

Isobel