

Monday 27th October 2014

Dear Customer,

Hello and I hope you are well. Here are some delicious recipes you could try with this week's ingredients:

Courgette, Parsnip and Courgette Frittata

butter or margarine to grease

160g grated courgette

120g grated carrot

6 free range eggs, lightly whisked

4 tbsp chopped fresh parsley

4 tsp olive oil

100g grated parsnip

½ onion, finely chopped

80g strong cheese eg mature Cheddar, Jarlsberg

2 tbsp plain flour, sifted

Preheat oven to 180C. Brush a shallow square 18.5cm cake pan (base measurement) with melted butter or margarine to grease. Line the base and two opposite sides with non-stick baking paper, allowing it to overhang. Heat the oil in a medium saucepan over a medium heat. Add the courgette, carrot, parsnip and onion and cook, stirring, for 4-5 minutes or until the vegetables soften. Remove from the heat and set aside for about 10 minutes to cool. Combine the vegetable mixture, egg, cheese, parsley and flour in a large bowl until well combined. Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin and smooth the surface. Bake in the oven for 12 minutes or until set. Remove from the oven and set aside for 10 minutes to cool. Lift the frittata from the pan and place on a plate to cool completely. Cut into fingers to serve.

Red Pepper and Courgette Lasagne

1 onion, peeled and sliced

340g red peppers, deseeded and finely chopped

2 tsp chopped fresh thyme

8 sheets wholemeal lasagne

75ml skimmed milk

2 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed

450g courgettes, sliced

2 x 400g chopped tomatoes

300g cream cheese

50g Parmesan cheese, grated

Preheat the oven to 180C / Gas 4. Heat three drops of oil in a large non-stick frying pan. Fry the onion and garlic for 2 to 3 minutes. Add the peppers and courgettes and continue to cook for 6-8 minutes, until the vegetables start to soften. Stir in the thyme and tomatoes and cook for 10-12 minutes. Whisk together the cream cheese and milk. Spoon half the vegetable mixture into the bottom of an ovenproof dish, then top with four of the lasagne sheets and half of the cheese sauce. Repeat with the remaining vegetables, lasagne and cheese sauce, then sprinkle with the grated Parmesan. Bake for one hour until golden and bubbling. Serve with a crispy autumn salad.

Kale and Potato Soup

1 large onion

250g kale

1 litre vegetable stock

3 cloves garlic

500g potatoes

Dice your onion finely and add to a pan with some olive oil and salt. Leave to sweat for 5 minutes. Dice the garlic and add to the pan and cook for another 5 minutes on a low heat. Peel your potatoes, chop into smallish squares and add to the pot. Add just enough stock. Bring to the boil and prepare the kale by stripping the leaves from the stalk and chopping them finely. Add the kale and cook until all is tender. Season to taste and serve.

Saturday morning started off well. I had a relaxing hot bath, it was a beautiful, blustery day stripping the leaves off the trees opposite, opening up my view, letting the light pour in. I lay down on the sunny sofa with a cup of tea and went onto the computer to read the BBC News and it all went downhill after that. I clicked onto an article about Russell Brand. He was described as having 'hypomania' – something I have often wondered whether I might have even though I didn't know what it was. I made the grave mistake of googling 'hypomania'. All I can say is, don't go rooting round on the internet trying to find yourself a mental illness because you will probably find one. Yes it was me....except I don't have the sex addiction typical, the only interesting bit. For the rest of the day I was mentally ill – Farmaround, Izzy Lane, Good Food Nation, my soon to launch new business, my songwriting – all products of my new 'illness'.

That is until I had spent a long walk on the moors pondering the evolution of psychiatry. I actually had this one out with my friend when we were in France, who is a clinical psychologist. Average psychiatrists diagnosing minds far more brilliant and complex than their own –labelling people who are so highly sensitive that in many cases it just destroys them. The labelling is worse than the 'symptoms'. She didn't say much in response, she probably recognised that it was true. I know it's true because I have seen it. Where have all the English eccentrics and artists gone? Are they gone from society, are they all on medication, doped out in front of 'Under the Hammer' - a damning diagnosis and a bottle of pills. One is bog-standard or one is ill. I noted that many of the great minds in history have been retrospectively diagnosed as 'bi-polar' - Isaac Newton, Churchill, Napoleon, Michelangelo, Mozart, Beethoven, Plato, Agatha Christie etc..... what a cheek, I wonder what they'd have to say about this. What has happened to the notion of genius – a term which sadly does not exist in the Psychiatry Handbook.

We shot our Izzy Lane Autumn/Winter collection this weekend in Norfolk. We are very late and are simultaneously working on next year's collection in time for London Fashion Week in February. I am sick of pictures of me snogging sheep – it misses the point. I have worked out the visuals of our stand – it will have a huge backdrop of a halal slaughter and side banners visually depicting the horrors of live export. – halal slaughter always being the destination of our exported lambs. A Compassion in World Farming investigation found 1700 Irish lambs being slaughtered in killing tents in Singapore. These poor little creatures are being traded and re-traded around the globe. There is an election coming soon.

We had a visit from our new bank manager last week, out visiting his new brood of small businesses. He'd done his research, he'd been reading my newsletters. Yeah exactly ! That's the overdraft facility out the window. Very nice man actually.... Gary ☺.

Kind wishes,

Isobel

PS I have just gone back to google 'hypomania', and actually, it isn't me at all. Only the ideas and exuberance bit so I guess I am not ! Phew – that's good news - another close shave.