

Monday 1st October 2018

Dear Customer,

Blimey, the nights are drawing in quickly aren't they, October already. But for the moment, the weather is still beautiful and mild and sunny. I just can't conceive of the miserable months ahead of us – the endless dark, grey, cold, murky, foggy, windy, drizzly, rainy mess. But who knows. The Great British weather, endlessly fascinating and tantalising, one of the true wonders of the world.

We have golden beetroot in the bags this week. It is slightly sweeter than red beetroot but you can cook it in the same way and also grate it raw into salads. Being golden it contains high levels of vitamins A and C, beta-carotene, lycopene and flavonoids and is also a good source of potassium and calcium.

The raised eyebrow of the week is pak choi. You could roast it - place on a baking sheet, drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Toss to coat and roast for 7-10 minutes until the leaves are wilted and caramelised and the bulbs are cooked but still with some crunch. Or you could one of these recipes:

Quick Stir-Fried Pak Choi

2 tbsp oil	3cm piece fresh ginger, finely chopped
1-2 red chillies, finely sliced	3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2 pak choi, stalks finely sliced, leaves roughly sliced	soy sauce
salt	sesame oil

Heat the oil in a large frying pan or wok until very hot, Add the ginger, followed by the chilli and garlic. Immediately add the pak choi stalks and stir. Cook for a minute then add the leaves and stir until wilting, Remove from the heat. Add a pinch of salt, some soy sauce, a few drops of sesame oil, and serve.

Pak Choi and Noodle Soup

1 litre good stock	1 tsp root ginger, chopped
1 small red chilli, de-seeded and finely chopped	juice of ½ lime
1 tbsp soy sauce	50g mushrooms, sliced
2 pak choi heads, leaves separated and sliced	150g dried fine noodles
chopped fresh coriander	

Put the stock, ginger, chilli, lime juice and soy sauce in a large saucepan. Simmer for 5 minutes over a moderate heat. Stir in the mushrooms and pak choi and cook for another 5-7 minutes or until the green stems are cooked but not soggy. Place the noodle in a bowl and pour boiling water over them and stir to separate the strands. Leave to soak according to packet instructions. Drain and divide into bowls. Top up the bowls with the soup and garnish with chopped coriander.

Pak Choi with Ginger Sweet Tofu

250g firm tofu	2 tbsp oil
1cm piece ginger, sliced	2 pak choi, leaves separated
1-2 tbsp rice vinegar	½ tsp dried chilli flakes

Marinade:

1 tbsp grated ginger	3 tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp brown sugar	

Prick a few holes in the tofu with a toothpick to help the marinade soak into it, then cut into bite-sized cubes. Mix the marinade ingredients together in a bowl and toss in the tofu pieces. Set aside to marinate for 15 minutes. Heat a wok or large frying pan over a high heat and add half the oil. When it starts to smoke add the ginger slices and stir-fry for a few seconds. Add the pak choi leaves and stir-fry for 1-2 minutes. Add a small splash of water to create some steam and cook for 2 minutes more. When the leaves have wilted and the stems are cooked but still a little crunchy, season with salt and transfer to a serving dish. Rinse the wok/pan under cold water then reheat it and add the remaining oil. When it starts to smoke add the tofu pieces, retaining the marinade liquid, and stir-fry for 5 – 10 minutes. Take care not to break up the tofu as you toss it to get it browned evenly on all sides. Season with the rice vinegar. Add the remaining marinade liquid, bring to the bubble and let the liquid reduce. Sprinkle over the chilli flakes and toss well. Spoon onto the pak choi and serve immediately with rice, if you like.

Golden Beetroot Pasta

400g golden beetroot	300g pasta eg penne, spaghetti
2 tbsp herb pesto	2 tbsp olive oil

Wash and dry the beets and place them in a heavy roasting tin. Drizzle them with olive oil and roll around to coat. Sprinkle with salt and thyme and roll again, Put the roasting tin in the middle of a preheated oven and cook for 40-45 minutes or until the beets are soft but not shrunken. Remove from the oven and when cool rub off the skins. Meanwhile cook the pasta according to packet instructions. Chop the beets into bite-sized chunks. Place the hot, cooked penne pasta in a warmed serving bowl and stir through the pesto and then the beetroot. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper.

Not much space left to write in and not much news here anyway. I wasn't very well last week. 'The aching' descended upon me. It seems to be my very own unique condition. I put it down to some sort of migraine, a variation on the theme. It can inhabit me for up to 5 or 6 days and then it leaves. At least it does leave.....for now. I guess we all have something. I don't think spending hours and hours curved over a computer is very good for our skeletal frames, but for many of us that is where our work is. If evolution gets its way I can see the humans of tomorrow shuffling round, small, weak versions of the hunchback of Notre Dame. And if we insist on letting rip with population growth then we should become a lot smaller, maybe 50cms high or even 10cms. We would need less food, less water, smaller cars and smaller houses. Watch this space !

I hope you have a good week,

Kind wishes,

Isobel