



[Monday 5th December 2011](#)

Dear Customer

It isn't with much joy that we wake up with snow again. Noone up here likes snow anymore, not after the last 2 years. They hate it.

However, if you see a golden glow radiating from your vegetable bags this week, it is golden globe beetroot. It will bring you health, wealth and happiness. It has a slightly milder flavour than normal beetroot but you can cook it in the same way.

To roast beetroot, preheat the oven to 400F/200C/Gas 6. Wash the beetroot and pat dry with kitchen paper. Place in a roomy roasting tin, sprinkle with olive oil and roll the beetroot in them to ensure they are well-covered. Sprinkle with salt and thyme and bake for 40-45 minutes until soft but not shrunken. Leave to cool then rub away the skin.

Golden Beetroot Pasta

450g warm, roasted Golden beetroot

300g cooked penne

2 tbsp pesto

handful rocket

olive oil

seas salt and black pepper

Remove the skin and any root from the hot, roasted beetroot. Chop into small pieces and keep warm. Place the cooked pasta in a warm serving bowl, add the pesto and stir thoroughly, add the rocket and then the coked beetroot. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper and serve immediately with greens or a fresh salad and crusty bread.

I am finally back in Yorkshire. I spent a day meticulously cleaning my brother's house and removing any trace of myself and Myfa before my departure. For years I've been yearning to have my own place in London again so I could live between there and here, have the best of both worlds, but after 2 weeks there I was desperate to come home. I've long felt that my head is in London but my heart is in the rugged landscape of the Dales. Myfa was starting to look as sick as a pig from being cooped up. She loved the trips to Richmond Park and found rolling in deer muck novel but she couldn't give good chase to the squirrels which were up a tree in a flash – not like the moorland hares which see her run until she is just a speck on the horizon. There were no putrefying sheep to roll in either. Ernest said the other day that if he dropped dead behind a gorse bush, he would lie there and rot because noone would know he was missing - and then Myfa would find him and roll in him – which she would.

She was so pleased to get home and span around doing her high speed whirling dervishes dance. Badgie the guinea pig joined in the excitement and ran round the dining room. My guinea pigs are never officially named – just over time they acquire something which describes them eg Fatty, Little One, Slipper. I can imagine they do the same to us. Ernest was feeding them while I was away..... “ The sun’s been up half an hour, where the hell’s Baldy with the dandelion leaves ?” I can’t write here what they call me.

I am so relieved our Eggs and Milk are up and running and thank you again for all your orders. I have responsibility for so many animals now and who on earth knows what our future holds. Despite the economy, I think we have to carry on doing the things that we feel are right and true to what we believe in. We have to carry on boldly and maintain our values. I did believe at the time of Northern Rock, that it was all going to be far, far worse than anyone was predicting, when they talked of unemployment reaching 2½ million, my instinct told me it would be more like 4 million, and that, actually, life would never be the same again. I didn’t see how historic cycles could apply since the world has never been like this before. The dynamics of the globe had changed beyond recognition. Many of us believe that we have lived through the most affluent and comfortable times this country has ever had and will ever have again. Initially terrifying, but once one accepts this, there becomes an exciting opportunity to revisit how we live, our values, and for the next generation to make it their own. But it is a future which won’t revolve around money, because there won’t be any. Some wholesome trends have been taking root over the last few years, symbolic of a move away from consumerism – a return to home-baking, knitting, growing vegetables - but is that all bourgeois and can that apply in the city. It could do. All of a sudden (and heaven forbid !) ‘the big society’ resonates - not just looking out for ones own but for everyone in the community. Stepping in where the state is stepping out. I guess Cameron and his advisers knew back then what was coming – we ‘sort of’ knew what he was trying to say but didn’t know why he was saying it. We do now.

The last few years has seen a faltering and regression of the organic movement and within this are animal welfare standards. Many organic farmers have been giving up and going back to conventional production – chemicals and factory farming. Organic farming can’t be switched on and off at whim. It is a different farming methodology – one which is sustainable, ensures our eco-system, protects soil-fertility and one which depletes and ravages it, ensuring nothing is left to the next generation, and which decimates wildlife. Never before, has what we spend our limited money on, been so important to our future. Only the companies which we buy from will survive, along with their supply chains. What we each buy will determine what our future looks like. Having abandoned organic vegetables some time ago, I noted that my local supermarket, the Coop, has just stopped selling organic cheese too. That doesn’t bode well for animal welfare. At least under an organic system, cows can’t be incarcerated for 12 months a year. We can’t let ‘the economics’ have it’s way with the things we care about and must stand up for them.

Well that was my Sunday morning, in my dressing gown, reflection on ‘stating the obvious’ to those who already know.

I hope all is well with you,

Kind Wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Isobel', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

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