



Monday 16th January 2012

Dear Customer,

At the moment quite a lot of our produce is coming from Royal Oak Farm in Ormskirk - out Liverpool way. The leeks are Scousers. You can imagine the hoo ha in the bags when they meet the Breton cauliflowers. Hopefully they won't smash each other up too much. They won't when they realize who's in the fruit bag. The Sicilian Moro Blood oranges. The frost has now come with a vengeance but the growing season was so remarkable that the vegetables at Royal Oak just kept on growing and growing. We have had some complaints that the vegetables are too big. Any giant root vegetables will keep for weeks in your fridge if you can fit them. You could just hack pieces off as and when. Or they will freeze. I don't think there should be anything of concern this week though. The potatoes in the bags are Desiree from Rosemary Wass. The apples are Dalinettes and the pears are Worcester Magics.

Here are a few delicious recipes you could try :

Roasted Cauliflower with Lemon and Paprika

*1 medium cauliflower, trimmed
3 tbsp olive oil
flaky sea salt*

*2 lemons
½ tsp hot smoked paprika
freshly ground black pepper*

Preheat oven to 220C/ Gas7. Cut the cauliflower into medium florets and rinse, leaving some water clinging to the florets. Put them in a large roasting tray, squeeze over the juice from one of the lemons, trickle over the olive oil, add the paprika and some salt and pepper and toss it all together. Cut the remaining lemon into 6 segments and scatter these in the tray. Roast for 25-30 minutes, turning once, until the florets are slightly caramelized at the edges. Squeeze the juice from the roasted lemon segments over the roasted cauliflower and serve at once scattered with flaky sea salt.

Stir-fried Sesame Cauliflower

*1 medium cauliflower, trimmed
2 tbsp sunflower oil
2 garlic cloves, sliced
2 tsp ginger, freshly grated
2 tsp soy sauce plus extra to serve*

*2 tbsp sesame seeds
1 onion, halved and thinly sliced
1-2 green chillies, deseeded and thinly sliced
1 tsp toasted sesame oil
small handful coriander, chopped*

Break the cauliflower into small florets. Place in bowl of water to soak for 10 minutes. In a small frying pan, dry-fry the sesame seeds for a minute or two until toasted. Tip onto a plate and set aside. Heat the sunflower oil in a large frying pan or wok over a medium heat and add the onion. Saute until pale golden, then add the garlic, chilli and ginger and fry, stirring for a minute. Drain the cauliflower. Raise the heat under the frying pan then tip in the cauliflower and 100ml water. Cook, stirring, for 5-10 minutes until the florets are browning around the edges, adding a splash more water if they start to stick. Stir in the sesame seeds, sesame oil, soy sauce and chopped coriander. Serve with soy sauce to hand.

Leek Risotto with Chestnuts

*75g butter or margarine
500g leeks, trimmed and finely sliced
150ml dry white wine
salt and pepper*

*olive oil
800ml vegetable stock
200g cooked chestnuts
thyme leaves to finish*

Heat 50g of the butter or margarine and a little oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat. As soon as it is foaming, add the leeks, lower the heat and sweat gently, covered for about 20 minutes until silky, stirring occasionally. Bring the stock to a low simmer in a pan and keep over a low heat. Add the rice to the leeks and stir well, then add the wine. Increase the heat and let it bubble until the liquid has evaporated. Then start adding the stock, about a quarter at a time. Stir often, adding more hot stock until it is absorbed. After about 25 minutes the rice should be cooked with just a hint of a bite and all the stock used. While the risotto is cooking, heat 20g of butter or margarine and a little oil in a frying pan and add the chestnuts with a pinch of salt. Turn up the heat and fry a bit for 2 minutes until the chestnuts are browned. Take off the heat. When the risotto is cooked, turn off the heat, season with salt and pepper to taste then dot a little

more butter or margarine over the surface. Cover the pan to let it melt then stir it into the rice. Serve scattered with chestnuts and thyme.

Emails and texts have certainly taken over from the telephone in my life. It's the fraughtness of all the kisses which upsets me. It starts off with one .. 'x', reciprocated by ...'x'. Then it starts to escalate '....xx', so...'xx'. Then all of a sudden this happens '...xxxxx' and you wish it had never started. I am as guilty as the next. Judging the response is a nightmare. Especially when you've never met the person involved and it could even just be a business scenario. Oh, the deliberations – trying not to come across as cold, off or offensive – too adoring or sycophantic. I'll put '...xx' then go back and take one off '...x', then put it back on again '...xx'. I was very please when Blackberry gave us a lot of little faces to use instead.

The clear blue skies and sunshine this weekend sent me into spring clean fever. I have been fed up with having so many clothes. Decades of accumulated stuff that I have never worn and will never wear. My logic – not knowing what the future might hold - kept as a big nest egg in case one day I wouldn't be able to scrape together 50p for an old jumper. I must have taken 100 kilos to the charity shop. If you haven't already done this, I highly recommend it. I am now going through every box, cupboard and drawer – all full of life's useless rubble and am going to get rid of it.

Kind wishes and hope all well with you,

Isobel