



Monday 21st May 2012

Dear Customer,

The temperatures are set to rise this week – can't wait !

Unfortunately the English main crop potatoes have now become too sprouty to use so we have switched to Italian Nicola new potatoes. Having said that, as I write this, the Italian lorry driver is stuck with them in Dover, having been stopped at Customs for going over his driving hours. It's Monday morning and I hope he will be released soon as he's holding the packing up ! Next week we will start on Cornish new potatoes.

Here are some delicious and quick recipes you could try with this week's produce:

Spring Vegetables in Lemony Butter

200g peas

small head broccoli, in florets

25g butter or margarine

250g green beans, trimmed and chopped

250g spring cabbage, shredded

1 lemon, halved

Cook each vegetable until tender. Drain, then rinse under the cold tap. Put the butter in a large pan and melt until it starts to foam. Add a good squeeze of lemon and the vegetables. Then, toss everything together until hot and coated with the butter. Season with salt and lots of freshly ground black pepper and another good squeeze of lemon.

Spring Cabbage with Mustard Seeds

1 tbsp olive oil

1 small onion, finely sliced

1 tbsp grated ginger

1 tbsp mustard seeds

1 garlic clove, crushed

1 spring cabbage, shredded

Heat the oil in a frying pan then cook the mustard seeds until they are fragrant and starting to pop. Add the onion, garlic and ginger, then fry until golden. Tip in the cabbage and stir to coat in the spices, then cook for 5 minutes until tender. Season and serve immediately.

Courgette and Cherry Tomato Linguine

250g linguine, or other pasta

1 garlic clove, crushed

100g cherry tomatoes, quartered

half a lemon, zested and juiced

1 small onion, thinly sliced

450g courgettes, thinly sliced

olive oil

Parmesan shavings to serve, optional

Cook the linguine or other pasta according to packet instructions. Meanwhile, heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large frying pan and fry the onion, garlic and courgette until golden. Add the lemon zest and juice, tomato and some more olive oil and season. Toss the pasta with the lemony courgettes and serve scattered with Parmesan.

I was on the settee with Myfa the other night watching The Apprentice. Something caught her eye and I turned to see a massive brown rat running from under my aubergine kitchen bar across my golden limestone floor into the utility room and back again with a piece of guinea pig food. In a state of shock, I went over and closed the utility room door. So brazen doing it with me and Myfa sitting there and the TV on. A minute later it ran out again and sat bemused next to the just-closed door. WellI didn't know what the hell to do !

Whilst I suspected I was having such visits, I couldn't really believe it. The rat, or.....dare I say 'Robbie' (that wasn't my idea – it was my friend Helen) was so sleek and healthy looking. Anyway, I got onto the internet that night and ordered a humane trap. The next day I told Ernest what had happened. Then I told him he was called Robbie. "No, no Isobel, no, no, not a rat ". He screwed his face up and told me there was no way he would be coming to collect it and driving it up Swaledale to a nice barn. He said I'd be on my own with it and that if it were down to him he would kill it. He is apparently terrified of them. When he was a baby, one sunny day outside in his pram, a rat jumped in with him, then they had to set the terrier loose in the pram to kill it. He said that years ago when hay was raked and stacked with forks the rats used to run up the farm labourers' trousers. On one occasion, a rat ran up someone's trouser leg and into his jumper. He grabbed it and held it in his jumper and another man whacked him in the stomach with his fork sending him winded to the ground - also killing the rat.

It was so sad to hear of Robin Gibb's death and to hear that he had wondered if his success had brought him 'bad karma'. What a terrible thing to think. Anyone who can write 'Massachusetts' and 'Saturday Night Fever' deserves

serious success. The success was only proportionate to how much people loved and bought their music. It was certainly one of the soundtracks to my life in those years in the seventies when I'd just left home – the juke boxes, the clubs. And of course, he was a vegetarian !

Well I'm fed up with the Olympics already and they've only just set off with the torch. I will probably watch and enjoy the games themselves but between now and then, the perpetual news coverage, of basically nothing, will be unbearable.

Anyway, I hope all is well with you and you have a great week,

Kind wishes,

Isobel, Myfa, Badgie, Coco.....and Robbie

PS With the double bank holiday next weekend, our deliveries will be going out one day later than normal. So Tuesday's deliveries will go out on Wednesday, Wednesday's on Thursday and Thursday's on Friday. I hope this won't cause any inconvenience.

PPS The new potatoes are vastly more expensive than the main crop so we have had to increase the prices of the kilo bags.