



## **Monday 8th October 2012**

Dear Customer,

Summer at last. Fantastic weather. We have Yorkshire cavolo nero in the bags this week and swedes make their debut. Here are a few recipes you could try:

### **Tagliatelle with Cavolo Nero and Chickpeas**

*large handful of cavolo nero*

*2 lemons, zest only*

*200g cooked chickpeas*

*salt*

*100g grated hard cheese, optional*

*100ml olive juice*

*½ lemon, juice only*

*500g fresh tagliatelle pasta, or similar*

*freshly ground black pepper*

*Bring a deep saucepan of water to the boil and blanch the cavolo nero for one minute. Drain, and when cool enough, chop finely. Heat the olive oil in a wide pan and fry the cavolo nero in it for a few minutes over a moderately high heat, stirring constantly. At the same time, bring a pot of water to boil and drop in the pasta and cook until tender. Drain the pasta and stir it into the cavolo with the lemon juice and zest, the chickpeas and half of the grated cheese. Season to taste. Serve in deep bowls with more grated cheese scattered over.*

### **Cavolo Nero and Potato Soup**

*400g cavolo nero, approximately*

*1 onion, diced*

*1 small dried red chilli, chopped*

*1 tsp salt*

*1 litre water or stock*

*soured cream, to serve*

*1 tbsp olive oil*

*6 garlic cloves, sliced*

*1 bay leaf*

*4 medium potatoes, peeled and diced*

*freshly ground black pepper*

*Strip the kale leaves from their central ribs. Cut the leaves into roughly 5cm pieces. Heat the oil in a large pan and add the onion, garlic, chilli, bay leaf and salt and cook gently for 3-4 minutes. Add the diced potatoes and a cup of the water and cook for 5 minutes. Add the kale, pour in the remaining stock or water and simmer for about 30 minutes until the potatoes are soft. Puree a cup or two and then return it to the pot. Season with black pepper and serve with a dollop of cream.*

I know I spoke of my health-scare the other week. I had found a lump and went straight to see the doctor who said I needed it investigating under the 2 week rule. I'd basically had it. I called for my hospital appointment and they got me in within 2 days - too quick to blink. I went cheerfully off to my hospital appointment - it obviously hadn't had time to sink in. I had to have an x ray and biopsy. I have to say, it wasn't bad at all and not as bad as it seems on Look North. In fact the whole hospital experience was quite pleasant and they made me a cup of tea. During the biopsy I cracked a few jokes so they had to ask me to keep still to which I made some comment about 'else they'd go straight through my heart' which I thought was funny and laughed again at the wrong time so they had to do it all over again.

Well that was the easy bit. The hard bit was the wait for the results. Everyone kept telling me how it was statistically unlikely as 8 out of 9 lumps are benign. I started counting the number of people who told me they'd found one and had been fine. I think it was 7. I added in the housekeeper from Downton, that made 8. Statistically I was the one. In the meantime my brother sent me a large bouquet of flowers and went into action. He got onto his old Uni friends - an asthma specialist at Imperial, a cardiologist at the Nuffield, he tracked me down the best consultant in the North.

The day of my results appointment loomed. I decided I didn't want to go to the hospital for my results and go through X-factor 'am I through to the next round' tension - the waiting room build-up, the look in the doctor's face. Everyone told me "you have to go". The problem is one doesn't 'have' to do anything, so I decided I wasn't going. If it was bad they would feel compelled to track me down and tell me and in the meantime I would make the most of blissful ignorance. In the morning I rang to cancel my appointment and the receptionist started rescheduling one for the end of October. When I told him I was awaiting results he suggested I talk to the secretary "no, no, no", I begged. "Can you just ask her to let me know if there's anything I need to know". Ten minutes later the phone rang. It was her. My heart pounded as she confirmed my name, my date of birth, my address. "Well" she said. "It was quite a worrying lump..... but other than that there were no symptoms.....but even though you have slowed down now, you have lived life in the fast lane, some might say 'recklessly' ..... I'm afraid it's not good news.....it's GREAT news. YOU ARE THROUGH TO THE NEXT ROUND"

What she really said is “ It’s ok, nothing untoward has been found but come to the next appointment to officially receive the results”. “oh thank you, thank God, thank you”. I came off the phone and was shaking. I punched the air, I felt elated. Not just elated. I felt immortal. A lot of people say they wouldn’t want to live forever. I would. I remember in my twenties reading Simone de Beauvoir’s ‘Tous les hommes sont mortels’. It was a chilling tale of Raimon Fosca who was immortal. It’s reading made one very relieved to have an expiry date. Now that I am getting older, I should probably read it again.

Hope you have a great week,  
Kind wishes,  
Isobel