



## **Monday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2013**

Dear Customer,

It's Bank Holiday Monday today, a beautiful, sunny morning and it is officially Yellow Marrow Week. Our specimens are from Royal Oak Farm and are loaded with Vitamin A, Vitamin C and potassium. Please don't just squeeze it into the bottom drawer of the fridge and leave it there until it decomposes, celebrate it. We also have Jonnie Watson's cavolo nero, his spinach and his Marfona potatoes in the bags and Newfield's famous Yorkshire Moors carrots. We have Galia melons, Blush seedless grapes and yellow plums from the South of France. The English apples and Conference pears should be starting soon.

Here are a few recipes you could try with this week's produce:

### **Stuffed Marrow**

1 marrow	40g butter or margarine
2 celery sticks, chopped	1 garlic clove, chopped
2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes	3 tbsp fresh basil
50g fresh white breadcrumbs	25g mature Cheddar, finely grated
salt and freshly ground black pepper	

*Preheat the oven to 190C/ gas 5. Cut the marrow into eight rings, each about 4cm thick, peel and remove the seeds. Place the rings in a large, lightly greased ovenproof dish, arranging them in a single layer. Melt the butter in a large saucepan and cook the onion and celery for 5 minutes until softened. Add the garlic and cook for a further minute. Stir in the chopped tomatoes with their juice and season with a little salt and pepper. Bring to the boil, then simmer uncovered for about 10 minutes or until the mixture is thick and pulpy. Stir in the shredded basil. Lightly season the marrow rings with salt and pepper before spooning the tomato mixture into the hollowed-out centres. Spread any leftover tomato mixture between the marrow rings and bake for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, mix the breadcrumbs and cheese together. Remove the foil and sprinkle the crumb mixture over the tops of the marrow rings. Return to the oven and bake for a further 15 minutes or until the topping is golden and crisp and the marrow is tender and juicy. Serve hot scattered with fresh basil leaves.*

### **Cavolo Nero with Pasta and Chickpeas**

large handful cavolo nero	100ml olive oil
2 lemons, zest only	½ lemon, juice only
200g cooked chickpeas	500g fresh tagliatelle or similar
salt and freshly ground black pepper	100g hard cheese, finely grated ( optional)

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

Whenever I sit down at my computer to work, the first thing I do is procrastinate. I check the farmaround facebook for slander, check the 5-day weather forecast for all corners of Britain and Marseille and check the BBC News website to make sure bubonic plague isn't sweeping the nation . I often catch a glimpse of the 'most read stories' list. This morning, it wasn't 'Syria', it was ' Will we ever want to have sex with robots'. No doubt some people will. I wasn't interested enough to look up the answer. The 'most read' tends to be of the same genre or 'policeman falls over and gets a traffic cone stuck on his head', not the latest GDP figures. I guess we are a nation of procrastinators...dawdlers....live and be merry.

After Badgie my guinea pig died a few months ago, I let Coco grieve a while, then went to the local rescue centre and brought home a little male guinea pig as a companion. I had to keep them in separate hutches as they wanted to kill each other. Eventually I took him back. I have to add that the rescue centre is like a 5 star hotel so I had no qualms about returning him. Then I decided I would take Coco to be castrated so I could get him a female companion. Not that I didn't trust him. The day before his op, I changed my mind and cancelled it thinking Coco was fine on his own, he is free to go where he wants when he wants and is part of the family. However, he never wants to do anything except sit mid-way, in the opening of his hutch, half in and half out, day and night except when he comes out to eat. I couldn't bear it any more. I couldn't bear him having to spend the rest of his life half in and half out of his hutch and all alone so I thought I would go and get a female guinea pig. I went to collect her yesterday, she is called Kiki and is a little baby. Coco adores her, he is so happy. She isn't yet confident enough to come out the hutch so Coco ferries food into her. He took her a French bean in for her breakfast then came and ate his one on the terrace before disappearing into the hutch again to be with her. I am going to take him for the op this week. As I said, not that I don't trust him !

I hope you are well and enjoying this beautiful, golden late summer weather. I'm going to head up to the moors now with Myfa, where the heather is in full bloom and abuzz with bees, where there is no phone signal, and where I will try to take the afternoon off. It was my birthday recently, time is passing very quickly and one often wonders how many good years remain to one ☺.

Kind wishes,

Isobel