



Monday 9th December 2013

Dear Customer,

Well the Christmas cheer, or..... stress.... is really kicking in now. I was a bit shocked when I drove through Richmond the other night and every other house had Christmas tree already up, baubled and illuminated.

We have sweet potatoes in the bags this week from Andaluca. They are full of nutrients – vitamins A, C, B6, fibre, iron and calcium. You could bake them – scrub clean, prick their skins and bake in the oven at 200C? Gas 6, for 30-50 minutes depending on size and serve as a jacket potato. You could peel and cut into chunks and boil in salted water until soft then mash them – maybe with milk and butter. For sweet potato wedges – peel and cut into wedges – the drizzle with olive oil and balsamic vinegar and roast for 20-25 minutes at 200C/ Gas 6.

Spring Greens with Lemon Dressing

250g broccoli, in florets (optional)

400g spring greens, thick stalks removed, shredded

Dressing:

2 cloves garlic

zest and juice of 1 lemon

2 tbsp olive oil

To make the dressing, mix the garlic, lemon juice and zest, olive oil and some seasoning together. Bring a large pan of water to the boil, then add the broccoli and greens, and cook for about 5 minutes until tender. Drain well, then toss through the dressing and serve.

Leek and Spring Green Filo Pie

finely grated zest of 1 lemon

2 tbsp olive oil

225g leeks, thinly sliced

150g spring greens, shredded

170g frozen petits pois

2 tbsp fresh tarragon, chopped

1 tbsp fresh mint, chopped

2 eggs

4 tbsp low fat yoghurt

85g Gruyere cheese, diced

115g filo pastry

salt and pepper

Mix the lemon zest with the oil and set aside to infuse for about 5 minutes. Heat half the lemon-infused oil in a large saucepan. Add the leeks, spring greens, petits pois, tarragon and mint. Mix well to coat the vegetables with the oil, then cover and cook over a low heat for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the greens are lightly cooked and have wilted. Season the vegetables to taste then transfer them to an 8" pie or flan dish. Preheat oven to 220C/425F/Gas 7. Beat the eggs with the yoghurt. Add a little seasoning and the Gruyere cheese, then pour the mixture evenly over the vegetables and mix lightly. Brush a sheet of filo pastry very sparingly with a little of the remaining lemon-infused oil and lay it over the vegetables, tucking the edges neatly inside the rim of the dish. Brush the remaining sheets of filo with oil and place them on top of the pie, oiled side up, pinching and pleating them into folds to cover the top fairly evenly. Lay a piece of foil loosely over the top of the pie and bake for about 10 minutes. Remove the foil and bake for a further 10-15 minutes or until the pastry is crisp and golden brown. Serve immediately.

I've got bad toothache, well it's not even just toothache, it the whole of one side of my face and jaw and so spread that it's impossible to know which tooth it's coming from. I think it has been brought on by a horrible event at the weekend. I went over to walk round the sheep and thought I would go into the cow byre where some hay is stored to make sure none were in there. To my horror a little sheep had found his way in, had clambered up onto the bales, slipped between them, had become lodged and he was dead. I feel absolutely terrible and can't get the image out of my head. Obviously had I been in to check the byre before, then I may have found him alive and would have got him out. So that is what I am dealing with this lovely Monday morning. I am wracked with guilt.

On top of that I have fallen out with Ernest. Earlier this summer, in the little field I rent at the end of my road, a Swaledale ewe appeared with two male lambs. They were probably on the run and someone opened the gate to get them off the road – or give them market. So I left them there and they became part of the flock with the 30 Shetlands I had in that field.

Anyway last week Ernest was going to gather that small flock up and take them to join the others in Hornby for the winter, which he did. I went for a walk with Ernest the day after during which I said I'd like to drop in on the sheep and said I wanted to see if the Swaledale ewe and lambs had hooked up with my other two Swaledales. He didn't say a word. We walked round them but it was dark and we couldn't see anything so gave up. I told Ernest I'd go up there to see them the next morning.

The next morning, knowing I was going to see the Swaledales, Ernest called me and said that he hadn't moved them, but instead had found the farmer who owned them and told him to come and get them. He told he his conscience wouldn't allow it.

I absolutely blew up knowing the lambs would be slaughtered straight away. I asked him for the phone number of the farm so I could buy them before they were killed. "No, I can't give you it". "Why didn't you tell me, why didn't you discuss this with me first, you knew I would have bought them, give me the number" I said

"It's in the phone directory". "Give me the bloody number, I haven't got a directory" I shouted. I was beyond furious by the betrayal, and he would know those lambs we had watched grow up would be killed straightway. He said he'd call me back with it. I called the farmer and asked to buy them and they are being delivered back to Hornby, well in about half an hour, so I have to go and meet the farmer there now. It's been a horrible few days.

Anyway, I hope all is well with you,

Kindest wishes,

Isobel

Your Christmas delivery dates are as follows:

If your usual delivery day is Tuesday 24th we will be delivering to you on Sunday the 22nd December.

If your usual delivery day is Wednesday 25th we will be delivering to you on Monday 23rd December.

If your usual delivery day is Thursday 26th, we will be delivering on Tuesday 24th December.

Your New Year delivery dates:

If your usual delivery day is 31st December – your delivery will be as normal.

If your usual delivery day is Wednesday 1st January we will be delivering to you on Thursday 2nd January.

If your usual delivery day is Thursday 2nd January we will be delivering to you on Friday 3rd January