



Monday 24th October 2016

Dear Customer,

I hope this finds you well. Distinctly nippier and more golden this week here in the Dales. One more week before the joy of the clocks going back. Here are some lovely autumnal recipes you could try with this week's ingredients:

Fennel, Leek and Mushroom Penne

500g penne	10g butter or margarine
1 onion	3 medium leeks
1 bulb fennel	200g mushrooms
200ml crème fraiche	1 tsp dried oregano

Cook the pasta according to packet instructions to 'al dente' then drain. Meanwhile, finely slice the onion, leeks and fennel. Put them in a large saute pan with the butter or margarine and cook for 10 minutes, until softened. Slice the mushrooms, add these and cook for a further 5 minutes. Stir in the crème fraiche and 200ml water. Add the oregano, bring to a simmer and season with salt and pepper. Mix the sauce with the pasta and serve.

Braised Kale with Parsnips and Chestnuts

200g kale, shredded	125g carrots, sliced
300g parsnips, coarsely grated	100g chestnuts, halved
1 sprig rosemary	400ml hot vegetable stock
1 tbsp cranberry sauce	

Place all the ingredients in a large saucepan. Cover, bring to the boil then simmer for 8-10 minutes until tender then season.

Leek, Kale and Gruyere

375g ready-rolled shortcrust pastry	knob butter
2 medium leeks, thinly sliced	75g kale, roughly chopped
2 medium free-range eggs	100ml double cream
bunch of fresh chives, snipped	50g Gruyere cheese, grated

Preheat the oven to 200C/ Fan 180C/ Gas 6. Line an 18cm flan tin with the pastry, prick the base all over with a fork, then line the pastry with baking paper and fill with baking beans or rice and blind bake for 5 minutes more. Meanwhile, melt the butter in a frying pan, add the leeks and cook over a medium heat for 10 minutes until soft. Cook the kale in boiling water for 4-5 minutes, drain well then squeeze dry. Add the kale to the pastry case with the leeks. Whisk the eggs, cream, chives and Gruyere together then season well and pour on top of the leeks and kale. Return to the oven and bake for 20 minutes until golden and set.

Chocolate Kale Brownies

200g plain chocolate	225g butter, diced
200g kale, stems removed	225g light brown soft sugar
3 free range eggs	100g plain flour
1 tsp baking powder	

Preheat the oven to 180C/ Gas 4. Grease and base line a 22cm square tin. Melt the chocolate and butter in a bowl over a pan of simmering water. Meanwhile, cook the kale in boiling water for 3-4 minutes, cool under cold water and drain well, squeezing out any excess liquid, then chop up finely. Whisk the sugar and eggs together until pale then stir in the chocolate mixture and kale. Mix together the flour and baking powder and fold into the brownie mixture and pour into the prepared tin. Bake for 35-40 minutes. Cool slightly before removing from the tin and cut into 12 pieces.

On Monday I had the call to take my new reconditioned computer to the computer guru to have my data downloaded and emails restored. The guru occupies half of his sitting room, taken over with his paraphernalia. It was 10am his wife was laid out on the sofa in pyjamas covered in a blanket watching an action movie. I think she is a care worker and does odd shifts so this was probably her evening. It was boiling and airless in the room, I sat down knowing this was going to be a long session. I sat next to the guru, he was coughing and sneezing and his waste paper basket was overflowing with tissues. About an hour and a half in, the now obviously unwell wife said they had had to call the Rapid Response Unit out that morning as she had collapsed in the shower – viral flu combined with a panic attack apparently. Great, what hope did I have sitting there in between them. I made an excuse and slipped out of the French doors for some air, looking in, wondering if I could just stay out there for the rest of the session. The next laptop casualty arrived while I was out there. A young mother with a little girl who was watching Peppa the Pig on her phone. They sat down next to the wife who had called the ambulance out that morning. This is terrible I thought. We were trapped. I went back in as it was freezing outside. I stood away from everyone and looked at the gekkos which lived in big Tupperware boxes on the bookshelves. Peppa the Pig started speaking in Italian from the girl's phone. Impressed as she was only about 2yrs old, I asked if she was learning Italian. Mother gave me a dirty look and said she'd just pressed the wrong button. I mused that this would be a great way for me to learn Italian and how could I download it. I will get onto Google later. Looking like I might be there forever I asked if I might go and he could call me once the data was all downloaded. I shot out the door. About 7 hours later I rang him to see what was happening. It was still downloading. He said there were 30 gigabytes of it.

I hadn't deleted any of my deleted emails for many years – there were probably about 1,000,000 emails in the sent and deleted folders alone. You never know when you'll need them – I have learned this the hard way.

On the way home I called in the shop. The person in front of me was buying Strepsils. Next morning Diane was coughing and spluttering. It's Monday morning and she said she has been in bed all weekend very sick and poorly. Another friend had turned up for the weekend, opening line - 'I've got a stinking cold'. My neighbour has just gone past the window – nose buried in a big handkerchief. I've been pretty achey all week – less with virus and more with the stress of trying to avoid one. I've been imagining the computer game. So it seems this is 'ill October'. The best way to avoid the bugs – avoid people as much as possible, lots of exercise, fresh air, and of course, your bug-busting, immunity boosting farmaround fruit and vegetables.

Kind regards,

Isobel