



Monday 27th March 2017

Dear Customer,

After a wintry blast and snow earlier in the week, OMG, it was like being in paradise this weekend. What glorious warm sunshine for us to bask in. My car went to the garage for its MOT on Thursday, and failed miserably. It is Monday morning and it is apparently still in pieces waiting for a suspension arm to arrive. But being car-less meant I could spend the whole weekend in the garden with a trowel, a fork and a rake. My pond, no bigger than 9ft diameter, was bubbling and croaking with toads. I counted 22 of them. The blackbirds were singing, the cuckoos were cuckooing and I managed to hack, saw, dig and prune the garden back to respectability – and looking lovely actually. But today I can barely move – every muscle hurts but the clocks have gone forward and it is spring.

We have delicious purple sprouting broccoli in the bags this week. It is from Langridge Farm, situated just outside the market town of Crediton in Mid Devon. Langridge has been farmed by the Govier family since 1969 and is now run by David Govier. It consists of 270 acres of traditional mixed organic land in the rolling Devon hills. It has 170 acres being rotated and used for growing vegetables as well as mixed managed woodlands.

The farm started converting to organic in 1983 and was fully organic by the growing season of 1988. The soil is all grade 3 with as David puts it in his broad Devonian accent 'no flat fields here'. The farm has the most fantastic biodiversity and array of wildlife present on the farm. The earthworms work very hard to create the fertile soils which produce this delicious purple sprouting broccoli.

It can be steamed, stir-fried, boiled or roasted. You could eat it on its own as you would asparagus - cook until tender then dip in mayonnaise - or butter/margarine, sprinkle with lemon juice and season. It is extremely nutritious with high levels of antioxidants, vitamin C, iron and folic acid.

Here are a few tasty recipes you could try with it:

Spaghetti with Purple Sprouting Broccoli, Tomato and Olive Sauce

1 tbsp olive oil	2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 tsp red chilli flakes	1 bag purple sprouting broccoli, washed and trimmed
2 or 3 x 400g tins chopped tomatoes	10 black olives, pitted and halved
2 tsp capers, drained	450g spaghetti
croutons (cubes of bread fried to a crunch)	grated cheese, to serve (optional)

Heat the oil in a large pan over a medium heat. Add the garlic and chilli and cook for 1-2 minutes, until golden. Stir in the tomatoes. Season well then reduce the heat and simmer gently for 10 minutes. Add the olives and capers for the final 2 minutes of cooking. Cook the spaghetti according to packet instructions. Add the purple sprouting broccoli to the pan for the final 3 minutes of cooking. Drain the spaghetti and broccoli well and add to the tomato sauce. Toss to coat and serve scattered with croutons and the grated cheese if using.

Purple Sprouting Broccoli Tempura with Soy and Ginger Dipping Sauce

bag of purple sprouting broccoli	oil, for deep frying
For Dipping Sauce:	
2 tbsp soy sauce	1 tbsp rice wine or white wine
1 tbsp maple syrup	1 tsp fresh ginger, peeled and finely chopped
For Tempura Batter:	
100g cornflour	100g rice flour
pinch baking powder	pinch sea salt
250ml sparkling water or beer	

Make the dipping sauce by whisking together the sauce ingredients then set aside. For the batter, whisk together the flours, baking powder, salt and sparkling water or beer until you have a thin batter. Trim the florets. Pour oil into the pan to a depth of about 7cm and place on a high heat. The oil is ready when a cube of bread dropped in browns in 30 seconds. Dip the florets into the tempura batter ensuring each is coated. Carefully drop into the oil and cook for 2-3 minutes, turning to cook on all sides until the batter is light and crisp. Do this in batches and remove with a slotted spoon onto kitchen paper. Serve hot with the dipping sauce.

Purple Sprouting Broccoli, Mozzarella and Tomato Bake

2 tbsp olive oil	1 small leek, sliced
1 bag purple sprouting broccoli	200g cherry tomatoes, halved or tomatoes, sliced
200g mozzarella, roughly torn	2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 tbsp dried marjoram or oregano	sea salt and ground black pepper
2 tbsp breadcrumbs	

Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the leek and cook gently to soften. Steam or boil the broccoli for two minutes, drain and refresh in a bowl of cold water, then drain again. Preheat the oven to 190C/ 375F/ Gas 5. Toss the broccoli in a shallow baking dish with the leeks, tomatoes, mozzarella, garlic and herbs. Season with salt and pepper. Scatter over the breadcrumbs then bake for 20-25 minutes until the cheese has melted. Drizzle over a little olive oil to serve.

I am relieved to say that Ernest has had a change of heart - money talks - and is allowing my beautiful little devils, the sheep back onto his land until November. I am very, very relieved as time was running out and I was starting to get seriously worried. So, I at least have some time now to try and win the lottery so I can buy them their own farm. But for the moment – phew !!

Kind wishes and have a lovely week,

Isobel