

Monday 28th August 2017

Dear Customer,

We have little pattypan squash in the bags this week. They don't need to be peeled. They can be cooked whole in boiling water or steamed until tender. You could slice it and fry it until tender, toss in lemon juice and butter or margarine and season with black pepper. You can roast it whole with other veg in a little olive oil at 200C/ Gas 6 until tender.

We also have chard this week and here are some tasty recipes you could try:

Chard, New Potato and Coconut Curry

1 large onion, halved and thinly sliced	600g new potatoes, cut in half lengthways, more if bigger
200g chard, stems cut in 4cm pieces and leaves shredded	250g frozen peas, defrosted
1 tsp cumin seeds	2.5cm piece ginger, peeled and roughly chopped
2 green chillies, roughly chopped	3 cloves garlic, peeled
30g desiccated coconut	400ml tin coconut milk
3 tbsp vegetable or rapeseed oil	1½ tsp garam masala
½ tsp turmeric	1 tsp salt

Put the cumin, ginger, chillies, garlic and desiccated coconut in a blender with just enough of the coconut milk to blitz everything to a smooth paste. Add the rest of the coconut milk and lightly pulse to a sauce-like consistency. In a wide frying pan for which you have a lid, heat the oil over a medium flame then fry the onion for 5 minutes until translucent. Put in the potatoes cut-side down and fry for around 10 minutes until they are lightly golden brown and the onions are soft, dark and sticky. Stir in the garam masala, turmeric and salt then add the coconut sauce and bring up to a gentle bubble. Add the chard stalks, cover and cook for 5 minutes. Add the leaves and peas, cover again and simmer for a final 5 minutes until the chard stems, peas and potatoes are all tender and the leaves have wilted. Serve with basmati rice or chapatis and a pickle.

Chard and New Potato Dhal

2 tbsp rapeseed or sunflower oil	1 onion, finely chopped
3 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed	3cm piece ginger, peeled and finely chopped
1 tsp turmeric	1 tsp cumin
1 tsp chilli flakes	1 medium tomato, roughly chopped
300g new potatoes, sliced in thick rounds	200g chard
200g lentils	500g water
1 lemon	

Heat the oil in a large pan, one with a lid, add the onion and fry gently for 2-3 minutes. Add the garlic, ginger, turmeric, cumin and chilli flakes. Continue to fry gently for 3-4 minutes. Chop the stalks of the chard putting the leaves aside for later. Add these chopped stems to the pan with the tomato, potato and lentils, then pour over the water. Season well with salt and pepper. Stir thoroughly to bring to the boil then reduce to a gentle simmer. Cover with a lid and leave to cook for 40 minutes or until the lentils are soft. Stir from time to time, adding a little more water towards the end of cooking time. Finely chop the chard leaves and stir them through the dhal. Finally turn off the heat, squeeze the juice of the lemon into the pan and stir through. Serve with rice and naan bread.

Swiss Chard Tagliatelle

1 bag swiss chard	50ml olive oil
1 clove garlic, crushed	pinch salt
370g dried tagliatelle	150g Gruyere cheese, grated

Separate the green leaves from the chard stalks and cut each stalk into strips. Put the oil into a large pan on a medium heat, add the stalks and garlic, season and saute until cooked and leave to one side. Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil, add the pasta and cook as per packet instructions. Just before the pasta is done add the chard leaves to the boiling water and cook for a minute. Drain immediately and add the pasta and leaves to the pan of cooked stalks. Toss everything together with the cheese so it starts to melt. Check the seasoning and serve immediately.

On Thursday night I drove down to Leeds Bradford airport to collect my French friend arriving from the South of France. Her 2 daughters, 7 and 10 yrs old, were wearing new matching long raincoats bought specially for the trip. They were surprised to wake up to a beautiful sunny morning. I said we did see it occasionally - they may have 300 days of sunshine in Perpignan but we get the other 65 - well, in our dreams - but we get a few of them. It's Sunday and they have sprinted the mile up the road to see the sheep, leaving me alone to write my letter. I can't believe how much energy children have. Yesterday we went to Preston Park Museum where there is a wonderful reconstruction of a Victorian street with its array of shops - haberdashers, grocers shop etc., and a walled garden but alas everyone was in the main attraction, the adventure playground. I think we spent 4 hours standing watching the girls as they leapt from swinging things to climbing things to things that whizzed through the air. They screamed and shrieked with joy and excitement, the faster the better - all tanned limbs and long, thick, sun-tinged hair streaming behind them. I must admit, I think they are borderline unruly. They are uncontrollable. I'd be scared if they were mine.

They had a difficult bereavement recently and as they adore animals and can't have a dog I had suggested she get them some guinea pigs. She got them a rat each. 'we're leaving in an hour' she texted just before leaving Perpignan 'the girls are playing with the rats'. Tomorrow, Durham cathedral.

I hope you have a good week,

Kind wishes,

Isobel