



## **Monday 31st December 2018**

Dear Customer,

Happy New Year and I hope you have had a nice festive season. I'm just glad it's all over. Back to the fabulous banality of ordinary daily life. Good riddance to the tinselly, razzmatazz. Old diary signed off, stored for posterity, new crisp, virgin diary at the ready. What will 2019 have in store for us all.

As for Brexit, left simmering in suspended animation like a ghost hovering over us..... it's back. To breex or not to breex, that is the question. Take a deep breath..... off we go again. Where's Nostradamus! I just had a quick look at his predictions for 2019. STOP READING NOW. World War III starts in France, spreads through Europe and lasts for 27 years. There will be a massive earthquake in the US – the big one. There will be catastrophic flooding in Hungary, Italy, the Czech Republic and Britain. There will be fires, volcanic eruptions, an asteroid event and a lack of global financial prosperity. Sounds great. He also said that people will start being able to talk to animals "humans will be closer to animals than their fellow men...the pigs will become brothers to man". We'll be snuffling about with them in the woods looking for grubs.

In the meantime, here are a few tasty recipes you could try with this week's ingredients:

### **Kale, Lemon and Sesame Seed Salad**

<i>bunch of kale</i>	<i>½ lemon, juice only</i>
<i>1 tbsp honey</i>	<i>2cm piece fresh root ginger, finely chopped</i>
<i>2 tbsp sesame seeds</i>	<i>1 tsp salt</i>
<i>olive oil</i>	

*Pull the kale leaves off the stalks. Finely chop the stalks and roughly chop the leaves. Place the kale in a bowl with the salt, lemon juice and honey. Massage the dressing into the leaves for 2-3 minutes, bruising them so they soak up the juices. Leave for 30 minutes, then pour off the excess liquid. Add the ginger and sesame seeds, mix and dress with olive oil*

### **Green Winter Pasta**

<i>1 large or 2 small leeks</i>	<i>6 cloves garlic</i>
<i>2 large handfuls kale</i>	<i>100ml olive oil</i>
<i>500g penne, linguine or spaghetti</i>	<i>100g cheese, optional</i>

*Trim, halve and chop the leeks into chunks and peel the garlic. Put a large pan of salted water on to boil then drop in the leeks and garlic cloves. Cook for 3 minutes then add the kale. Cook for another 3 minutes. Using a slotted spoon transfer the veg to a liquidiser and add the oil. Blend to a puree. If it's too dry add a splash of cooking water. Bring the water back to the boil and cook the pasta according to packet instructions. Drain and return the pasta to the pan, add the sauce and allow it to simmer over a medium-low heat for 30 seconds to heat through. Grate in the cheese if using and season.*

### **Cauliflower and Leek Soup**

<i>2 leeks, washed and thinly sliced</i>	<i>1 cauliflower, in florets</i>
<i>1 potato, chopped</i>	<i>5 cloves garlic, minced</i>
<i>salt and pepper</i>	<i>3 tbsp olive oil</i>
<i>1 litre vegetable stock</i>	

*In a large saucepan heat the olive oil. Add the leeks and cook for about 4 minutes until golden. Add the garlic and cook for another minute. Add the potato and cauliflower with salt and pepper. Add the stock and bring to the boil. Simmer covered until the vegetables are tender, about 20 minutes. Remove from the heat and blend until smooth with an immersion blender. Season to taste.*

### **Kale, Leek and Gruyere Tart**

<i>375g shortcrust pastry</i>	<i>knob of butter / margarine</i>
<i>2 leeks, thinly sliced</i>	<i>75g kale, roughly chopped</i>
<i>2 Hen Nation eggs</i>	<i>100ml double cream</i>
<i>fresh chives, snipped</i>	<i>50g Gruyere, grated</i>

*Preheat the oven to 200C/ Fan 180C/ Gas 6. Line an 18cm flan tin with the pastry and prick the base all over with a fork. Line the tin with baking paper, add baking beans or rice and blind bake for 15 minutes. Remove the rice/beans and baking paper and bake for a further 5 minutes. Meanwhile melt the butter/ margarine in a frying pan, add the leeks and cook until soft, about 10 minutes. Cook the kale in salted, boiling water for 4-5 minutes, drain well and squeeze dry. Add the kale to the pastry case with the leeks. Whisk the eggs, cream, chives and Gruyere together, season well, then pour on top of the leeks and kale. Return to the oven and bake for 15-20 minutes until golden and set.*

I went to my brother's in Harrogate on Christmas day. He doesn't particularly love animals, Lainey was exuberant. I had asked her to be on her best behaviour except she doesn't have one. It was all a bit of a strain trying to keep her off his furniture, keep her from running off with the Christmas presents, running off with their turkey. Then I found her surreptitiously eating Christmas decorations behind the sofa. She'd chewed the head off the white sea lion. I put it back on the tree with its severed head next to it. Every visitor who came to my house had come to play with her she thought. She bombs them in the stomach. Then, as they take off their coat she jumps on their back and pulls it off them.

Once they have wrestled their coat back, she trots past with their shoes in her mouth. She jumps up next to them on the sofa, then onto the sofa back behind them and tries to eat what's on their plate from over their shoulder. She will then do a Houdini performance on the rug – extricating herself from her harness. At various points it looks like she is stuck and is choking but then she's out and tears round the room with it in her mouth, in triumph. She's so intelligent she terrifies me. She will be 1 next week.

The weather has been beautiful and mild. I would be happy if winter doesn't come. I still have a few summer flowers in bloom, the snowdrops are coming up and the trees are in bud.

Kind wishes,

Isobel