



Monday 4th March 2019

Dear Customer,

I hope this finds you well. It's got cold again leaving Spring freeze-framed. My pond had been gurgling with mating toads... so early...too early. They are now flummoxed. Anyway, I have had a revelation, I am now worshipping at the altar of the Jet Stream. Who would have thought it. Flowing above us on the map - happiness.... beneath us – misery. I'm praying hard and offering sacrifices, my stash of ginger biscuits, willing it back up to John O Groats. Actually, I don't mind it getting cold at the moment as long as it doesn't hurt the wildlife, or raining, as we need it, but another summer like last years would be really nice.

In the meantime here are a few recipes you could try this week:

Tagliatelle with Leeks and Peppers

300g tagliatelle	2 tbsp olive oil
2 leeks	2 Romano peppers
2 cloves garlic	few springs of fresh thyme

Cook the pasta according to packet instructions. Meanwhile warm the oil in a large frying pan. Wash and trim the leeks. Cut them into 8cm lengths and then into ribbons. Deseed the Romano peppers and cut into thin strips. Add the pepper and leeks strips along with the garlic and thyme, to the pan. Cook for 5-8 minutes until tender. Drain the pasta and return it to the pan. Stir in the leek mixture, season well and sprinkle with chilli flakes if desired. Drizzle with oil and scatter with olives to serve.

Cream of Broccoli Soup

1 small onion, finely chopped	1 head broccoli, chopped
750ml vegetable stock, made with 1 stock cube	30g herb cream cheese

Heat 2 tbsp olive oil in a large saucepan and gently soften the onion. Add the broccoli and stock and simmer for 10 minutes until the broccoli is tender. Add the cream cheese, stir and heat through. Puree until smooth then season to taste. Simple.

Romano Pepper Tortilla

2 medium potatoes	8 tbsp olive oil
2 medium onions, thinly sliced	2 sprigs thyme
2 bay leaves	2 Romano peppers, deseeded and sliced
¼ tsp smoked paprika	8 Hen Nation eggs

Peel the potatoes, quarter them lengthways and cut into thin triangles and toss them with ½ tsp salt, transfer to a colander and leave for 15 minutes. Put 4 tablespoons of oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat. Add the onion, thyme, bay leaves and and cook for 10 minutes until the onion is soft and golden. Add the peppers and paprika and continue to cook for 10 minutes. Add the potatoes and cook for a further 15 minutes until the tender. Remove from the heat and transfer to a dish, discarding any excess oil. Whisk the eggs in a large bowl, remove the thyme and bay leaves and fold the vegetable mixture into the eggs. Return the frying pan to a medium-high heat and add another 2 tbsp oil. When hot pour in the mixture. Lower the heat and cook for 3-5 minutes until golden brown on the underside and the runny side has formed a ring of cooked egg around the edge. Invert the tortilla onto a plate. Reheat the frying pan, add the rest of oil and cook the other side of the tortilla until golden brown and firm.

Well it's now 20 working days to Brexit, 15 if you're a Friday delivery. Time for the Mediterranean producers to chuck all our produce in the sea – the oranges, the peppers, the aubergines and more - to bob off through the Strait of Gibraltar and across the Bay of Biscay for our fishermen to trawl out..... and save us from scurvy and tinned food. Another week of no further forward, with still not a soul on earth who knows if we are leaving the European Union, or not.

It has brought to mind a poem my mother used to love to recite to me when I was little, and often in lieu of a bedtime story. It both chilled me and fired my imagination as I sailed off to sleep. She recited with passion, hissing the last verse. I now know that poem was:

Cargoes by John Masefield:

*Quinquere of Nineveh from distant Ophir,
Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine,
With a cargo of ivory,
And apes and peacocks,
Sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet white wine.*

*Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-green shores,
With a cargo of diamonds,
Emeralds, amethysts,
Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moidores.*

*Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack,
Butting through the Channel in the mad March days,
With a cargo of Tyne coal,
Road-rails, pig-lead,
Firewood, iron-ware, and cheap tin trays*

I guess it about sums things up,

I hope you have a good week,

Kind wishes,

Isobel