



Monday 9th March 2020

Dear Customer,

I hope this finds you well. Life goes on. Spring has come to Yorkshire, nature is stirring. The daffodils and crocuses are coming into flower, birds are singing. Everything looks reassuringly normal !

Here are some tasty recipes you could try this week:

Roast Broccoli

olive oil
1 head broccoli
balsamic vinegar

2 cloves garlic, minced
1 lemon
sea salt and black pepper

Preheat the oven to 200C. Put a splash of olive oil in a roasting pan. Cut the broccoli into bite-sized florets with some stem attached. Spread them in the oiled tin and scatter with the garlic and season well with salt and pepper. Squeeze over some lemon juice and grating of lemon zest. Mix well. Roast in the oven for 15-20 minutes or until tender. Serve drizzled with a little balsamic vinegar.

Broccoli with Satay Sauce

½ tsp vegetable oil
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
½ tbsp light brown soft sugar
100ml coconut milk
1 lime, juice

2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
20g fresh root ginger, finely chopped
2 tbsp smooth or crunchy peanut butter
1 tbsp light soy sauce
head of broccoli

Chop the broccoli into florets and cut the stems into small pieces. For the sauce, heat the oil in a small frying pan with the garlic, chilli and ginger over a low heat and cook for 1 minute. Stir in the sugar and cook for 2 minutes more until melted and caramelised. Use a hand whisk to blend in the peanut butter, coconut milk and soy sauce with a pinch of salt. Warm through, remove from the heat and add the lime juice. Keep warm. Cook the broccoli for 6-8 minutes, or until just tender. Spoon the sauce over the broccoli and serve with rice or noodles if desired.

Spinach and Ricotta Tagliatelle

300g tagliatelle
3 tbsp olive oil
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
15g pack fresh basil, leaves roughly torn
1 tbsp toasted pine nuts

bunch spinach, shredded
1 large red chilli, seeded and finely chopped
1 onion, thinly sliced
125g ricotta

Cook the tagliatelle according to packet instructions, adding the spinach a few minutes before the end of cooking time. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a small pan and add the chilli and garlic. Cook gently for 2 minutes, then add the onion and cook for a further few minutes. Drain the tagliatelle and spinach and return to the pan. Stir in the garlic mixture and most of the basil. Gently fold through the ricotta then scatter over the pine nuts, remaining basil and a good grinding of black pepper.

1.49am my brother emailed me links to Chinese medical papers on the treatment of coronavirus which he'd translated. Followed by details of an old anti-malarial drug which I should get in case I get pneumonia. Superdrug will order it for you if you're going to Honduras or Haiti. I've bought him a G25 scarf with anti-viral nanotechnology. So that's this year's birthday presents sorted. I asked him if he'd got any food in... "...yes I've bought quite a bit of food in in case we need it...". I know exactly what that means.

I understand the concerns about stockpiling, but to get as much food pulled into the UK as possible while everything is still functioning might not be a bad thing. Because let's face it, our rice, chocolate, chopped tomatoes, tea, pasta etc etc, none of it is produced on these shores, and our supermarkets operate 'just-in-time'. Extra demand forces them to pull the food in quicker, and more of it. We don't know what's coming down the line.

I'm trying to get on with life as normal, keep anxiety in check, but it very much depends on what article I have just seen. Last night I read the letter written to the EU by the Italian doctors treating the coronavirus patients, warning us to 'Get ready'. It was one of the worst things I have ever read. Many on life support are just in their forties with no underlying conditions. This is bad, but us containing it is not out of the question if the government take the appropriate measures and take them now, severe measures. Their sluggish complacency is breath-taking. 'Keep calm and carry on washing your hands', it just doesn't cut it. They don't want to disrupt society. Most of us would like them to disrupt society in order to get rid of this thing. Either we take control of it, or it takes control of us.

Anyway, while I'm still on the loose I'm going to go and have a country walk to try and settle this fevered brain. Will go and look at the spring buds and the new shoots of fresh green grass. It's sunday morning, the wind has got up as is usual on a weekend but there's some brightness in the sky.

Older generations got through the wars, I guess this is our war, our test. The current best-selling novel on Amazon is called 'Eyes of Darkness' by Dean Koontz written in 1981. In it he talks about a Wuhan virus, and I quote..... "In around 2020 a pneumonia-like illness will spread across the globe attacking the lungs and the bronchial tubes and resisting all known treatments. Almost more baffling than the illness itself is that it will suddenly vanish as quickly as it arrived, it will attack again 10 years later and then disappear completely". If Koontz is the modern-day Nostradamus then there is cause for some optimism in that it might suddenly vanish. And maybe by the time it returns in a decade we might be ready for it and do what should have been done this time.

Very best wishes,

Isobel