



Monday 25th May 2020

Dear Customer,

I hope you are well and have been enjoying the beautiful weather. I surmise our gardens have never seen so much of us with 44% working from home. It's not easy though outside on a laptop in the glare of the sun, it's almost impossible. It's completely impossible. A non-starter. We need clip-on laptop parasols. And the chirpy birdsong lulls us away from work and into another dimension, into another world far away. It is easy to switch the laptop on but not quite as easy to switch the brain on. It takes great resolve and determination to power on with work at home in the month of May.

Here are a few very tasty recipes you could try with this week's ingredients:

Beetroot Burgers with Mustard Mayo

150g raw beetroot, peeled and grated
80g rolled oats
½ onion, finely chopped
dill, fronds finely chopped
1 tsp salt
2 tbsp sunflower oil

100g carrot, peeled and grated
2 organic eggs
1 garlic clove, crushed
flat leaf parsley, leaves finely chopped
¼ tsp ground black pepper

To Serve:

4 tbsp mayonnaise
4 burger buns, toasted

1 tbsp wholegrain mustard

Preheat the oven to 200°C/ Gas 6. In a large bowl, thoroughly combine all the ingredients for the burger, apart from the oil; set aside. In another bowl, mix the mayonnaise and mustard; set aside. Shape the beetroot mixture into 4 large burger patties, about 2cm thick, firmly compacting the mixture so it holds its shape. Heat the oil in a large non-stick pan over a medium heat. Gently put the burgers into the pan and fry for 3-4 minutes on each side until golden, then transfer to a baking tray lined with baking parchment and bake for 20 minutes. Remove and leave to cool slightly. Serve in the toasted buns with some salad and mustard mayonnaise.

Roasted Beetroot with Coriander

450g small raw beetroot
½ tbsp coriander seeds, lightly crushed
50ml medium-bodied red wine
1 tbsp clear honey

1 clove garlic, bashed to break the skin
3 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp red wine vinegar
1 tbsp fresh, roughly chopped coriander

Preheat the oven to 200°C/ Gas 6. Scrub and peel the beetroots, then cut into halves or quarters, depending on size, and place in a bowl. Add the garlic and coriander seeds with the olive oil, red wine, vinegar and honey. Season and toss well to coat. Place a large square of foil on a baking tray, top with a similar-sized piece of greaseproof paper, then add the beetroot mixture. Cover with another square of greaseproof paper and foil. Seal all the edges well. Roast for 1 hour, shaking the tray once to move the beetroot a little. You will notice that the foil has puffed up – a good sign as it shows there is enough steam in the parcel to cook the vegetables, which should be tender and caramelised when ready. Serve warm or cold, sprinkled with fresh coriander.

Roasted Courgettes with Tomatoes and Garlic

2 courgettes
½ onion, minced
½ tsp red chilli flakes
salt and pepper

350g tomatoes
3 cloves garlic, minced
4 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp chopped fresh basil

Preheat the oven to 230C/ Gas 8. Grease a baking dish. Halve the courgettes lengthwise then slice into half-moons. Quarter the tomatoes. Combine the courgettes, tomatoes, onion, garlic and red chilli flakes in the baking dish. Drizzle with olive oil, season with salt and pepper and mix well. Roast until the vegetables are tender, about 18 minutes. Sprinkle with basil to serve.

Lemon and Basil Courgette Pasta

2 tbsp olive oil
400g courgettes
finely grated zest 1 lemon
150ml dry white wine
500g tagliatelle or other pasta
6 tbsp grated cheese

small onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
pinch chilli flakes
150ml vegetable stock
25g fresh basil, leaves only

Warm the olive oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat and cook the onion until starting to soften. Use a vegetable peeler to peel long ribbons from the courgettes. Add the garlic, lemon zest and chilli flakes to the pan and cook for just 1 minute, then add the courgettes and cook for 5 minutes. Increase the heat and add the white wine and stock. Simmer for 2-3 minutes until reduced. Meanwhile, cook the pasta according to pack instructions. Drain and return to the pan. Add the courgette sauce and toss well together with the basil and half of the cheese, season. Serve with the remaining cheese sprinkled over.

Suffice to say, I am unable to switch my brain on this morning. There is nothing in it, I am sitting staring gormlessly at the screen. The birds are singing, the peonies and irises are popping open. I am in awe of a new magnolia tree in a pot outside my window, it has just bloomed for the first time with big lemon-yellow flowers. I've only just got up but I feel like nodding off again.

I will leave it there,

I hope you have a nice week,

Kind wishes,

Isobel