



Monday 14th September 2020

Dear Customer,

I hope you are managing to enjoy the mini heatwave and mop up some of the last warm sunshine before winter. It's minier up here of course where it is tempered by a roaring wind this Sunday morning. But it's mild and it's sunny. Very good clothes-drying weather.

Here are a few tasty recipes you could try this week:

Leek and Celeriac Pie

*knob butter or margarine
2 leeks, trimmed and sliced
1 pepper, finely sliced
2 tbsp plain flour
100g soft cheese
75g Cheddar, grated
1 Hen Nation egg, beaten*

*1 celeriac, peeled and cut into small cubes
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2 tsp fresh thyme leaves
300ml fresh vegetable stock, heated
1 tbsp wholegrain mustard
320g puff pastry sheet, defrosted if frozen*

Heat the butter or margarine in a large pan and saute the celeriac and leeks for 5 minutes. Add the garlic, pepper and thyme and cook for a further 5 minutes. Stir in the flour and cook for another minute. Stir in the stock, cover and simmer for 15 minutes or until the celeriac is tender. Stir the soft cheese, mustard and Cheddar into the mixture, then remove from the heat. Season and tip into a large ovenproof dish then set aside to cool. Preheat the oven to 200°C/ Gas 6. Cover the filling with the pastry sheet, trimming if necessary, and tuck in the edges. Brush with the egg and bake for 30 minutes until the pastry is golden and risen.

Rainbow Chard with Pine Nuts and Raisins

*3 tbsp raisins
1 onion, finely sliced
1 level tbsp tomato purée
1 tbsp caster sugar
3 tbsp pine nuts*

*3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
3 garlic cloves, finely sliced
3 tbsp red wine vinegar
bunch chard chard, stems cut into 3cm lengths, leaves roughly torn*

Put the raisins in a bowl, cover with boiling water and stand for 10 minutes. Drain, reserving 4 tbsp of the soaking liquid and set aside. Heat 2 tbsp olive oil in a frying pan over a medium heat. Add the onion, garlic and a pinch of salt, and sweat gently for 20 minutes, stirring often, until soft but not brown. When the onion is soft, stir in the tomato purée, vinegar, sugar, raisins and reserved soaking liquid. Bubble for 2-3 minutes until the juices thicken. Remove from the heat, season and set aside. Meanwhile, cook the chard stems in a pan of boiling water for 5 minutes. Drain and add to the onion mixture. Return to the heat with the chard leaves and pine nuts, stirring for 2-3 minutes, or until the leaves have just wilted. Drizzle with olive oil before serving.

Rainbow Chard and Potato Aloo

*1 tbsp olive oil
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
20g piece ginger, peeled and finely chopped
1 tbsp medium curry powder*

*1 onion, finely chopped
bunch rainbow chard, leaves and stems separated and shredded
4 potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
fresh coriander*

Heat the oil in a large saucepan. Add the onion and chard stems and sauté for 3-4 minutes until soft. Stir in the garlic, ginger and potatoes and sauté for a further 2 minutes. Stir in the curry powder until everything is coated with it, then add the chard leaves. Season well, then add 150ml water. Bring to the boil, then turn down the heat, cover and simmer for about 10-15 minutes or until the potatoes are just tender, adding more water if needed. Sprinkle with chopped coriander and serve with rice or naan bread.

They say don't they, when you have a massive 'to do' list, every day do one thing you don't want to do. I get that under my belt first thing, I get up. While some items are struck off with a sweep of the pen, the old favourites have to be carried over, and over and over to subsequent lists. So today I have made two lists. I have the list of all the things I can't face and a second list of the ones I can. I am not allowed to do anything from the second until the items in the first are biro-swiped. From the first list I am still wrestling with the T & C's of my new venture. I got a solicitor, thought it was sorted, but it's been batted back to me. I now have a two-page list of incomprehensible questions to answer, all written in legal jargon. Number 2 on the list, I have to work out how to set up Google Analytics, an impossible task. 'Clean the inside of the car' would seem easy by comparison but I've considered just striking it off, it's not that bad in there. But then that's cheating. I may give it a go today. So, not looking forward to the working week kicking off again tomorrow.

Cutpurse Lane, Pikepurse Lane, Gallowgate, the remnants of medieval Richmond, a flavour of the soul of this place. When I moved here I viewed a beautiful house on Gallowfields Road but couldn't live there, not with that name. The bubonic plague hit here in 1597 and killed 1072 people, half the population. The first to go was Roger Sharp, and the last, Cuthbert Oliver. They are buried in three pits, one in St Mary's Churchyard, one in Castle Yard, and one at Clink Pool, an area next to a bend in the river where the ducking chair was. Had I lived in Richmond back then with my flock of rescued sheep, I would have certainly met my maker in the River Swale. I would have been dunked out of existence.

In the then medieval marketplace, the bailey of the castle, were the stocks and pillory. I can imagine Boris, Gove and Cummings sending poor little stockinged Hancock into the stocks to have rotten tomatoes pelted in his face. And so it goes on in our wild, wild world. I called my Aunt and Uncle who live in Ludlow. Generally fonts of wisdom and optimism, I got their take on things ".... it all looks hopeless" they said, referring to everything. So that's it then. Let's just write the whole thing off.

Kind wishes and hope you have a good week

Isobel