



Monday 19th October 2020

Dear Customer,

I hope you are well. It's grey and dreary up here this Sunday morning. A good backdrop though for the dazzling colours of the autumn leaves. I'd hoped to get out to do a bit of weeding as it's green bin week but the garden is like a bog. A welcome reprieve. And more rain to come this week.

We've got patty pan squash in the bags this week, They can be baked, sliced and fried in butter / oil, or eaten raw in salads. They don't need to be peeled. To cook whole, boil or steam for 3-5 minutes, depending on size, until tender. Or you can fry patty pan slices for 3-5 minutes until tender. Toss in lemon juice and butter or margarine and season with pepper. To roast, heat a little olive oil in a roasting tin at 200C / Gas 6. Add the whole patty pans and a selection of other vegetables. Toss the vegetables to mix, season with salt and pepper, sprinkle with a little dried rosemary and cook for 35-45 minutes or until tender.

Leeks, Spinach and Gruyere Crepes (makes 6-8 crepes)

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| 125g wholegrain spelt flour | 1 Hen Nation egg |
| 300ml organic milk | 30g butter, melted |
| 2 leeks, trimmed, thinly sliced and rinsed | 1 garlic clove, finely chopped |
| 50ml dry white wine | 2 tbsp crème fraîche |
| 200g spinach leaves, shredded | 60g Gruyère cheese, finely grated |

Put the flour in a bowl. Add the egg into and whisk, gradually adding the milk and the flour. Stir in 1 tbsp of the melted butter. Preheat the oven to 120°C / Gas 2. Place a frying pan over a medium heat and grease with melted butter. Add a ladle of batter and swirl around to cover the base. Cook for 1-2 minutes, until slightly browned underneath and set on top. Flip and repeat on other side. Slide onto a plate and cover with baking parchment. Cover with foil and keep warm in the oven. Repeat with the remaining batter to make 6 -8 crêpes, layering them up with paper under the foil. For the filling, add the remaining butter to a large saucepan with the leeks. Cook gently, stirring, for 5 minutes then add the garlic, spinach and wine, cover and cook on the low for 10 minutes. Uncover, stir in the crème fraîche and simmer for a few minutes then add the Gruyère, season and remove from the heat. Spoon some of the filling just off-centre of each crêpe and fold over twice to make a triangle. Serve warm.

Potato, Leek and Bean Boulangere

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| 2 tsp olive oil | 2 leeks, sliced |
| 750g potatoes, thinly sliced | 400g tin mixed beans, drained and rinsed |
| 1 vegetable stock cube | 50g Cheddar, grated |

Preheat the oven to 220°C/ Gas 7. Heat the oil in a frying pan and fry the leeks for 5 minutes. Place half in a shallow ovenproof dish, top with half the potatoes and sprinkle over the beans. Top with remaining leeks and then potatoes. Blend the stock cube with 300ml boiling water, pour over the potatoes and season with black pepper. Sprinkle with the cheese and bake for 40 minutes until golden and tender.

Celeriac and Leek Bake

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| a tbsp olive oil | 2 medium leeks, sliced |
| 4 garlic cloves, sliced | 1 tbsp chopped thyme, plus extra to garnish |
| 2 tbsp plain flour | 300ml vegetable stock |
| 50ml double cream | butter, for greasing |
| 1 celeriac, finely sliced | 450g potatoes, finely sliced |

For the breadcrumbs

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| 100g ciabatta | ½ red chilli, seeded and finely chopped |
| 25g vegetarian hard cheese, grated | ½ lemon, zested |

Preheat the oven to 200°C/ Gas 6. Heat the oil in a lidded frying pan. Add the leeks and garlic, then cover and sweat, over a medium heat, for 8-10 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent the leeks catching. Add the thyme, then remove from the heat. In a food processor, whizz the ciabatta to coarse crumbs. Tip into a bowl and mix with the chilli, cheese and lemon zest. Set aside. In a small jug, stir the flour into 4 tbsp stock. Add the cream, followed by the remaining stock. Stir to combine and set aside. Grease a 2ltr ovenproof dish. Layer up the celeriac, potatoes and the leek mixture, alternating between each until all are used up. Pour over the cream mixture, then scatter over the breadcrumbs. Cover with foil and bake for 1 hour. Remove the foil and return to the oven for a further 15 minutes, or until tender and golden. Scatter with thyme to serve.

I couldn't get to sleep last night. Yesterday at dusk, walking on Ernest's land at the end of my road I saw two kittens snuggled in the grass. Worried Lainey might chase them, as I put her on the lead they scuttled into the hedge. But whose were they. Between me and the end of the lane, of civilisation, there are four dwellings. Two little barn conversions, a cottage where the vet lives and Ernest's old farmhouse which the owner has turned into a luxury holiday let. I asked round and drew a blank. They were too tiny to survive on their own. I was worried they'd starve, or that the barn owl would take them. So this morning I went back to try and find them. No sign, but I passed Katy Willkomm, a lady who settled in the Dales after being liberated from Stalin's labour camps. And her son. She'd bought 5 acres of Ernest's land a few years ago and keeps a cow, a calf and a 12 sheep.....whose lambs, on Thursday, I had the misfortune of seeing being loaded into the trailer.

I'd had to go home, close the curtains and put the TV and washing machine on to not hear it passing my house. I almost bought them to save them. Not a good day. Anyway, I asked her if she knew anything about the kittens. She did. They had been born in her barn to a feral cat who was a regular visitor. She said she didn't mind as they would keep the 'vermin' down. "There were 4 kittens". She said this several times – 'were' not 'are'. I think they may have 'disposed' of two of them. They're no different to lambs. Maybe they killed the females to stop them from proliferating. A bucket of water, traditional common practice. I couldn't exactly ask her. She said she had last seen the kittens at the beginning of the week. I asked if they were feeding them. She said she'd put down bread and milk earlier in the week and was going to get cat biscuits next week. She said the mother was probably looking after them, feeding them rabbit. I hope so. Another thing to worry about.

As for us, what's going to save us as we trundle along in this old trailer to meet our fate. It's nature versus science. I think it's quite clear, nature wants to see the back of us. But science keeps outwitting it. 'Oh no, not another bloody vaccine', nature laments. 'By hook or by crook I'll get them in the end. I should never have let them evolve in the first place..... but never too late'.

Kind wishes, Isobel