



Monday 1st February 2021

Dear Customer,

Well, we accomplished January. How it flies when you're having fun. There's deep snow here this morning. It comes, but at least it goes. Seemingly it will turn to rain later. I think we are through the worst of winter.

Here are some very tasty recipes you could try this week:

Kohlrabi Soup

1 kohlrabi, peeled and diced	1 garlic clove, chopped
1 onion, finely chopped	splash of olive oil
1 medium potato, peeled and diced	500ml vegetable stock
handful fresh parsley	½ lemon, juice and zest
salt and freshly ground black pepper	

Fry the kohlrabi, onion and garlic in the oil over a medium heat for a few minutes. Add the potato and stock and simmer until the veg are tender. Put them all in the blender with the parsley and puree until smooth. Transfer back to the pan and heat up. Season with salt and pepper, and lemon juice and zest to taste. Serve perhaps with crème fraiche and a scattering of parsley.

Kohlrabi Salad

1 kohlrabi, unpeeled	½ orange, juice only
1 tbs wholegrain mustard	2 tbs olive oil
1 tbs cider vinegar	handful fresh herbs eg mint, dill or parsley
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper	

Trim the leaves off the kohlrabi and set them aside. Slice the base off the kohlrabi and cut into thin slices and then matchsticks. Squeeze the orange juice from the half-orange into a bowl. Whisk in the oil, vinegar and mustard. Chop up the fresh herbs and add these to the vinaigrette. Add the kohlrabi to the bowl and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Roasted Fennel, Onion and Potato

fennel	600g large potatoes, peeled
3 onions, each cut into 6 wedges	2 garlic cloves, crushed
50g butter or margarine, plus extra for greasing	

Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/Gas 6. Grease a shallow ovenproof dish. Trim the top from the fennel and cut the bulb(s) in half through the root, then cut each in half lengthways into three wedges. Cut the potatoes into wedges of about the same size. Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil, then cook the fennel and onion for about 5 minutes. Add the potatoes and boil for a further 5 minutes until all the vegetables are just tender. Drain well. Put the butter or margarine and the garlic in the empty vegetable pan and set over a low heat until just melted. Add the vegetables and toss until coated, then tip into the prepared dish. Bake for 30-40 minutes, until piping hot.

Carrots and Sultana Scones

225g plain flour	2 tsp baking powder
50g margarine	30g golden caster sugar
100g carrots	50g sultanas
25g pumpkin seeds	125ml skimmed milk, plus extra for brushing
1 tsp vanilla extract	

Heat the oven to 200°C/ Gas 6. Sift the flour and baking powder into a bowl and rub in the margarine with your fingertips. Coarsely grate the carrots and squeeze to remove the excess juice. Stir the sugar, carrots, sultanas and pumpkin seeds into the bowl, then make a well in the centre and pour in the milk and vanilla extract. Using a table knife, bring the mixture together to make a firm dough. Pat out to a thickness of about 2cm and, using a 6cm cutter, stamp out 8 rounds. Transfer to a non-stick baking tray, brush the tops with milk and bake for 15–18 minutes, until risen and golden.

It's been an interesting week. The week when the EU lost it's cool with megalomaniac, vaccine-hoarding Britain. We are set to become the world's pin cushion, the testing ground. Whatever it is, wherever it's from, whatever it does, get it in your arm.

We will have vaccines coming out of our ears. Pfizer, Astra Zeneca, Moderna, Johnson and Johnson, Novavax, Valneva, Janssen, all just for starters. The government working hard, trying to make up for last year. I don't deny, the vaccination programme has been impressive.

I guess we all await to see to what extent it reduces transmission. I wrote a whole long newsletter about this some weeks ago, then deleted it as too pessimistic when everyone was celebrating the roll out. I just felt 'yes, but...'.

The sterilising vaccine, the one which doesn't just prevent severe symptoms, but prevents infection and transmission is the Holy Grail. I felt more optimistic after reading a scientific article published in the US back in November about the Novavax vaccine – seemingly the dark horse. I quote:

".....scientists noted strong results in a dozen monkeys injected with various doses of Novavax's vaccine and then infected with live coronavirus. The virus failed entirely to multiply in the animals' noses and replicated in the lungs of just one monkey that received the lowest dose; that animal shut down the infection after 4 days. "It's the only vaccine I've seen out of all the candidates that are further down the pipeline that actually had no viral replication in the nasal swabs of vaccinated animals," says Angela Rasmussen, a virologist at Columbia University.

Of course, it isn't yet known if it acts the same in humans but we aren't very different, though monkeys don't tend to get severe symptoms with Covid. I feel sick even mentioning all this, the poor monkeys. I can't stand animal experimentation and can only surmise on the numbers involved, sacrificed, to bring us these vaccines. They get no recognition though do they. Not a mention.

I'm heading into the snow now before anyone else treads on it,

Kindest wishes, Isobel