



Monday 12th April 2021

Dear Customer,

I hope you are well. It's Monday morning and another gloriously sunny one. And without further ado, some tasty recipes:

Braised Cabbage and Apple Wedges

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| 1 savoy cabbage, trimmed | 2 apples |
| 1 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for drizzling | 30g butter or margarine |
| 300ml hot vegetable stock | 30g soft fresh breadcrumbs |
| 1 lemon, zest | 1 tbsp pine nuts |

Preheat the oven to 180°C/ Gas 4. Cut the cabbage into 4 or 6 wedges). Quarter the apples, removing the cores. Put a large ovenproof frying pan or casserole dish over a medium heat and add the oil and butter or margarine. Season and fry the cut sides of the cabbage and apple wedges for 8-10 minutes, turning halfway through until lightly charred. Remove from the heat and arrange the cabbage cut-sides up in the pan. Pour in the stock, cover and bake for 20-25 minutes. Meanwhile, in a bowl, mix together the breadcrumbs, lemon zest and pine nuts, along with a drizzle of oil. Remove the pan from the oven and increase the temperature to 200°C/ Gas 6. Scatter the breadcrumb mixture over the cabbage wedges and return to the oven, uncovered, for 10 minutes, until the topping is golden and crisp.

Purple Sprouting Broccoli Croquettes

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| bunch of purple sprouting broccoli | 3 Hen Nation eggs |
| 400g chilled mashed potato | 120g Gruyère, finely grated, or alternative |
| 50g plain flour | 125g fresh breadcrumbs |
| vegetable oil, for frying | 100g mayonnaise |
| 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar | |

Cook the broccoli for 4-5 minutes until just tender. Drain and squeeze out any moisture, finely chop it and put it in a large bowl. Beat 1 egg and add to the bowl of broccoli with the mashed potato and cheese, then season. Thoroughly combine the mixture then divide into 20-24 balls of equal size and roll each into a roughly cylindrical shape. Beat the remaining 2 eggs in a bowl and put the flour and breadcrumbs in separate bowls. Gently roll each croquette in the flour, then the egg and finally the breadcrumbs. Pour 4cm oil into a large saucepan and heat to 180°C, testing with a small piece of bread – it should turn lightly golden in about 40 seconds. Using a slotted spoon, add a few croquettes at a time and fry for 2-3 minutes until golden. Remove; drain on kitchen paper. Repeat with the remaining croquettes, taking care not to let the oil get too hot, as the croquettes will burst open at higher heats. Mix together the mayonnaise and balsamic vinegar in a bowl. Serve with the balsamic mayo for dipping.

All was well with the world, I flicked over from emails to the BBC News and within seconds I had tears rolling down my face. Prince Phillip is dead. One never quite knows the what's or whys of the emotions lurking beneath the surface. We are all many things. Were these the tears of a patriot. I am proud of our multi-culturalism, of our art, our music, our myriad of sub-cultures, our democracy, our feistiness, our urban landscapes, our hills and dales and dales. Despite how I moan, I like British life - the foibles - the good, the bad and the ugly. I stop short of loving the Royal family but I recognise their service as ambassadors, living lives of purgatory at ceremonies and military parades. And for providing tourist collateral, the camp and colourful pageantry, the stuff of fairy tales. But more important than that is the timeline through history. A family tree without which we would be lost. Our history books would be an absolute dog's dinner with the perpetual churn of politicians. There would be nothing to hang antiques on, nor architecture. What else has such longevity. Could it be BBC newsreaders, a Hugh Edwardsian terraced house, or TV presentersthe Schofield period, Ant and Dec silver, a Forsythian chaise. Or even Dr Who's - the David Tennant era, a Pertwee dressing table. Move over Elizabeth, we are in the reign of Fiona Bruce.

But something died, and while it was most definitely Prince Phillip, and Elizabeth edges ever closer, it is the nearing of end of the wartime generation, the world of our parents / grandparents, the world of our childhoods, of stories and memories. That is something to shed tears over – caught as we are between our known past and our unknown future.

When Elizabeth does shuffle off, what then, our 1789 moment. The Storming of the Bastille by social media followed on its heels by the tabloids. The Age of Respect for the monarch will be over. Prince Charles will be dragged to the Tower, hung, drawn and quartered. We know this is coming. Queen Kate and a scaled-back, emotive, modern version will probably give them their best chance of survival. I don't mind Prince Charles actually, apart from his hunting and shooting, which I detest of course. But along with the Dimblebys and John Humphreys, they were the high-profile advocates of the organic movement back when Farmaround started and organics were niche. He was always at the Soil Association dinners and gave rousing lectures. I met him and have happened to have been in his vicinity many times and he always seemed very pleasant and modest. One time was when I arrived late to the Queen's Garden Party as I couldn't find a parking place. I arrived immediately after the Queen. With her almost. I followed her through Buckingham Palace onto the top of the steps – the crowds on the lawn hushed and turned towards us. I then had to stand immediately behind her, Phillip, Charles and Camilla at the top of the steps as part of the Royal family as they played the national anthem.

I got my heating fixed, they fitted the new fan for the boiler, but they disrupted the hot water settings. They left it to come on twice, missing my bath time. Frightened of exploding the boiler, I did nonetheless try pressing some buttons then the word ECO came up in red lights and there was a big roar. I switched everything off on the wall and ran away. Eventually I found the courage to go back in and switch it back on then found I had enough water for a tepid six-inch eco-bath. I called the plumber back, masked up and escorted him to the boiler with a pencil and notebook. I needed to learn. 'Right, these three buttons under HOT WATER – OFF, TWICE and ON. I drew a diagram with the three buttons and an arrow pointing to 'ON'. He pressed 'ON'. All sorted. I put my diagram in the drawer for future reference.

My passport expired last year. I asked on the local Facebook group where the nearest photo booth is. Tesco apparently. I'm looking forward to my Picture of Dorian Grey moment. Ten more years-worth of life etched into it the picture. I don't know where I'm going but hopefully somewhere one day. There will probably be some new cruises on offer soon, the ones which never dock, just sail past all your favourite holiday destinations.

Kind wishes,

Isobel