

The Incidentally Gluten-Free Cookbook

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Introduction





Our approach to cooking is simple: it's about what you **can** eat, not what you **can't**. This is why we've called our book 'incidentally gluten-free' - we try to focus more on recipes that don't need a gluten-free alternative, because that's the kind of food we usually cook.

These are recipes we really do make. We're both very busy people but we enjoy cooking and baking. We hope our recipes are easy to follow and we encourage you to experiment however you want. Don't follow our recipes to the letter if you don't want to, and don't take the ingredients or measurements as gospel: a little bit more, a bit less, leave out cardamom if you don't like it, try putting in pine nuts if you think it might be nice...it's about making food you want to cook & eat, not about making it 'right'.

To help you along the way to making 'our' recipes into 'your' recipes, we've given suggestions for other things you can do with them wherever we can. We've also made a note of recipes which are vegetarian, vegan and/or dairy-free, or which can be adjusted to make them so.

So cook, bakesperiment, and most importantly ENJOY.

About Us

We met at school 20 years ago (you know how there's always one person left over when you have to pair up in PE? There were two in our year). We've both moved away & around a lot since but we've managed to keep in touch. We started collecting gluten-free recipes a while ago and when Melanie suggested putting together a cookbook, Karla quickly agreed!

Melanie first started eating gluten-free (and low carb) in her early 20s, after a year of steadily worsening gastrointestinal problems, anaemia and weight loss which the doctors could not cure. She decided to put herself on an exclusion diet. After just six weeks, the symptoms had fully resolved and she was no longer taking any of the medications. Obviously, she's been eating this way ever since - despite the doctors claiming it was just a coincidence! Now her family are all eating gluten-free too, including her two young children, the pet rat and the mental cat.

Karla

I first started paying attention to gluten-free cooking after Melanie went gluten-free: if there's one thing I love, it's the challenge of a dietary requirement (ok, mostly it's the smugness of being able to say 'oh, that's NO problem, DO come round to dinner, but of COURSE you must'). I'm lucky enough not to need to be gluten-free. As a result, most of my (non-baking) recipes are recipes that don't have a whiff of an 'alternative' to them: they're just recipes that have no gluten in.

One thing we hope to do here is to show people that cooking gluten-free doesn't need to be a chore, or a panic to address a 'difficult' dinner guest. Everyone makes recipes that don't have gluten in all the time - they just don't realise it!

Cooking and baking gluten-free isn't difficult, or even that different. And hopefully once you've tried some of our recipes, you'll agree with us that eating gluten-free shouldn't be a bind. Our approach is that the gluten-free food should taste at least as good as, and hopefully better than, other food. Otherwise we just don't bother with it. There is so much delicious food out there...



Foreword by Peter Dobromylskyj

Gluten-containing grains have been part of human history for only about 10,000 years. In terms of human evolution, this represents an extremely short time span and our adaptation to this novel food source is far from complete.

The classical form of gluten intolerance is coeliac disease, which usually presents as a very severe form of diarrhoea and weight loss in young people. Accounts from ancient Rome clearly describe this illness and its management.

The incidence of coeliac disease has been gradually revised upwards from one in 2000 of the population to the current estimate of one in 100. At the same time the range of illnesses which are associated with gluten intolerance has expanded. Initially diarrhoea and certain forms of skin disease (*dermatitis herpetiformis*) were seen as the only conditions clearly triggered by gluten, but in modern times the range of conditions in which gluten intolerance is suspected has become enormous (see page 183).

Coeliac disease is diagnosed by the detection of a certain antibody in the bloodstream and is then normally confirmed by gut biopsy. If you do not have the 'correct' antibody on the blood test you will not be diagnosed as a coeliac. This currently places marked limitations on who is classified with fully-confirmed coeliac disease. However, many people who are technically not coeliacs find improvement in a wide variety of health problems when they eliminate gluten from their diet. This leads us to the rather fascinating question of quite why gluten is so bad for so many of us – if you want to read more on this, turn to page 183.

There is no single nutritional component of gluten which cannot be better supplied by meat, eggs and vegetables. Even cakes based around almonds and eggs carry a hugely higher nutrient content than those based around white flour. There is a reasonable case to be made for anyone with an "idiopathic" inflammatory disease (i.e. of unknown cause) to trial a gluten-free diet. Food which is incidentally gluten-free can be delicious in its own right and no one ever died of gluten deficiency.



Acknowledgements:

With thanks to our brave and ever ready recipe testers: the Penns, Wadsworths, Ways & Dobromylskyjs, the colleagues (especially Caroline) & all the friends xx

Thanks also to people whose recipes we've borrowed and knocked into gluten-free-tastic shape! We hope we haven't forgotten any of you...

For Hazel xxx



Chapter 1 - Fish Dishes



Tinned Tuna Fish Cakes

Makes 6 fish cakes – serves 2 - 3.

Ingredients:

1 small tin of flaked tuna fish, in water or brine (185g undrained)

50g ground almonds

2 eggs

fresh coriander and chives

salt and pepper, to taste

red chilli flakes (optional)

½ tbsp ground cumin

20g cheddar, finely grated

fat, for frying

lemon wedges and sour cream to serve

Photo:

see page 14, bottom middle panel

Thoroughly drain the tuna and place it in a bowl. Break up any large chunks.

Add the eggs and the ground almonds and mix well.

Add the ground cumin, salt and pepper to taste (season well).

Chop the fresh coriander and chives, then mix them in together with the chilli flakes, if using.

Mix in the grated cheddar. Divide the mixture into 6 equal parts.

Heat the fat in a frying pan, until you have at least 1 - 2cm depth.

Roll the fish cake mix into balls and then flatten them slightly. Place them in the pan.

Cook over a medium heat, moving them occasionally so they do not stick. After about 5 minutes, turn them over. Cook for a further 5 - 10 minutes or until golden brown on both sides.

Drain on kitchen roll and serve with a lemon wedge and a dollop of sour cream.

Salmon Sans Croute

Serves 3 - 4.

Ingredients:

200g fresh salmon
200g large or king prawns
20g butter, for frying
4 cloves of garlic, crushed
2 hardboiled eggs
2 handfuls of spinach, fresh or frozen
200g brie, chunked, rind removed
ground black pepper, to taste
small amount of double cream
ground almonds, for the topping

Photos:

see opposite page for finished dish
(top left panel) and assembly process
(remaining panels)

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

Cut the salmon into big chunks (e.g. 4 cm square). Melt the butter in a frying pan and add the garlic and salmon, then fry the salmon until just cooked through. Remove the salmon and garlic from the pan and place into an ovenproof dish.

Add the prawns to the pan and cook for 1 - 2 minutes, or until they have just turned opaque. Then remove them and add them to the ovenproof dish with the salmon and garlic. Slice the hardboiled eggs and layer them on top of the salmon and prawns. Wilt the spinach in a saucepan or in the microwave, and spoon it over the eggs.

Make a cheese sauce by melting the rindless brie in the frying pan (add more butter if needed) and adding enough double cream to make it a nice and thick but pourable consistency. Season with black pepper to taste. Pour the sauce over the fish, eggs and spinach in the ovenproof dish.

Sprinkle ground almonds over the top until the contents are completely covered. Cook in the oven for about 20 minutes, until the almonds are light golden brown and the mixture is bubbling. Serve with a nice glass of chilled white wine.

Alternatives -

Try adding other cheeses to the sauce, e.g. mozzarella.



Cauliflower Cheese with Tuna

A versatile recipe, including the easiest ever cheese sauce – you never need struggle to make a roux ever again, gluten-free or otherwise! Leave out the tuna for a nice vegetarian main. Serves 2 - 4.

****potentially vegetarian****

Ingredients:

1 small - medium cauliflower
300g soft cream cheese
1 small tin of tuna (185g)
grated cheddar cheese
double cream
ground black pepper, to taste
fresh chopped chives (optional)

Chop the cauliflower into florets, and cook (boil or steam) for about 10 minutes until just done or al dente. Strain away the water and keep the cauliflower to one side. Preheat the oven to around 180°C (350°F/GM4) or preheat the grill.

Melt the soft cheese in a small pan or frying pan. Once melted, add plenty of grated cheddar cheese and ground black pepper, both to taste. Add double cream until you reach the white sauce consistency you like. Add the tuna and mix well. Add the chopped chives.

Place the cauliflower into an ovenproof dish and pour the cheese sauce over the top, ensuring all the cauliflower is well coated. Sprinkle a little extra cheddar over the top and place in a hot oven or under the grill for about 10 minutes, or until the sauce is bubbling and the cheese on top has melted and turned brown.

Alternatives -

Make this into a vegetarian dish simply by leaving out the tuna. Leave out the tuna and the cheese for a simple side dish of cauliflower in white sauce.

Photo:

see page 14, top right panel

Easy Peasy Fish Pie

Serves 2 - 3 as a sole dish, serves 4 with vegetables as a side.

Ingredients:

Pie Filling -

300g mixed fish, including salmon, smoked fish and white fish
200g prawns
300g soft cream cheese
10g butter
olive oil with garlic
1 green bell pepper, diced
salt and pepper, to taste
chopped fresh chives, to taste

Savoury Crumble Topping -

2:1 ratio ground almonds : potato flour
butter, cubed
salt and pepper, to taste

Photo:

see page 14, bottom right panel

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

The Filling -

Melt the butter with the olive oil in a frying pan. Cook the green pepper for a few minutes. Add the fish and cook gently until just done. Add the prawns and cook for a few more minutes, until the prawns are opaque. Add the cream cheese and heat gently until melted. Add the chives and season to taste. Pour into an oven proof dish.

The Savoury Crumble Topping -

Mix the ground almonds and potato flour (other gluten-free flours would also work fine), adding in the salt and pepper to taste. Add the butter and rub it into the flour until it forms a crumble-like topping. You can use a food processor for this, but you may need to do the last bit by hand to get the right crumb-like texture. If it's too sticky (i.e. big sticky crumbs) add a little more flour or almonds. If it's too dry (i.e. not forming crumbs) add more butter.

Sprinkle the topping over the fish mixture. Cook in the oven at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for about 30 minutes or until the topping is turning golden brown and the mixture is bubbling.

Spicy Coated White Fish

This is a simple Mexican recipe for giving any firm fleshed white fish a light but tasty coating. Simply adjust the amounts according to how much fish you have.

Ingredients:

firm fleshed white fish, e.g. cod, haddock, cut into large chunks
1 egg, beaten
fat, for frying

The Coating -

1 tsp dried oregano
1 tsp ground cumin
½ tsp chilli powder (or to taste)
1 clove of garlic, crushed or finely diced (or 1 tsp powdered garlic)
salt and pepper, to taste
1 tbsp potato flour
(rice flour or cornflour work too)

Photo:

see page 14, top middle panel

Cut the fish into big chunks and pat dry. Pour the beaten egg into a shallow dish or plate.

Mix together the spices, garlic and seasoning in the flour. Place it into a shallow dish or plate. Heat the fat in a deep frying pan.

Roll each piece of fish in the egg, then in the coating mix. Roll it over several times and pat the coating evenly onto the fish, covering all sides, top and bottom.

Simply fry the coated chunks of fish until just cooked through and the coating is slightly golden brown.

Serve with a wedge of lemon.

Alternatives -

Leave out the chilli powder and go easy on the pepper for a non-spicy fish finger replacement for children.

Spiced Coconut Fish

A spoonful of mango chutney stirred in goes especially nicely with this. Throw in some vegetables (sliced peppers etc) to make this more substantial. Serves 2.

Ingredients:

2 chunky white fish fillets
(cod works well, but monkfish, halibut etc are good alternatives)

oil or butter, for frying

1 onion, sliced
garlic, crushed
approx 1 tsp each of:
 ground coriander
 ground cumin
 ground turmeric

½ tin of coconut milk
½ tin of chopped tomatoes (200g)

Photo:
see page 14, bottom left panel

Cut the fish into approximately 5cm chunks.

Melt the oil or butter in a frying pan and fry the onion, garlic, coriander, cumin and turmeric gently for 2 - 3 minutes.

Add the coconut milk & tomatoes (approximately 50:50 ratio or to taste) & simmer for 4 - 5 minutes.

Add the fish & cook gently until the fish is opaque and flakes easily (5 - 10 minutes).

Serve with rice.

Alternatives -

You can also do this with chicken or lamb - just cook the meat through first.



Chilli Prawns

It's worth getting all possible preparation done before doing any cooking for this. Be careful not to overcook the prawns!
Serves 2.

Ingredients:

300g king prawns (raw, peeled)
1 tbsp sake (sherry or white wine
make passable alternatives)
½ an egg white
½ tsp salt
1 spring onion or half a slender leek
1 garlic clove; same amount of fresh
ginger
3 tbsp salad oil
1 tbsp sweet chilli sauce
3 tbsp ketchup (check gluten-free)
½ tbsp sake
1 tsp sugar
½ cube of chicken stock, in 300ml of
water
1 tbsp gluten-free flour in 2 tbsp water
(for thickening)
½ tsp vinegar
green peas (amount to taste)

Photo:

see page 14, top left panel

Cut the spring onion, ginger and garlic very finely. Peel the prawns if you haven't already.

Coat the prawns in sake and egg white (add a little gluten-free flour if desired). Dissolve the salt in a little boiling water in the saucepan then add the oil, and, once mixed, the prawns. Drain the prawns AS SOON AS they colour.

Heat oil on a low heat and add the chopped onion, ginger and garlic for a minute or two until the fragrances are released. Add the prawns and stir once or twice then add the sweet chilli sauce, sake, sugar, stock, vinegar & ketchup.

Add the dissolved flour-in-water mix and once it starts to thicken, add the peas. If you want to leave out the flour, you can leave the sauce loose, or keep it boiling down a bit - but I recommend you remove the prawns first so they don't go tough.

Serve with rice or rice noodles.

Mackerel in Miso

Serves 2.

Ingredients:

2 mackerel fillets, bones removed
40g miso paste
1 tbsp soy sauce (omit if you don't like salty flavours)
1 tbsp caster sugar
300ml water
2 tbsp mirin (omit if not available)
2 tbsp sake (use sherry/white wine if not available)
1 - 2cm fresh ginger
10cm daikon (white radish/mooli)
1 leek, fairly slender

sushi rice to serve

Photo:

see page 14, middle right panel

Score the back of the fish (this stops it shrinking), slice the ginger into small thin matchsticks, then peel & cut the daikon into 1.5 cm-thick half moons. Set aside.

Cut the leeks into 2.5cm lengths & put onto skewers in threes.

Put the water, sake, mirin & sugar into a large flat pan on a medium heat. Add the miso, soy sauce and ginger.

Bring to the boil, then place the fish fillets flesh-down in the liquid & simmer for about 20 minutes.

Check regularly: add more water (and mirin & sake in smaller amounts) if it gets too thick or tastes too salty.

Meanwhile, grill the skewered leeks & cook the rice.

Add the chopped daikon to the liquid for the last 5 minutes, then serve with rice & the leek skewers.

Salmon in Chilli Miso

Serves 2.

Ingredients:

2 salmon fillets, chopped into largish chunks
40g miso paste
1 tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp caster sugar
200ml water
2 tbsp mirin (omit if not available)
2 tbsp sake (use sherry/white wine if not available)
1 green pepper, sliced
1 tsp ready-chopped chillies, or 1 scant tsp chilli flakes
1 tsp white sesame seeds, toasted if you like

sushi rice to serve

Put the water, sake, mirin & sugar into a large flat pan on a medium heat.

Add the miso & soy sauce.

Bring to the boil, then place the fish chunks in the liquid & simmer for about 10 minutes.

Stir in the chillies & pepper after about 5 minutes.

Serve with rice.

Ideally, the sauce for this should be thicker than for the mackerel in miso recipe. Quantities are, as usual, very much to taste!

Quick and Spicy Prawns

Serves 4 as a starter or nibbles; increase the quantities for a main course.

Ingredients:

350g prawns
(small to medium ones work the best)

50g rice flour
2 tsp turmeric
½ tsp cayenne pepper (or to taste)
2 tbsp ground cumin
1 tsp ground coriander
salt, to taste (approx. ½ tsp)
1 tsp ground black pepper

fat for frying (2cm deep)
lemon juice to serve

Photos:

see opposite page for finished dish
(bottom right panel) and preparation
(remaining panels)

Pat dry the prawns using kitchen paper.

Mix together the flour with the spices.

Heat the fat or oil in a deep frying pan until medium hot.

Coat the prawns well with the spiced flour mix and place in the pan in a single layer.

Cook for 1 - 2 minutes and turn. Cook for a further 1 - 2 minutes, then remove the prawns from the pan and place them to drain on a kitchen towel.

Cook all the prawns this way, in batches: you may need to replenish the fat.

You can serve these with lemon wedges so people can sprinkle lemon juice over.

Serve warm and eat straight away.



Seafood Curry

A ridiculously simple dish which is quick to prepare and versatile. Make this as mild or spicy as you like by using whichever curry powder you prefer. I make this with mild curry powder for the children, and just add red chillies for the adults. Serves 2.

Ingredients:

300g seafood mixture including prawns, mussels and squid rings (precooked)

200g prawns

butter, for frying

curry powder of your choice (mild, etc, to taste)

3 tbsp mayonnaise

6 tbsp double cream

red chillies, sliced into rings (optional)

Photo:

see page 14, middle left panel

Prepare the curry sauce by mixing 1 part mayonnaise to 2 parts double cream (approximately 3 tbsp mayo to 6 tbsp cream, but the amount is up to you).

Mix together well and then add the curry powder to taste. Check the taste and add more curry powder if required.

Melt the butter in a frying pan over a gentle heat.

Add the seafood mixture and prawns (and chillies if using) and cook gently for a few minutes: be careful not to overcook the seafood; it won't need long.

Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the curry sauce.

Once well mixed, return the pan to the gentle heat and warm the sauce through until gently bubbling – don't overdo it!

Alternatives -

This recipe also works well with diced chicken breast.

Chapter 2 - Chicken



Chicken, Mushroom and Aubergine

Serves 2.

Ingredients:

approx 250g chicken breast
approx 250g mushrooms, sliced
1 aubergine

butter for frying

small amount of good stock
double cream
seasoning

Photo:

see page 24, top two panels

Peel the aubergine and slice into rectangles about 5cm long, 1cm thick and 5mm deep.

Set aside between two sheets of kitchen towel for 30 minutes, then squeeze the aubergine to remove any excess water.

Cook the chicken in chunks however you want to, and set to one side.

Cook the mushrooms and the aubergine in butter for 10 minutes.

Add the stock and simmer for a further 15 - 20 minutes.

Add the chicken to heat through, then add a good amount of double cream.

Heat through gently, and season to taste.

Garlic Chicken

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

1kg chicken joints e.g. drumsticks and thighs - bone in, skin on
ground black pepper and salt

butter to fry

15 whole garlic cloves, unpeeled and slightly crushed

50ml dry white sherry
2 - 5 tbsp soy sauce (to taste)
2 - 5 tbsp sesame oil (to taste)
2 tsp sugar

Photo:

see page 24, middle two panels

Coat the chicken with pepper and salt, and pat it in well.

Melt the butter in a frying pan or wok, and add the chicken skin-side down.

Slowly brown on both sides for about 10 minutes. Add the garlic and fry for a further 2 minutes.

Add the sherry, soy sauce, sesame oil and sugar. Stir well and turn the chicken to coat it with the sauce.

Bring it to the boil, then turn the heat to as low as possible and cover and braise for 20 minutes until the chicken is tender. Turn the chicken occasionally to coat it with the sauce.

Remove chicken with a slotted spoon. You can reduce the sauce down further (it should thicken nicely with the sugar in it) and either pour it over the chicken or roll the chicken in it to coat it.



Coconut Lemon Chicken

Serves 3 - 4.

Ingredients:

300g chicken fillets, diced
100g dessicated coconut
100g butter, for frying
3 medium onions, finely sliced
4 cloves of garlic, finely sliced
2cm piece of fresh ginger, finely diced
rind of half a lemon, cut into thin slivers

30ml soy sauce
juice of half a lemon

Photo:

see opposite page, bottom two panels

Prepare the coconut milk by lining a heat-proof jug with a clean tea towel. Place the coconut onto the tea towel within the jug. Pour enough boiling water to just cover the coconut and leave for 30 minutes (see photo on opposite page, bottom left panel).

Carefully lift out the coconut in the tea towel, and holding it above the jug, twist the tea towel to extract all of the milk. Be careful when handling, as it may still be hot.

Melt the butter in a wok or large frying pan and cook the chicken until browned on the surface (approximately 5 minutes).

Add the onions, ginger, garlic and lemon peel and continue to fry for a further 5 minutes.

Add in the coconut milk, soy sauce and lemon juice. Reduce the sauce down over a high heat for about 20 minutes.

Serve with fresh coriander leaves or a little basil.

Tequila Wings

Serves as many as care to share...

Good cold, so ideal for picnics and buffets. Also good for BBQs.

Ingredients:

1kg chicken wings, cut into two

The Marinade -

2 tbsp tequila
juice of 2 limes
juice of 1 orange
2 tbsp olive oil
10 garlic cloves, crushed
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
pinch each of cinnamon, oregano and cumin (to taste)
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground allspice
1 tsp sugar

fresh coriander leaves to serve

Photo:

see page 29, top left panel

Mix the ingredients for the marinade together, and place the chickens wings in it.

Turn them and ensure they are well covered. Marinate in fridge either overnight or for 3 hours.

Then, either cook over a barbecue or slowly grill for 15 - 20 minutes or until juice runs clear.

You can also cook these in the oven. Simply place them on a foil-lined tray and cook at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for about 25 minutes.

Scatter some fresh chopped coriander leaves over the top to serve.

Chicken in Salsa Verde

A Mexican recipe using tomatillos, but you can substitute mild green salsa instead.

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

4 chicken breasts

salt and pepper

butter or oil, for frying

either 450g mild green salsa
or the same amount of tomatillos,
puréed

2 - 4 garlic cloves, crushed

250ml chicken stock (or chicken stock
cube in hot water)

a little splash of white wine (optional)

½ green chilli, deseeded and
chopped

1 tsp cumin

double cream or sour cream
fresh coriander leaves to serve

Sprinkle plenty of salt and pepper over the chicken breasts and pat it in.

Melt the butter and/or oil in a large frying pan, add the chicken breasts and cook over a medium heat until they are golden brown all over (they don't need to be cooked through at this stage). Remove the chicken from the pan and keep to one side.

Place the salsa or pureed tomatillos together with the garlic, stock, wine, chilli and cumin in the pan, mix well and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat, put the chicken into the sauce and simmer the sauce gently. Cook for 20 - 25 minutes, occasionally spooning the sauce over the chicken, keeping it covered in between times. Make sure it is cooked through before serving.

Dish up the chicken, and then add a small amount of the double cream or sour cream to the remaining sauce in the pan. Heat through gently, then spoon the sauce over the chicken.

Serve sprinkled with some fresh coriander leaves torn over the top.

Proper Chicken Curry

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

50g butter
1 large onion, finely chopped
4 cloves of garlic, crushed
4 whole cloves
1 cinnamon stick
4 black peppercorns
3 cardamom pods
2 tbsp tomato purée
2 tbsp fresh ginger, finely chopped
1 tbsp lemon juice
500g chicken (chopped breast or portions work fine)
1 tsp turmeric
chilli powder, to taste
4 tbsp natural yoghurt
½ pint water
salt, to taste
1 tsp garam masala
fresh chopped coriander leaves, to garnish

Photo:

see page 29, top right panel

Melt the butter and fry the onion, garlic, cloves, cinnamon, peppercorns and cardamom pods until the onion is soft and golden brown.

Add the tomato purée, ginger, lemon juice, chicken, turmeric and chilli and cook for 15 minutes over low heat.

Mix together the yoghurt, water and salt and add to the mixture, stirring well.

Bring to the boil and then simmer for 20 - 30 minutes, until chicken is cooked through and the sauce is reduced.

Stir in the garam masala and serve, sprinkled with freshly chopped coriander leaves.



Chicken and Sesame Tofu

With thanks to the lovely Bara for the recipe!

Serves 2.

Ingredients:

1 block firm tofu (approx 250g)
sesame oil to taste

2 cloves of garlic, chopped or crushed
half an onion, chopped

200g chicken, diced

1 tbsp white sesame seeds
handful of spinach

The Marinade -

2 tbsp soy sauce
2 tbsp mirin
2 tbsp sake/sherry

sticky rice or sushi rice, to serve

Photo:

see page 29, bottom left panel

Mix together the ingredients for the marinade and then place the chicken in the marinade.

Wrap the tofu in a paper towel & microwave for a minute or so to remove the excess water.

Heat the sesame oil & fry the garlic. Add the onion & chicken (keeping the marinade to one side). Cover and simmer on a low heat for 5 minutes.

Break in the tofu and add the marinade. Add the sesame seeds & increase the heat to high. Add the spinach and cook until wilted.

At this point, you can cook until the liquid has evaporated if you like your food drier. If you prefer to have some juice simply don't cook it so long.

Serve spooned on top of a bowl half-filled with rice.

Oyako-don: Chicken & Egg on Rice

Serves 1.

Ingredients:

50 - 75ml hot water
½ tbsp sake
½ tbsp mirin
1 tsp soy sauce
½ tbsp sugar
85g chicken, chopped into little pieces
2 eggs
handful of parsley, roughly ripped or chopped (optional)

sticky rice or sushi rice, to serve

Photo:

see page 33, bottom left panel

Bring the hot water, sake, mirin, soy sauce and sugar to a simmer then add the onions and cover for 2 - 3 minutes.

Add the chicken pieces & cover for a couple more minutes. Turn the chicken pieces over & cover again until done (this won't take long).

Beat the eggs lightly - don't overbeat, don't beat till smooth. Pour two thirds of the egg over the chicken mix, stir & cover for 30 - 45 seconds.

Add the rest of the egg & the parsley, then cover, turn off & leave for 15 - 30 seconds.

Fill a nice, big, deep bowl with rice & pour the chicken mix on top.

Traditionally, the egg should remain a bit liquid, but obviously it's up to your tastes.

It should definitely not be an omelette on rice though!

Ginger and Sesame Seed Chicken

Serves 3 - 4.

Ingredients:

500g chicken breast, diced
50g butter
sesame oil, for frying
2 - 3cm piece of fresh ginger, finely chopped
150g mushrooms, diced
2 tbsp soy sauce
1 tsp sugar (or to taste)
½ tsp ground black pepper
2 tbsp dry sherry
1 tbsp sesame seeds
fresh coriander leaves (optional)

The Marinade -

3 tbsp soy sauce
5 tbsp rice wine or dry sherry
1 tsp ground black pepper
1 tbsp sesame oil

Photo:

see opposite page, top left panel

Mix together the ingredients for the marinade, pour it over the chicken and stir well to coat all the chicken thoroughly. Leave to marinate for at least 30 minutes at room temperature (all day or overnight covered in the fridge also works well).

Heat the butter and sesame oil combined in a wok or large frying pan. Add the ginger and fry for 1 minute.

Add the mushrooms and fry until they are softened. Add the chicken and fry for another few minutes (until the chicken begins to brown).

Add the soy sauce, sugar, ground black pepper and about 140ml of water and cook on high heat for 1 minute. Reduce the heat, cover the pan and cook for 10 minutes (until the chicken is cooked through).

Remove the cover and cook over a high heat to reduce the sauce, stirring continuously. When the sauce is almost completely reduced, add the sherry and cook for further 2 minutes.

Stir in the sesame seeds and serve sprinkled with fresh coriander leaves.



Lemongrass Chicken

Serves 2 - 4.

Ingredients:

1kg chicken, thighs and drumsticks,
bone in

1 stick of lemongrass
20g butter plus sesame oil, for frying
2 onions, sliced in thin rings
4 cloves of garlic, coarsely chopped
zest & juice of 1 lime
red chillies, finely chopped into rings
(to taste)
1 tsp sugar (or to taste)
fresh basil leaves to garnish (optional)

The Marinade -

4 tbsp soy sauce
4 tbsp dry sherry
2 tbsp sesame oil

Photo:

see page 33, bottom right panel

Mix the ingredients for the marinade together and pour over the chicken, ensuring the chicken is thoroughly coated.

Marinate for at least 30 minutes - longer is better: you can leave this in the fridge for a day and it works fine, but do cover it and also turn the chicken occasionally.

Peel lemongrass stalk to reveal the tender centre, cut into 5cm pieces and crush slightly with the flat blade of a knife.

Heat butter and sesame oil in a wok or large frying pan, add the chicken and brown it all over for about 5 - 10 minutes. Keep the marinade to one side.

Add the lemongrass, onion, garlic, finely chopped lime zest, chillies and sugar. Cook with the lid on, until the chicken is cooked through (about 20 minutes), turning the chicken occasionally.

Remove the lid, add the remaining marinade and the lime juice. Mix well, then cook with the lid off to allow the sauce to reduce and thicken.

Serve garnished with fresh torn basil leaves, or stir them in at the last minute.

Melanie's Special Chicken

Also known as NFC or Nuthin' Fried Chicken.

Ingredients:

chicken drumsticks, 2 - 4 per person
stock, or a stock cube

200g soft cream cheese

1 egg yolk

1 tbsp each: paprika, oregano, cumin,
garlic granules, onion granules
hot chilli powder, to taste
salt and pepper, to taste
1 tbsp rice flour

oil for cooking

Photo:

see page 33, top right panel

Bring a large saucepan of stock (or water with a stock cube dissolved in it) to the boil. Carefully place the chicken drumsticks into the stock, and return it to the boil. Reduce the heat, and simmer the chicken for 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, mix together the spices, salt and pepper and rice flour thoroughly. Place the spice mix onto a large plate, spreading it out.

After 20 minutes, remove the chicken from the stock using a slotted spoon and leave the drumsticks to drain on some kitchen paper (keep the water, it makes great stock for another dish!).

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

Gently melt the cream cheese in a frying pan. Remove it from the heat as soon as it melts, and stir in the egg yolk. Keeping the cheese off the heat, take a chicken drumstick and roll it in the melted cheese/egg yolk till it's covered all over. Then roll it in the spice mix till it's well covered. Place the chicken in a baking tin with about 2cm of oil. Repeat the process for each drumstick.

Place the coated chicken in the oven and bake at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for about 30 minutes. Check after 15 - 20 minutes, and turn the chicken over. You may need to increase the oven temperature to 200°C for the last 5 minutes or so, to really crisp up the coating.

Chapter 3 - Pork



Pork Goulash

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

500g diced pork
50g butter

1 onion, chopped
1 red pepper, chopped
4 cloves of garlic, crushed
1 tin of tomatoes (400g)

red wine

salt and pepper, to taste
20g paprika

sour cream, to taste

Melt the butter in a casserole pan. Add the diced pork and lightly cook it.

Add the onion, garlic, tinned tomatoes and red pepper. Cook for a few minutes.

Add the red wine and/or water till the ingredients are all covered.

Add the paprika, salt and pepper.

Mix well and bring to the boil. Reduce to simmer and leave to cook slowly for at least 3 hours, stirring occasionally.

Add the sour cream at the end just before serving.

Photo:

see page 40, top left panel

Sausage and Pepper Stew

Serves 3 - 4, but this depends on the number of sausages...

Ingredients:

450g gluten-free pork sausages
olive oil

1 large onion, sliced into semi-circles
2 - 3 peppers, red/yellow/green, sliced
into long pieces
4 cloves of garlic, crushed

1 tin of tomatoes (400g)
1 - 2 tbsp oregano
black pepper, to taste

red wine

Photo:

see page 40, top right panel

Brown the sausages lightly in the olive oil. Remove them from the pan.

In the remaining fat, fry the onion and peppers with the garlic until softened.

Add the tomatoes, oregano, black pepper and about a third of a bottle of red wine.

Add the sausages back in and bring up to simmer.

Leave to cook for at least an hour, until the sauce has thickened nicely.

Smells great while cooking ... a nice and simple dish.

Pork and Leek (but with Garlic, Ginger and Chillies...)

Serves 2 - 4.

Ingredients:

500g pork, cut into thin slices
leeks, trimmed and sliced into very thin rings
50g butter plus sesame oil, for frying
half a bulb of garlic, crushed
2 - 3cm fresh ginger, finely chopped
red chillies, diced (to taste)

The Marinade -

1 tbsp dry sherry
2 tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp sesame oil
1 tsp sugar
ground black pepper, to taste

Photo:

see page 40, bottom right panel

Mix the ingredients for the marinade together and pour it over the pork slices, ensuring the pork is thoroughly covered.

Leave to marinate for 30 minutes at room temperature. Remove the pork but keep the marinade to one side.

Melt the butter with the sesame oil in a wok or large frying pan. Fry the pork for 2 - 3 minutes, until cooked through and then remove it from the wok.

Melt more butter if required, then add the leeks and fry until well softened.

Add the crushed garlic, ginger and chillies and fry for another minute.

Then add the remaining marinade together with a small amount of water.

Bring up to heat, then return the pork to the pan.

Fry for another 5 minutes and then serve.



Nutty-base Quiche Lorraine

Makes a 20cm (8 inch) diameter quiche - with NO pastry!

Ingredients:

The Nutty-base –

100g chopped nuts
e.g. almonds, walnuts, macadamias
50g ground almonds
2 eggs
30g melted butter
pinch of salt
1 tbsp xanthan gum

The Filling –

1 onion, finely diced
butter, for frying
150g streaky bacon, diced
150g grated cheddar
340ml double cream
4 eggs
salt and pepper, to taste

Photo:

see opposite, bottom left panel

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

The Base -

Mix together the nuts with the melted butter, eggs, salt and xanthan gum. Use a tin approximately 20cm (8 inches) in diameter - preferably one with a removable base. Grease the tin and line with grease-proof paper. Pack the nut mix firmly into the base and bake for 15 minutes at 180°C (350°F/GM4).

The Filling -

Melt the butter in a frying pan and fry the onion until softened. Add the bacon and fry until cooked through. Place the onion and bacon onto the precooked nut base. Sprinkle the grated cheddar over the onion and bacon. Mix together the double cream, eggs and seasoning to taste. Pour this mixture over the bacon, onion and cheddar.

Bake at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for a further 45 minutes. Place a tray underneath to catch any drips!

You can serve this warm or cold and the firm base means it makes good finger food. It also keeps well.

Baked and Stuffed Mushrooms

Allow 2 mushrooms per mushroom as main course, or 1 per person as a starter or side dish.

****potentially vegetarian****

Ingredients:

olive oil and/or
olive oil flavoured with garlic
packet of large, flat mushrooms
(approx 4)
4 - 6 rashers of smoked streaky bacon,
diced
1 small round of goat's cheese
300g pot of soft cream cheese
black pepper, to taste
fresh spinach

Photo:
see page 44, bottom panels

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

Peel the mushrooms and remove the stalks. Brush the outer surface of the mushrooms with the olive oil. Brush a baking tin with the olive oil too.

Dice the mushroom stalks and fry with the diced bacon in the garlic-flavoured oil. Add the cream cheese and heat gently till melted. Season with black pepper and add a couple of handfuls of fresh spinach, roughly torn. Cook for a short time, until the spinach is wilted.

Place the mushrooms in the oiled baking tin, with the outer surface facing downwards. Divide the cheese mixture between the mushrooms. Slice the goat's cheese and place a round slice on top of each mushroom. Bake in the oven at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for about 20 minutes until mushrooms are cooked through and the goat's cheese has melted.

Alternatives -

Leave out the bacon for a vegetarian alternative.

Replace the spinach with handfuls of fresh basil, coriander and chives.

Replace the bacon with tinned tuna.

Use a little basil-flavoured olive oil with or instead of garlic-flavoured oil.

Use Camembert instead of goat's cheese.

Carnitas

This is a Mexican recipe for fried pork.

Serves 2 - 4.

Ingredients:

1 packet of belly pork slices
1 whole bulb of garlic, chopped in half
1 onion, roughly diced
1 vegetable stock cube
1 bay leaf
1 tbsp ground cumin
hot chilli powder (optional)
salt and pepper, to taste

Place the whole strips of belly pork into a heavy bottomed pan, with the onion, a whole bulb of garlic sliced in half, ground cumin, stock cube, bay leaf and ground black pepper. Add water to cover and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat down very low and cook for two hours or more. Top up the water as required.

Remove the pork from pan, keeping the stock. Slice the pork into thick chunks.

Sprinkle with salt, pepper and chilli powder to taste. Without adding additional fat, fry the pork slowly in a frying pan for 15 - 20 minutes, turning frequently. The pork will go crispy and brown.

Add a ladle-full of the stock to the frying pan and simmer gently until the liquid has evaporated, turning occasionally. The pork should be crispy on the outside, but soft and melt-in-the-mouth on the inside.

Warning – due to the high fat content, a little of this dish will go a long way....

Photo:

see page 44, top right panel



Stuffed Cabbage Rolls

Serves 2.

Ingredients:

8 cabbage leaves
a pinch each of salt, pepper & rice flour

The Filling -

2 tsp butter
½ onion, very finely sliced
250g pork mince

1 egg
3 tbsp ground almonds
1 tbsp olive oil

½ tsp salt
pinch each of pepper & nutmeg

The Sauce -

1 carrot, sliced
3 - 4 tbsp tomato purée or passata
1 sage leaf
1 stock cube and white wine:
total volume of 568ml (1 pint) of stock and wine
1 clove of garlic, crushed
pinch of thyme and parsley

Photo: see opposite page, top left

Separate the cabbage leaves (remove the woody stem first, then they come away easily) and boil them until they start to look translucent (will only need a couple of minutes). Set them aside.

The Filling -

Melt the butter in a pan & add the onion. Fry until golden and then allow to cool. Mix the meat, egg, ground almonds, olive oil, salt, pepper & nutmeg in a bowl. Then add the cooled onion. Separate this mixture into four portions.

Dry the cabbage leaves & slice off the hardest part of the stalk. Layer two leaves together & add a pinch of salt & pepper. Sieve over a little rice flour then place one of the meat mixture portions in the middle. Wrap the cabbage leaf around the meat & secure with a wooden skewer or cocktail stick. Repeat with the rest, until you have four cabbage rolls.

The Sauce -

Dissolve the stock cube in a little water. Place the rolls in a large-bottomed pan & add the tomato purée/passata, wine, carrot, stock, garlic clove, thyme & sage. Cover & cook on a low heat for 30 minutes or so. When the skewers can be removed from the rolls and only clear juice comes out, it's ready. Remove the cabbage rolls & carrots, then thicken the sauce by bringing it to the boil & reducing it down. Add a little cornflour or rice flour to thicken the sauce if it needs it (optional).

Serve with rice & the carrots from the sauce.

Chilli Verde with Pork

This recipe uses tomatillos, which I've yet to see here in the UK in any shop but I have successfully grown them at home from seed (see page 44, middle right and left panels). Alternatively you can use fresh tomatoes and green salsa. Serves 4.

Ingredients:

500g pork, cut into big chunks
1 onion, chopped
2 bay leaves
1 whole bulb of garlic, cut in half
1 stock cube (vegetable)
2 cloves of garlic, chopped
400g fresh tomatillos
1 green bell pepper, chopped
2 Jalapeno chillies, deseeded and chopped
oil or butter, for frying
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp chilli powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cumin

Place the pork in a large saucepan or stock pot with the onion, the whole garlic bulb cut in half, the bay leaves and stock cube. Cover with water and bring to the boil. Skim off the scum, reduce the heat very low and leave to simmer very gently for at least 2 hours (longer is fine).

Peel off the husks from the tomatillos and chop them up. Place them along with the chopped garlic, Jalapeno chillies and green bell pepper into a food processor and blend to a purée. (You can make batches of this and freeze for future use if you have a glut of tomatillos – works very well).

Heat the butter or oil in a large frying pan. Add the tomatillo purée and cook over a medium heat for about 10 minutes, or until thickened. Add a little of the stock from the pork together with the chilli powder and cumin.

Remove the pork from the stock and add the pork to the sauce. Simmer gently for another 20 minutes or so.

Serve this with fresh coriander leaves sprinkled on top and some lime wedges.

Mole of Pork and Chillies

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

500g pork shoulder, cut into chunks
1 onion, roughly chopped
1 whole bulb of garlic, chopped in half
2 bay leaves
salt and pepper, to taste
chillies - Jalapeno, dried red ones, however hot you fancy!
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground cloves
1 tin of tomatoes (400g)
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground allspice
1 tbsp sesame seeds
50g butter
1 cinnamon stick
fresh chopped coriander, basil and/or mint leaves

Place the chopped pork in a large pan of water together with the onion, garlic, bay leaves, salt and pepper. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat as low as possible. Simmer for three hours.

In a blender, mix the tomatoes with the chillies and the sesame seeds, ground cloves and allspice.

Heat the butter in a frying pan and gently fry the tomato mixture for about 10 minutes.

Remove the pork from the stock, and add it to the tomato mix with the herbs, cinnamon stick and a little of the stock from the pork.

Mix together well and then simmer until it has reduced down to a thick sauce.

Chapter 4 - Lamb and Mutton



Roast Lamb with Garlic, Ginger and Rosemary

A simple but delicious way of roasting your lamb... adjust the amounts according to the size of the joint!

Ingredients:

joint of lamb
3 cloves of garlic, peeled and sliced
2 - 3cm of fresh ginger, finely chopped
2 or 3 sprigs of rosemary
salt

Photo:
see page 52, bottom left panel

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

Pierce the joint of lamb with a sharp knife at approximately 2cm intervals all over the surface. Push a slice of garlic into each puncture hole.

Sprinkle the joint with salt, and then sprinkle the chopped ginger over the surface.

Lay the rosemary on top of the joint.

Roast in the oven for 25 minutes per pound/450g plus 25 minutes at 180°C (350°F/GM4).

Liver, Bacon and Onions

Serves 2.

Ingredients:

butter, for frying

200g lamb liver

8 rashers of streaky bacon, chopped

1 onion, finely chopped

ground black pepper, to taste

Photo:

see page 52, top left panel

Melt a generous amount of butter in a frying pan. Add the onion, turn the heat down low and allow the onion to cook slowly until it's just brown around the edges and tastes sweet. Move the onion to the edge of the pan.

Add the bacon and fry this in the middle of the onion. Once cooked, put the bacon with the onions at the edge of the pan.

Fry the liver in the space left in the middle of the pan. Turn the pieces of liver over about twice so it's nicely browned on the outside.

Once the liver is cooked through then mix the whole lot together again in the centre of the pan, cover the pan with a lid and let it cook on a very low heat for about another 5 minutes.

Season to taste with the black pepper, dish it up and eat!

Shepherd's Pie

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

50g butter
2 onions, diced
400g minced lamb
100 - 150g mushrooms, sliced

284ml (½ pint) lamb stock
(or lamb stock cube dissolved in water)

1 tbsp tomato purée
1 tsp Worcestershire sauce (GF versions available in the 'free-from' section of most supermarkets)

salt and pepper, to taste

topping of your choice...see opposite

Photo:
see page 52, middle panel

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

Cook the onion in the butter until soft. Add the mince and cook until browned all over. Add the mushrooms and allow to soften.

Add the stock, tomato purée and Worcestershire sauce, season to taste. Bring to boil and then simmer gently until the sauce has reduced and thickened.

Place into an oven proof dish and finish with the topping of your choice – options include mashed potato, or mashed swede or a mixture perhaps.

Cook for about 30 minutes at 180°C (350°F/GM4) or until golden brown on top.

Or you could just eat this as a 'topless' Shepherd...



Hunkar Begendi

Lamb served with smoked aubergine in cheese sauce. A Turkish recipe, via Zorlu, made undoubtedly less authentic by me!
Serves 2.

Ingredients:

The Lamb -

3 large onions, sliced
400g lamb, diced
1 tin of chopped tomatoes (400g)
½ tsp ground cumin, or crush ½ tsp cumin seeds
½ tsp ground paprika
400ml strong stock, preferably lamb (from a stock cube is fine)
fresh chopped parsley
seasoning, to taste

The Aubergine -

2 medium aubergines
juice of 2 lemons
15g butter
1 tbsp cornflour/gluten-free flour
200ml milk
50g gruyère (cheddar will do)
seasoning, to taste

Photo:

see opposite, top right panel

You have to smoke the aubergines yourself for this, for which a gas hob is probably preferable to an electric one - though I'm told that also works ok. I was also advised to use a portable fish-smoker so if you're the kind of person who has such a thing, knock yourself out. Feel free to enjoy telling people that 'smoking my own aubergines' is not a euphemism...

Smoke the aubergines: place over a naked flame and turn regularly until they become charred and soft (takes 20 - 30 minutes). Place the aubergines in a plastic bag to sweat & cool. Add the lemon juice to a bowl of water, and then peel the aubergines when cooled. Soak the aubergines in the water for 30 minutes (you may want to begin the lamb at this point). Mash the aubergines with a fork & set aside.

Fry the onions until golden, then add the lamb & seasoning. Brown the lamb then add the tomatoes, cumin and paprika. Add the stock and simmer for an hour or so until tender. Sprinkle with parsley.

Melt the butter & add the cornflour, stirring well. Add the milk slowly, stirring constantly, then add the cheese. Add the mashed aubergine flesh to the cheese sauce & stir really well. Season to taste.

Serve, either with aubergine next to lamb, or with aubergine on bottom then lamb on top.

Moussaka

Serves about 4, and reheats fine as well.

Quantities are a guide only!

Ingredients:

750g lamb mince
2 onions, chopped
4 garlic cloves, crushed
1 splash of red wine
500ml passata
1 tbsp tomato purée
seasoning, to taste
1 large aubergine, sliced thinly
olive oil
1 egg
200ml full-fat Greek yoghurt
grated parmesan

Photo:

see page 52, bottom right panel

Pre-heat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

Fry the onions & garlic for a couple of minutes then add the lamb and gently fry until browned. Add the wine, passata & purée and season to taste. Bring to the boil and stir until thickened then simmer for 45 minutes.

Brush the aubergine slices on both sides with the oil, then grill (on both sides) until golden.

Beat the egg with the yoghurt, then season.

Put the meat into the bottom of a baking dish, then layer/overlap the aubergines on top. Cover completely with the yoghurt & sprinkle on the parmesan.

Bake at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for 40 minutes or so, until hot all the way through.

Rogan Josh

A rather lovely curry dish based on lamb or mutton.

Serves 4 - 6.

Ingredients:

20g butter (or ghee)
600g mutton or lamb, cut into cubes
2 bay leaves & 2 cardamom pods
6 whole cloves & 6 peppercorns
1 tsp cumin seeds
2.5cm cinnamon stick
568ml (1 pint) of hot water
140ml yoghurt

The Sauce -

20g butter (or ghee)
1 onion, finely chopped
4 green cardamom pods
4 tbsp tomato purée

The Paste -

6 cloves of garlic, crushed
1 onion, coarsely chopped
2cm fresh ginger, roughly chopped
1 tsp chilli powder
1 tbsp ground coriander
2 tsp turmeric

Photo: see page 56, top right and bottom left

Melt the butter or ghee in a large saucepan. Throw in the bay leaf, cardamom pods, whole cloves, peppercorns, cumin seeds and cinnamon stick. Fry for about 10 seconds, stirring well. Then add in the cubed mutton or lamb, stir well and allow to fry over a medium heat for at least 15 minutes, or until the meat is brown all over.

Meanwhile, melt the rest of the butter or ghee (for the sauce) in a large frying pan. Add the finely chopped onion and cardamom pods and fry them gently until the onions are soft and turning golden. Take off the heat and stir in the tomato purée. Leave to one side whilst preparing the paste.

Place the coarsely chopped onion, garlic and ginger into a food blender or processor and blend to a paste. Add a little water if necessary to help the process. Then mix in the chilli powder, ground coriander and turmeric.

Add the paste to the sauce in the frying pan and return the pan to the heat. Fry gently, whilst mixing well. After a few minutes, add the yoghurt. Cook for another couple of minutes. Then add this mixture to the meat in the large saucepan, together with the water and salt to taste. Cover and simmer gently for 2 - 3 hours (or longer).

Reduce the sauce right down prior to serving. This is a great dish for mutton, as after 3 hours the meat just melts in the mouth. Serve sprinkled with fresh chopped coriander leaves and/or garam masala.



Mutton Korma

Serves 4 - 6.

Ingredients:

600g mutton (or lamb) cut into cubes
568ml (1 pint) water
4 whole cloves
5cm cinnamon stick
1 tsp cumin seeds
6 black peppercorns
4 cardamon pods

100g butter
2 onions, finely chopped
4 bay leaves
4 cloves of garlic, crushed
20g fresh ginger, finely chopped

1 tsp turmeric
1 tsp garam masala
1 tsp chilli powder (optional, to taste)
280ml yoghurt
salt, to taste

Photo:

see page 56, top left panel

Place the cubed mutton (or lamb) in a large saucepan together with the water. Add the cloves, cinnamon stick, cumin seeds, peppercorns and cardamom pods. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and cover the pan. Simmer gently for about 1 - 1½ hours (until the meat is good and tender): the water should reduce by about half during this time.

In the meantime, melt the butter in a large frying pan and add the onion, bay leaves, garlic and ginger. Fry gently until the onion is golden and then add the turmeric, garam masala and chilli powder (if using). Cook gently for a further 5 minutes, mixing well. Add the yoghurt and salt to taste and cook for a further 5 minutes.

Once the meat is cooked, add the onion/yoghurt mixture to the large saucepan (don't drain the meat, just add the contents of the frying pan to those in the saucepan). Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for at least 15 minutes, to reduce the sauce to your desired consistency.

Scatter a chopped green chilli over the top, or garnish with fresh coriander leaves.

Spicy Orange Lamb Stir Fry

This recipe works equally well with fresh lamb or cold leftovers.

Serves 2 - 3.

Ingredients:

350g lamb, cut into bite-sized cubes
50g butter
4 cloves of garlic, finely sliced
2cm piece of fresh ginger, peeled and finely chopped
rind of 1 orange, finely chopped
ground black pepper, to taste
2 tbsp soy sauce
2 tbsp fresh orange juice
small amount cooking sherry or white wine (optional)
2 tbsp sesame oil
fresh coriander leaves, roughly chopped

Photo:

see page 56, bottom right panel

Briefly stir fry the lamb until just cooked, or reheat through the leftover lamb.

Remove from the wok, keeping any fat released.

Melt the butter in the wok, add the garlic, ginger, orange peel and black pepper.

After a few seconds of stir frying, return the lamb and cook until the fat is soft.

Add the orange juice, soy sauce and cooking sherry or white wine.

Cook for a further 5 minutes and then add the sesame oil.

Serve garnished with freshly chopped coriander.

Slow-baked Chops in Foil

This recipe is a simple yet delicious way to prepare chops, either lamb or mutton. The aroma while they cook is just mmmm. They end up with a slightly crispy yet chewy outer but are melt-in-the-mouth on the inside. Allow 1 - 2 chops per person.

Ingredients:

lamb or mutton chops
plenty of garlic, cut into slivers
salt and pepper, to taste
dried oregano
butter

Photo:
see page 56, middle panels

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

Make several small incisions into the chops, and place a sliver of garlic into each cut (4 - 5 cuts per chop). Place a small knob of butter on top of each chop, then sprinkle over salt, pepper and dried oregano to taste.

Wrap up each chop individually in a square of tin foil, pinching it closed at the top.

Place all of the chop parcels into a baking tray or tin, and place in the oven at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for about 45 - 60 minutes, until the meat is very tender and falls off the bones. The exact time depends on the size of the chops and whether lamb or mutton – mutton might require a little longer.

Serve them in their little foil parcels.

Chapter 5 - Beef



Spag-less Bolognese

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

1 onion, diced
500g beef mince
1 red pepper, diced
100 - 150g mushrooms, diced
1 small tin of sliced black olives
2 - 4 cloves of garlic, crushed
2 - 4 rashers of streaky bacon, cubed
1 tin of tomatoes (400g)
2 tbsp tomato purée
25g butter
2 - 4 tbsp olive oil
black pepper and salt, to taste
1 tbsp dried thyme
1 tbsp dried oregano
red wine
2 tbsp gluten-free green pesto
(optional)

Photo:

see page 64, top right panel

Melt the butter and fry the onions in the butter till softened. Add the mince and brown all over. Add the mushrooms, garlic, bacon and red pepper and cook for a further few minutes till softened.

Add the tinned tomatoes, red wine, tomato purée, black olives and a couple tablespoons of olive oil. Mix well and bring to the boil. Add water if needed to cover (depends how much wine you've used!). Season with generous amounts of black pepper, thyme and oregano. Add the pesto if using.

Once bubbling, reduce heat to low and allow to simmer for at least 45 minutes (couple of hours is best). Reduce until the sauce is nice and thick. You can add more water if needed to allow for a longer cooking time.

Check the seasoning before serving. We serve this as it is, with lots of grated cheddar cheese melted on top. This also freezes well.

Alternatives -

Serve with spaghetti squash...cut the squash longways and boil for 10 minutes (depends on size of chunks). Remove the squash from the water and use a fork to make the 'spaghetti' strands, starting from the inside of the squash.

Classic Beef Stew

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

450g stewing beef, cut into 2cm cubes
50g butter
1 onion, roughly diced
100 - 150g mushrooms, diced
1 - 2 carrots, sliced
 $\frac{1}{2}$ swede, cubed
2 cloves of garlic, crushed
1 bouquet garni
2 bay leaves
red wine
 $\frac{1}{2}$ pt stock/water with stock cube dissolved
1 tbsp dried thyme
salt and pepper, to taste
2 tbsp tomato purée

Photo:

see page 64, top left panel

Melt the butter and add the beef, cooking until brown. Add the chopped onions and garlic and cook until the onions are softened. Add the carrots, mushrooms and swede, and cook for a few more minutes.

Add the red wine and stock until all the ingredients are covered. Add the tomato purée, bouquet garni, bay leaves, dried thyme and seasoning. Stir well and bring to the boil, then reduce to minimal heat, cover and cook for several hours (the longer the better), checking regularly that the fluid has not all evaporated – you can add more water if necessary. This recipe would also work well in a slow cooker.

Check the seasoning and adjust if needed before serving.
This also freezes well.

Alternatives -

This recipe can be adapted to whatever and however much veg you have knocking around in the bottom of the fridge - parsnips, potatoes etc work well too.

If you don't have stock or gluten-free stock cubes, then marmite works well as a substitute!

The red wine is optional, but it does make it taste extra nice...
This recipe also works very well with lamb or mutton.

African Beef Stew

Serves 2 - 4.

Ingredients:

450 - 500g diced beef
2 tbsp tomato purée
1 medium carrot, sliced
1 medium onion, chopped
50g butter
50g peanut butter
1 bay leaf
200ml water, to just cover the meat
salt and pepper, to taste
fresh root ginger, finely chopped, to taste
3 cloves of garlic, crushed
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp cayenne pepper
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground cloves
1 tbsp white wine vinegar or lemon juice

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

Melt the butter in a large casserole dish, then add the beef and cook until browned all over.

Add the carrot, onion, ginger and garlic and cook gently for a few minutes.

Add the tomato purée, peanut butter, bay leaf, vinegar, cayenne pepper and cloves.

Add enough water so that the meat and vegetables are just covered. Season to taste. Bring to the boil, stir well and cover.

Place in a preheated oven at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for 2 - 3 hours until the meat melts in the mouth. Stir every half hour.

This dish can also be cooked very slowly on top of the cooker, or in a slow-cooker.



Beef in Beer

Most supermarkets sell gluten-free beer these days, so grab a bottle and try this delicious recipe!

Serves 2.

Ingredients:

500g beef stewing steak, cut into 1cm wide strips
3 onions, very finely sliced
lard, dripping or oil for frying
6 cloves of garlic, crushed
330ml bottle of gluten-free beer
300ml stock,
or stock cube made up in 300ml water
1 tbsp white wine vinegar
1 tsp soft brown sugar (optional)
salt and pepper, to taste
1 bay leaf
1 bouquet garni

Photo:

see opposite page, bottom right panel

Melt the fat in a large saucepan, add the strips of beef and cook on a high heat until brown all over.

Reduce the heat and add the onion and garlic. Continue to fry for a further 5 minutes.

Take the pan off the heat and add the beer, stock, vinegar and sugar. Stir well, and return to the heat.

Season to taste and add the bay leaf and bouquet garni.

Simmer over a low heat for a couple of hours.

Remove the lid towards the end to allow the sauce to reduce a little.

This could also be cooked slowly in the oven, at 160°C (325°F/GM3) for about 2 - 3 hours.

Corned Beef Bake

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

The Filling -

1 onion, finely diced
1 red pepper, diced
100 - 150g mushrooms, diced
25g butter
2 - 4 garlic cloves, crushed
1 tin of corned beef (340g)
1 tin of tomatoes (400g)
2 tbsp tomato purée
1 tbsp ground cumin
black pepper, to taste
fresh coriander (optional)

The Topping -

chopped mixed nuts or almonds
cheddar cheese, coarse grated
salt and pepper, to taste

Photo:

see page 64, bottom left panel

Preheat the oven to 160°C (325°F/GM3).

The Filling -

Melt the butter in a large frying pan. Fry the onion, mushrooms, garlic and red pepper in the butter until well softened. Chop the corned beef into roughly 1 cm cubes, stir into the mixture and cook for a further 5 minutes. Add the tinned tomatoes and tomato purée. Season with ground cumin and generous black pepper. Mix well, and allow to simmer for 10 - 15 minutes.

The corned beef will partially disintegrate until you are left with a sort of mush. Reduce until the liquid is all but gone, and remove from heat. Chop some fresh coriander and mix in. Place the mixture into an oven proof dish.

The Topping -

Mix roughly 50:50 grated cheddar cheese and chopped mixed nuts/almonds. Season with black pepper and salt and add the topping to the meat mixture so it is well covered. Cook in the oven at about 160°C (325°F/GM3) for 15 - 20 minutes, or until cheese is well melted, nuts are slightly browned and the mixture is bubbling round the edges.

Alternatives -

Add other cheeses to the topping, for example small pieces of mozzarella or crumbled feta.

Steak and Kidney Casserole

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

50g butter
1 tin of tomatoes (400g)
500g stewing beef, diced
200g kidney, diced
2 onions, chopped
1 red pepper, chopped
1 small carrot, sliced
salt and pepper, to taste
1 bouquet garni
1 bay leaf
red wine

In a large casserole pot, melt the butter and put in the chopped beef, kidneys and tinned tomatoes. Mix well and cook for a few minutes.

Add the onion, red pepper and carrot, mix well and cook for a few minutes. Add the red wine, salt and pepper, bouquet garni and bay leaf.

Bring to the boil, reduce the heat to simmer and leave to cook gently for several hours, until the sauce is nice and thick.

That's it.

This recipe would also work well in a slow-cooker.

Photo:

see page 69, top left panel

Aubergine Lasagne

Serves 6 - 8.

Ingredients:

The Meat Sauce -

2 tbsp olive oil
2 - 3 cloves of garlic, crushed
2 onions, diced
800g beef mince
1 red pepper, diced
3 courgettes, cut into thick chunks
100 - 150g mushrooms, sliced
1 tin of tomatoes (400g)
1 tbsp tomato purée
red wine
1 tbsp each of oregano and thyme
salt and pepper, to taste

The White Sauce -

2 x 300g soft cream cheese
1 packet of mozzarella, cubed
black pepper to taste
3 aubergines
grated cheddar for the top

Photo:

see page 69, top right panel

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

The Meat Sauce -

Warm about 2 tbsp of olive oil in a large pan, then add the crushed garlic, diced onions and minced beef. Cook until the meat is browned, then add the diced red pepper, courgettes, mushrooms, tinned tomatoes, tomato purée and mix together well. Add a generous amount of red wine (approx ¼ of a bottle) and water, together with the oregano, thyme, salt and pepper. Mix well and bring to boil, then allow to simmer for at least hour until the sauce has completely reduced down and is nice and thick.

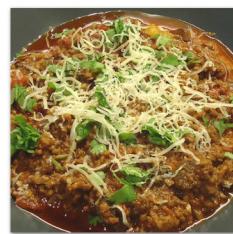
The White Sauce -

Melt the cream cheese with the mozzarella in a frying pan over a gentle heat. Once fully melted, season to taste with black pepper.

Assembly -

Slice the aubergines into rounds about half a centimetre thick and fry in generous amounts of olive oil until golden brown.

Place half the meat sauce in the bottom of a large rectangular oven proof dish. Layer half the aubergine slices on top. Then add the remaining half of the meat mixture on top. Layer the second half of the aubergine slices on top. Pour the white sauce over the top, cover with the grated cheese and bake in the oven for about 40 minutes at 180°C (350°F/GM4).



Mexican Chilli Beef

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

25g butter
500g mince beef
1 onion, finely chopped
2 - 3 garlic cloves, chopped
1 red pepper, diced
100 - 150g mushrooms, sliced
1 tin of tomatoes (400g)
1 tbsp tomato purée
red wine
2 tbsp dry white sherry
2 tbsp white wine vinegar
1 tbsp ground cumin
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each of ground cinnamon,
cloves and nutmeg
salt and pepper, to taste
2 tsp sugar
chilli powder, to taste

Photo:

see page 69, bottom left panel

Melt the butter and then cook the onion until soft.

Add the meat and cook until brown.

Add the mushrooms, garlic and red pepper and cook for a further five minutes.

Then add the tomatoes, tomato purée and red wine.

Add enough water to cover the meat. Stir well and bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to simmer.

Add the sherry, vinegar, sugar, cumin, spices and salt and pepper.

Simmer until the sauce is reduced nice and thick (at least 40 minutes).

If you want it hot and spicy - add chilli powder...to taste!

Nikujaga: meat & potatoes, the Japanese way

You can usually get very, very thinly sliced beef in a Chinese supermarket. If you can't, then this recipe works just as well with diced beef: fry it for longer to be sure it'll cook through. Serves 2.

Ingredients:

200g beef, very thinly sliced
6 small potatoes
1 carrot
1 onion
shirataki (this is a noodle made from yam)
1.5 tbsp salad oil or butter
2 tbsp sugar
3 tbsp mirin
2 tbsp sake (alternatively sherry/white wine)
5 tbsp soy sauce
2 tbsp green peas

Peel & slice the carrots into 1 cm thick slices (half-moon if need be).

Slice the onion into large strips.

Peel & slice the potatoes into sizeable chunks & put into some cold water.

Boil the shirataki for a couple of minutes.

Fry the meat in the butter quickly, then add the shirataki. Mix together, then add the potatoes & half the onions.

Add 350ml water, cover & bring to the boil, then reduce the heat. Remove any scum from the top occasionally, if necessary.

When you can easily get a skewer 3mm into the potato, then add the sugar, mirin, sake and then the soy sauce. Add the carrots. Cover & cook for 10 minutes.

Add the rest of the onion & cook, uncovered, for about 7 minutes.
Finally, add the peas.

This is also nice served as one part of a meal with lots of little parts, in a tapas-way.

Beef Stroganoff

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

butter, for frying
600g good quality beef, diced or cut into strips
4 shallots or 1 large onion, finely chopped
300 - 400ml single cream, to taste
1 tsp paprika
seasoning, to taste

Photo:
see page 69, middle panel

Heat half the butter and fry the beef for 2 minutes, or until done.

Remove the beef, add the rest of the butter, and fry the onions slowly until soft.

Return the beef to the pan, add the paprika, then add the cream and allow to cook down & thicken for a few minutes.

Season to taste before serving.

You can serve this with rice, or polenta:

Put 200g fine polenta in a pan with a stock cube and 1 litre of water. Season well and add any herbs you like. Boil, and stir until the polenta comes away from the sides. Pour out onto a lined flat surface to cool, then slice and fry in olive oil until crispy - see photo on page 69, central panel.

Alternatives -

Add mushrooms or peppers with the onion.

Chapter 6 - Vegetarian Mains



Ratatouille

Delicious hot or cold, easily made in advance either for cold buffets or gently reheated. Useful as a vegetarian main, or as a vegetable side dish. The ingredients below are only a guide, feel free to alter the veggies as you like. Serves 4 - 6. ****can be vegan****

Ingredients:

3 - 4 courgettes, cut into chunks
red and yellow peppers, thickly sliced
1 onion, thickly sliced
2 - 4 cloves of garlic, crushed
1 aubergine, cut into thin chunks
100 - 150g mushrooms, thickly sliced
1 tin of tomatoes (400g)
olive oil and/or butter, for frying
salt and black pepper, to taste
olives, green or black (optional)
thyme and oregano, fresh or dried, to taste
1 - 2 tbsp tomato purée
generous slush of red wine/water

Photo:

see page 78, bottom right panel

Melt the butter with the olive oil in a large pan.

Add the diced vegetables and cook gently, mixing well occasionally and adding more oil if needed.

Once the vegetables are well softened, add the tinned tomatoes, tomato purée, red wine/water.

Add the salt and black pepper to taste.

Add the thyme if using dried herbs (oregano and basil might be nice too). If using fresh herbs, add them nearer the end of cooking time.

Cook through until the sauce is reduced and nicely thickened.

Vegetarian Aubergine Lasagne

Serves 6 - 8.

Ingredients:

The Vegetable Sauce -

50g butter
4 tbsp olive oil
100 - 150g mushrooms, diced
1 - 2 red peppers, diced
1 onion, finely diced
3 courgettes, cut into chunks
2 - 3 cloves of garlic, crushed
1 small tin of sliced black olives
1 tin of tomatoes (400g)
1 tbsp tomato purée
red wine/water
ground black pepper and salt, to taste
1 tbsp oregano or thyme

Other -

3 - 4 aubergines, cut into rounds
plenty of olive oil for frying
chopped nuts/almonds
cheddar cheese, coarse grated
salt and pepper, to taste
1 ball of mozzarella, cubed (optional)

Preheat the oven to 160°C (325°F/GM3).

The Vegetable Sauce -

Melt the butter with the olive oil in a large pan. Add the diced vegetables (mushrooms, peppers, courgettes, onions and garlic) and cook through gently. Add the sliced olives, tomatoes, tomato purée, salt and black pepper and the herbs. Add enough red wine and/or water to cover the vegetables, and bring to a simmer. Cook through until the sauce is nicely thickened and reduced.

Assembly -

Fry the thin rounds of aubergine in the olive oil until lightly browned. Place one third of the vegetable mix in the bottom of an oven-proof dish, then add a layer of the fried aubergine rounds.

Add another third of the vegetable mixture on top, then another layer of aubergine. Add the final third of vegetables over the top.

For the topping, mix the chopped almonds or nuts 50:50 with the grated cheddar and mozzarella. Make enough to cover your dish and season to taste with salt and black pepper. Bake in a preheated oven at about 160°C (325°F/GM3) for 15 - 20 minutes until the mixture is bubbling, the cheese has melted and the nuts have turned a light golden-brown.

3 Colour Tartlets

I find making gluten-free savoury pastry quite a challenge, but I think I've cracked it with this recipe.
Makes 12 tartlets.

Ingredients:

The Savoury pastry -

75g potato flour
75g rice flour
75g ground almonds
salt, to taste
1 tbsp xanthan gum
1 egg
50g butter
olive oil

The Filling -

1 tin of tomatoes (400g)
garlic-flavoured olive oil
salt and pepper, to taste
thyme, oregano, to taste
½ tsp sugar
dash of balsamic vinegar
feta
gluten-free green pesto

Photo:

see page 78, top row

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

The Savoury Pastry -

Mix the dry ingredients together (flours, almonds, salt and gum). Add the egg and the butter, then mix together till you get a fine crumb. Gather the pastry together into a ball, adding as much olive oil as needed to hold it together. I find that the 'wetter' the better with this pastry (don't expect the same pastry rules to apply to gluten-free pastry). I add plenty of oil, so that the pastry holds together easily and is actually smooth and rather greasy to the touch.

It can be refrigerated overnight or frozen if needed, but I don't find cooling it helps with the handling, so I don't bother unless it's for storage reasons.

Roll the pastry out sandwiched between two sheets of grease-proof paper (this works really well, so don't worry about dusting surfaces with flour – it simply makes a mess and dries out your pastry!) Cut out 12 circles to fit your tin – I find a shallow, 12-hole bun tin works well. Don't roll the pastry out too thin, and be careful transferring it to the tin as it will break easily. If it rips, simply roll it up and start again – have patience with it!

Blind bake the pastry for 10 minutes at 180°C (350°F/GM4). Remove them from the oven, coat the pastry with egg wash and return to the oven for 2 minutes.

The Filling -

This is only a suggestion; you can fill these with whatever you fancy!

Warm the garlic-flavoured olive oil in a frying pan and add the tomatoes.

Cook gently until the juice has almost completely disappeared.

Season to taste with salt, pepper, oregano and thyme.

Add a small amount of sugar (exact amount depends on the tomatoes) and sprinkle a little balsamic vinegar over at the last minute.

Mix well and spoon this into the tartlets.

Crumble a little feta over the top and return them to the oven for 10 minutes.

Once cooked, serve drizzled with a little gluten-free green pesto over the top.

You can serve these warm or cold. Good finger food for buffets.



Nutty-base Vegetarian Quiche

No pastry!

Makes a 20cm (8 inch) diameter quiche.

Ingredients:

The Nutty-base -

50g chopped almonds
50g other chopped nuts
50g ground almonds
2 eggs
30g melted butter
pinch of salt

The Filling -

1 onion, finely diced
butter, for frying
1 red and 1 orange pepper, finely diced
1 small tin of sliced black olives
150g grated cheddar
350ml (12 fl oz) double cream
1 tbsp xanthan gum
4 eggs
salt and pepper, to taste

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

The Base -

Mix together the nuts with the melted butter, eggs, salt and xanthan gum. Use a tin approximately 20 cm (8 inches) in diameter (preferably with a removable base), grease the tin and line with grease-proof paper. Pack the nut mix firmly into the base and bake for 15 minutes at 180°C (350°F/GM4).

The Filling -

Melt the butter in a frying pan, and fry the onion until softened. Add the peppers and olives and fry until cooked through. Place the onion, peppers and olives onto the precooked nut base. Sprinkle the grated cheddar over the vegetables. Mix together the double cream, eggs and seasoning to taste. Pour this mixture over the vegetables and cheddar. Bake at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for a further 50 - 60 minutes, until golden brown on top. Place a tray underneath to catch any drips!

You can serve this warm or cold and the firm base means it makes good finger food. It also keeps well.

Baked Butternut Squash with Goat's Cheese

Serves 2.

Ingredients:

1 butternut squash
1 log goat's cheese
handful of chives for the top
olive oil

Pretty much as it says in the title...

Halve & de-seed a butternut squash & cut incisions into it diagonally.

Fill the hole left in the butternut squash with goat's cheese.

Add some ripped chives over the top, drizzle with olive oil & bake at 230°C (450°F/GM8) for 40 minutes or until soft.

Serve with whatever you fancy..super-easy and really good!

Alternatives -

You can add whatever you want to this - I would suggest chopped sundried tomatoes or toasted pine-nuts for a start!

Photo:

see page 78, bottom left panel

Pesto Risotto

The feta & pesto are what really makes this recipe for me, but you can use whatever ingredients you like or have left over! I sometimes use roast butternut squash and sweetcorn, for example. Serves 4.

****can be vegan****

Ingredients:

1 onion, chopped

2 cloves of garlic, chopped
olive oil, for frying

250 - 300g risotto rice

568ml (1 pint) stock - from a stock cube is fine

approx 12 mushrooms, chopped
1 green pepper, chopped

cream (remove for vegan version)

green pesto (a jar is fine but homemade is amazing, and can be made without parmesan for a vegan risotto)

half a packet of feta, chopped
(remove for vegan version)
handful pine nuts, toasted

Photo:

see page 83, central panel

Heat the oil & fry the onion & garlic for a minute or so, then add the rice & coat in the oil.

Add the stock a little at a time, stirring fairly constantly.

Throw in the mushrooms and peppers at some point during the cooking (when rice is halfway cooked, or later if you want more crunch in the peppers).

When the rice is nearly cooked, add a big slug of cream then stir in a big spoonful of pesto (amount to taste).

Just before serving, throw in the feta & toasted pine nuts, then stir for one last minute. The feta will juuuust start to go soft around the edges.

Jamaican Rice and Peas

This came via my sister and is more exciting than it sounds!

Serves 2 - 3.

****vegan****

Ingredients:

1 red onion, chopped

1 red chilli, deseeded & chopped
or 1 tsp of the ready-chopped in a jar
variety

1 tin of coconut milk
1 tin of gungo peas
400ml vegetable stock
300g rice
salt, pepper and paprika to taste

Fry the onion and chilli.

Add everything else.

Bring to the boil.

Simmer for 20 minutes.

Season to taste. Eat, possibly with some sausages on the side!

Alternatives -

You should be able to find gungo peas in the "Gosh, Don't Foreigners Eat Funny Things?" section in supermarkets. If not, use chickpeas.



Egg Curry

An unusual curry maybe, but well worth a try!

Serves 3 -4.

Ingredients:

100g butter
8 hard boiled eggs, peeled and sliced
1 large onion, finely chopped
2 bay leaves
4 cloves of garlic, crushed
1 tsp fresh ginger, chopped
2 tbsp natural yoghurt
1 tin of tomatoes (400g)
salt, to taste

2 whole cloves
1 cinnamon stick
4 cardamom pods
5 black peppercorns
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp turmeric
chilli powder, to taste
1 tbsp ground coriander
1 tbsp garam masala

Photo:

see page 83, top left panel

Melt the butter and fry the hard boiled eggs until golden brown. Remove from the pan and set aside.

Fry the onions, bay leaves, cloves, cinnamon stick, cardamom pods, peppercorns and cumin seeds, until the onion is soft and just turning golden brown.

Remove from the heat and stir in the turmeric, chilli, coriander, garlic, ginger and yoghurt. Return to the heat and cook for 2 minutes.

And the tomatoes and salt and cook for another 10 minutes.

Stir in some water (about half a pint) and bring to the boil.

Add the eggs and simmer for another 10 minutes.

Stir in the garam masala and serve, sprinkled with fresh chopped coriander leaves.

Courgette, Chickpea and Coconut Curry

Serves 2.

****can be vegan****

Ingredients:

1 onion, chopped
butter or oil, for frying
2-4 garlic cloves, roughly chopped

spices: ground coriander, garam masala, cinnamon, to taste

1 courgette, chunked
1 tin of coconut milk
1 tin of chickpeas
seasoning, to taste
lemon or lime juice (optional)

Blend half the onion, the garlic, spices and half the coconut milk to a paste.

Melt the butter in a pan and fry the remaining onion for a couple of minutes.

Add the courgette chunks and fry for 5 minutes until brown.

Add the paste and cook for a couple of minutes, then add the chickpeas & the rest of the coconut.

Cook for 5 - 10 minutes until the chickpeas are cooked through, season and serve, with a squeeze of lime or lemon juice to taste.

Photo:

see page 83, top right panel

Coconut Dhal

Serves 3 - 4.

vegan

Ingredients:

1 onion, chopped
olive oil, for frying
1 tsp each of grated ginger and garlic
½ tsp each of: turmeric, cumin, garam masala & ground coriander

300g red split lentils
1 pack cream of coconut or 1 tin coconut milk
400ml water
1 lime
salt, to taste
fresh coriander

Fry the onion, garlic and ginger in the olive oil until soft.

Add the spices and lentils and cook for a few minutes.

Add the coconut and water, simmering until mushy (20 - 30 minutes): add more water if necessary.

Squeeze in the lime juice and add salt to taste.

Garnish with coriander & serve with rice.

Mushroom Stroganoff

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

butter, for frying
4 shallots, or one onion
approximately 15 mushrooms
1 red pepper
1 tsp paprika (or to taste)
200ml double cream
seasoning, to taste
basmati rice, to serve

Photo:

see page 83, bottom left panel

Chop the onion, mushrooms and pepper as you like them.

Fry the onion in the butter for a minute or two, then add the mushrooms (use enough butter to coat the mushrooms).

Add the peppers and cook for a minute and then add the paprika & stir to coat all the ingredients.

Finally, add the cream & heat through, then season to taste.

Serve with rice.

Peter's Mushrooms

Serves 2 as a main course, or 4 as a side dish.

Ingredients:

250g chestnut mushrooms, whole
100g shiitake mushrooms, sliced
100g oyster mushrooms, whole
100g closed cup or button mushrooms, whole

100g butter
4 cloves of garlic, finely sliced
2 - 3cm cube of fresh ginger, finely diced
1 onion, coarsely chopped
100ml dry sherry
50ml soy sauce
pinch of sugar (to taste)
25ml sesame oil
fresh coriander leaves, roughly torn

Photo:

see page 83, bottom right panel

Melt the butter in a wok or large frying pan.

Add the onion, garlic and ginger and stir fry for 5 minutes.

Add the mushrooms and stir fry them together for a further 5 minutes.

Add the sherry, soy sauce and sugar, mix well and reduce down for a few minutes, until the sauce has thickened a little.

Add the sesame oil just before serving.

Garnish with fresh coriander leaves.

Chapter 7 - Soups and Sides



Sweet Potato & Coconut Soup

Serves 2.

****vegetarian, can be vegan****

Ingredients:

1 onion, chopped
1 clove of garlic, crushed
1cm of fresh ginger, chopped
butter or oil, for frying
plenty of diced sweet potato
568ml (1 pint) of vegetable stock
1 tin of coconut milk
seasoning, to taste
juice of 2 limes

Fry the onion, garlic and ginger in a little butter or oil till softened, and then add the sweet potato. Cook for a couple more minutes.

Add the stock & simmer for 15 - 20 minutes until the sweet potato is soft.

Liquidise this with half of the coconut milk.

Return the liquidised mixture to the heat and add the remaining coconut milk.

Season to taste. Add the lime juice and serve.

Butternut Squash and Chilli Soup

Serves 4.

****vegan****

Ingredients:

1 onion
2 cloves of garlic
1 medium butternut squash or
pumpkin (if preferred)
1 tsp chilli flakes or pre-chopped
chillies, or 1 - 2 red chillies
vegetable stock cube
seasoning, to taste

Chop the onion, garlic & squash, then place all the ingredients in a saucepan with enough water to cover well.

Simmer for 10 - 15 minutes or until the squash is tender, then blitz to a smooth soup.

Test and season further if necessary.

Photo:

see page 93, top left panel

Tomato Soup, with a Kick

I sometimes take this to work in a soup flask, for a nice warm lunch.

Serves 2.

****vegetarian, can be vegan****

Ingredients:

1 tin of chopped tomatoes (400g)
2cm fresh root ginger, chopped
100 ml water
2 cloves of garlic, crushed
1 piece of lemon grass (optional)
10g butter (or oil)
salt and black pepper, to taste
double cream
ground cumin and coriander, to taste
pinch of cayenne pepper (optional)

Photo:

see page 93, top right panel

Melt the butter or oil in a pan, then add the ginger and garlic.

Fry gently for a few seconds, then add the tomatoes, water, lemon grass, cumin and coriander (to taste: I add plenty!).

Bring gently to bubble, then turn down low and leave to cook for about 30 minutes or longer, or until the tomato juice has reduced down.

Remove the pan from the heat. At this stage, if you like your soup smooth you can blend it quickly in a food blender. Otherwise, if you like chunks of tomato in your soup leave it as it is!

Add a generous amount of double cream (to taste), and check for seasoning. Add salt and pepper to taste if required. If you like an extra kick to your soup, add the cayenne pepper too.

This is really nice served with a sprinkling of fresh chopped coriander leaves.



Blue Cheese & Mushroom Soup

This came about during my student days, at a 'let's pretend we're classy' cheese evening, when someone complained there wasn't any soup. Et voila! Serves 4 as a starter.

****vegetarian****

Ingredients:

200g blue cheese (stilton, Danish etc)
300g mushrooms
butter, for frying
 $\frac{1}{2}$ large onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, chopped
426ml ($\frac{3}{4}$ pint) of stock
284ml ($\frac{1}{2}$ pint) of milk
100ml cream
seasoning, to taste

Photo:

see page 93, central panel

Fry the onions & garlic in butter until soft.

Add the stock, milk, mushrooms and seasoning.

Bring to the boil, then simmer for 5 minutes.

Add the cheese and allow to melt in.

Add the cream, and season further to taste, if required.

If you find the soup a bit loose, thicken with a little cornflour.

Greek Vegetable Soup

A very substantial soup this one...and another nice one for the lunchtime soup flask.

Serves 3 - 4.

****vegetarian, potentially vegan****

Ingredients:

olive oil, for frying
2 - 4 cloves of garlic, crushed
1 onion, finely sliced
½ a white cabbage, finely shredded
1 carrot, finely chopped
3 celery sticks, chopped
1 litre (2 pints) of vegetable stock, or a cube in hot water
splash of red wine (optional)
1 tin of chopped tomatoes (400g)
salt and pepper, to taste
1 tsp dried oregano (optional)
50g feta (unless vegan)

Photo:

see page 93, bottom right panel

Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan, and gently fry the onion and garlic until softened but not coloured.

Add the cabbage and cook for a further 5 minutes.

Add the celery and carrots, stir well and cook for a further 5 minutes, or until all the vegetables are softened.

Add the vegetable stock (and wine if using), stir well and bring the soup up to the boil.

Then reduce the heat, and leave the soup to simmer for 15 - 20 minutes covered.

Add the tomatoes, oregano and season to taste. Recover the soup and allow to simmer for about 1 hour.

Check the seasoning. Serve with the feta crumbled over the top at the last minute.

Decadent Fish Soup

This fantastic soup is a meal in its own right – and doesn't take long to prepare.

Serves 3 - 4.

Ingredients:

50g butter
350g haddock (or other firm-fleshed white fish), chunks
200g small prawns
1 leek, finely sliced
1 green bell pepper, diced
1 log (125g) of soft goat's cheese
300ml double cream
1 tsp ground cumin
chopped fresh chives
salt and ground black pepper, to taste
pinch of cayenne pepper (optional)

Photo:

see page 97, top left panel

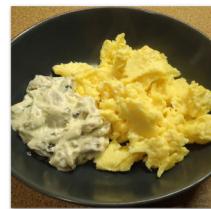
Melt the butter in a large frying pan, and cook the fish chunks until just done. Remove from the pan. Briefly fry the prawns for a few minutes, until opaque. Remove from the pan.

Melt more butter if needed, and fry the leek and green pepper until nice and soft. Remove the pan from the heat. Melt in the soft goat's cheese and mix well. Once fully melted, add the double cream until you have a thick soup consistency. Add the ground cumin, chopped chives, and season to taste with salt and black pepper. Add cayenne pepper if you want the soup to have a kick – how much is up to you...

Add the fish and prawns back into the pan and mix well. Heat through until gently bubbling. Cook for a further 5 minutes or so, and then serve.

Alternatives -

Try different fish or combinations of fish e.g. salmon, smoked fish, other white fish. Add a topping such as ground almonds, or savoury crumble (page 11) and bake in the oven for about 15 - 20 minutes (160°C/325°F/GM3) to bake a very tasty fish pie.



Carrot Kinpira

Just a tasty little quick veg side dish. Be very careful with the chilli flakes - a little goes a long way!

Serves 1.

****vegan****

Ingredients:

carrot, chopped into matchstick sized pieces
sesame oil
1/8 tsp chilli flakes
soy sauce
white sesame seeds (optional)

Photo:
see page 97, central panel

Heat up sesame oil and chase any horrified Chinese neighbours out of the kitchen as they protest at cooking in sesame oil.

Add the carrot and fry, tossing well, for about 5 minutes till tender.

Add the chilli flakes & toss again.

Add a splash of soy sauce & toss again, then if you want to, throw in some white sesame seeds.

mnam!

Cabbage with Onions

This is just a nice side dish, and something slightly different to do with a cabbage.

****vegetarian****

Ingredients:

1 medium sized cabbage (white, sweetheart), sliced into thin strips
1 - 2 onions, sliced into semi-circle strips
50g butter
1 tbsp cumin seeds
1 tbsp fennel seeds
2 cloves of garlic, crushed
1cm of fresh ginger, coarsely chopped
1 - 2 tbsp tomato purée
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp turmeric
hot chilli powder, to taste (optional)
salt, to taste
1 tsp garam masala
lemon juice (optional)

Photo:

see page 97, top right panel

Melt the butter and add the cumin and fennel seeds, cooking for about 10 seconds.

Add the half-circle onion slices, garlic and ginger and fry for a further 3 minutes.

Add the cabbage, stir in well, cover and cook on a low heat for 10 - 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Uncover and add the tomato purée, turmeric, chilli powder and salt. Cook for another 10 minutes, keep stirring it occasionally.

When the cabbage is wilted and cooked through, add the garam masala and lemon juice, and cook for a final 5 minutes.

This dish is lovely served with a big dollop of Greek yoghurt.

French Beans with Dressing

Serves as a side dish.

****vegan****

Ingredients:

40ml olive oil
20ml white wine vinegar
2 cloves of garlic, crushed
salt and pepper, to taste
½ tsp gluten-free mustard
1 packet French beans (or as many as you want...)

Photo:
see page 97, bottom left panel

Trim the beans and place them in slightly-salted boiling water.

Bring them back to the boil and then reduce the heat to simmer, for approximately 8 minutes (or until cooked to your taste).

Drain, but keep the beans in the saucepan.

Combine the oil, vinegar, garlic, mustard, salt and pepper.

Pour the dressing mixture over the still-warm beans and replace the lid on the saucepan.

Serve while still warm or alternatively these make a nice cold side salad.

Creamy Garlic Mushrooms

Serves as a side dish.

****vegetarian****

Ingredients:

closed cup mushrooms, quartered
or button mushrooms, whole
6 cloves of garlic, crushed
lots of butter, for frying
salt and pepper, to taste
cream cheese
fresh chives, ripped
splash of double cream

Photo:

see page 97, bottom right panel

Melt the butter in a frying pan.

Add the mushrooms and crushed garlic and cook gently for 10 - 15 minutes, adding more butter if required (mushrooms seem to act like little butter-sponges, for this recipe you want them fully saturated).

Once the mushrooms are fully cooked, add the cream cheese and seasoning, and allow the cheese to slowly melt over a low heat.

Add a little double cream to get the required sauce consistency.

Just before serving, add plenty of ripped chives and stir them in well.

Chapter 8 - Others



Flour-free Pizza

This is a very filling recipe as the base contains nuts and eggs and is thus highly nutritious in its own right.

Each pizza serves 1 - 2.

potentially vegetarian

Ingredients:

The Base -

3 eggs
100g ground almonds
1 red onion, finely diced (optional)
garlic, crushed (optional)
seasoning, to taste
oil or butter, for frying

The Tomato Topping -

green pesto (gluten-free)
tomato purée
generous amount of oregano

Toppings -

your choice; see across for
suggestions
lots of grated cheddar cheese

Photo:

see page 108, top left panel - pre-baked, top middle panel - baked

The Base -

Mix three eggs per 100g ground almonds - how much in total depends on how thick you want to make the base, and how many pizzas you are making. This is just a ratio.

Optional – you can add some finely diced and fried red onion and also garlic – this helps give the base a bit more moisture and also an extra delicious taste so it's strongly recommended. Season well.

Melt some oil or butter in a small frying pan – this will be the size of your pizza. Add a spoonful of the mix; enough to coat the base of the pan. Cook the base through, flipping part-way so it's cooked on both sides. Remove from the pan and place on an oven proof tray.

The Tomato Topping -

Mix together some green pesto with tomato purée, about a 50:50 ratio. Add a generous amount of oregano: this makes it taste like pizza! Spread a thin layer of this over the cooked pizza base: you don't need a lot as it is very strong.

Then add toppings of your choice! I like salami or ham or pepperoni, sliced olives, finely chopped mushrooms or pepper, goat's cheese... Mozzarella is a must for the stringy cheese effect...be generous with your toppings. Then add lots of grated cheddar cheese and place under a grill to melt.

Warning - this is a very filling pizza....

Spanish Tortilla

This is a recipe from my sister Zoe, who made this for a packed lunch to take on field trips.

Serves 4.

****vegetarian****

Ingredients:

150ml olive oil
750g potatoes, thinly sliced or cubed
1 large onion, sliced
1 red pepper, cored, deseeded and sliced
1 green pepper, cored, deseeded and sliced
5 large eggs
salt and pepper, to taste

Heat all but 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large frying pan. Add the potato slices, onion and peppers and cook for 15 minutes stirring well, until all the vegetables are golden and tender.

In a bowl, beat the eggs then stir in the potato mixture from the pan and add a dash of salt and pepper. Put on one side to stand for 15 minutes.

Heat the rest of the oil in the frying pan and tip in the tortilla mixture. Cook over a low heat for 10 minutes, until almost cooked through. Flip over and cook the other side for another 5 minutes, or until the tortilla is cooked on both sides. Leave it to cool then cut into wedges.

Note that the times given are only a guide; you may need to cook it for longer but watch out you don't burn it (but the burnt bit just peels off, so no worries).

Eat hot or cold – you can wrap portions in tin foil to use for a packed lunch.

Cheesy Polenta Bread

This is somewhere between a bread & a savoury cake. Feel free to play around with the extras (eg. herbs, different cheeses, seeds, nuts!). Makes one 1lb loaf.

vegetarian

Ingredients:

2 shallots, chopped
100g fine polenta
100g rice flour
1 tsp baking powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each salt, pepper, ground paprika (or to taste)
1 large egg
1 tbsp olive oil
250 - 300ml natural yoghurt
50 - 75g grated cheese (cheddar, Red Leicester etc to taste)
a generous pour each of pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds

Photo:

see page 108, central and bottom left panels

Heat the oven to 200°C (400°F/GM6) & roast the chopped shallots for 5 - 10 minutes. Alternatively you could just fry them in butter until soft.

Mix the polenta, flour, baking powder & seasoning, then add the egg, olive oil & yoghurt.

The consistency should be wet but not soggy. Add more polenta if it seems too sloppy.

Mix in $\frac{3}{4}$ of the cheese, then add the roasted shallots & seeds to taste.

Transfer to a lined or greased loaf tin & put the rest of the cheese on top.

Bake for 30 - 35 minutes at 200°C (400°F/GM6).

Apple Mint Chutney

Fills about 6 one pound jars.

****vegan****

Ingredients:

2kg cooking apples, peeled, cored and chopped
568ml (1 pint) white wine vinegar
500g tomatoes, chopped
4 - 5 chilli peppers, sliced
8 cloves of garlic, chopped
1 red onion, chopped into big chunks
500g soft brown sugar
2 tsp each of ground ginger and mixed spice
salt, to taste
large handful of roughly chopped fresh mint

Photo:

see page 108, top right panel for finished product

Place the chopped apples in a large, stainless steel pan with half a pint of vinegar.

Heat up and cook until it is thick and pulpy (leave the lid on, otherwise the vinegar evaporates before the apples are ready).

Then add the remaining vinegar, tomatoes, chilli pepper, garlic, red onion, sugar, ground ginger, mixed spice and salt. Mix well and bring up to heat.

Allow to bubble gently for about 30 minutes.

Add the large handful of mint and allow to bubble for another 5 minutes.

Turn the heat off and allow to cool a little (till it has stopped bubbling).

Place into clean jars whilst still hot, and lid.

“Traffic Light” Tomato Chutney

This fills approximately 4 one pound jars.

vegan

Ingredients:

2.5kg tomatoes, red, green and every colour in-between, chopped
500g onion, finely chopped
30g salt
500ml red wine vinegar
500ml white wine vinegar
500g soft light brown sugar
1 tbsp each of ground black pepper, ginger and cumin (or to taste)
2 tsp each of ground cloves and cinnamon (or to taste)

Photos:

see page 108, bottom middle and right panels for tomato colours

Chop and wash the tomatoes. Add the finely chopped onion, and sprinkle over the salt. Mix thoroughly in a large bowl, cover with a cloth or similar and leave somewhere safe overnight.

The next day, drain away the liquid from the tomatoes and onion, but do not rinse or wash them.

Pour the vinegars into a large stock pot or similar. Add the sugar and gently heat until the sugar has fully dissolved into the vinegar.

Add the tomatoes and onion, the black pepper, ginger, cumin, cloves and cinnamon. Mix well and increase the heat to gently bring the mixture to a gentle boil. Reduce the heat and allow to cook slowly, stirring occasionally.

The chutney should eventually thicken and turn a dark-golden brown colour and the volume should reduce to less than half. A good test is to run a wooden spoon across the bottom of the pan – if the chutney mixture remains divided long enough to see the bottom of the pan, it's probably done! The actual cooking time needed will depend on a). how thick you like your chutney and b). how high the heat is during the cooking!





Hot Cheesy Nachos

Serves as many as want to share...

****vegetarian****

Ingredients:

1 large packet of gluten-free corn chips
1 small pot of crème fraîche
1 pot of tomato (red) salsa
1 pot of pickled Jalapeno peppers
1 pot of guacamole
lots of grated cheddar cheese

Photo:

see page 109, top right and bottom right panels

Place one third of the nachos in the bottom of an oven-proof dish.

Drizzle big lumps of salsa and guacamole in random places over the nachos.

Add some of the sliced Jalapeno peppers too.

Layer another third of the nachos on top, then add more salsa, guacamole and Jalapeno peppers.

Cover with the rest of the nachos.

Sprinkle lots of grated cheddar cheese over the top and place under the grill to melt the cheese.

Serve with big dollops of crème fraîche and eat!

Edible Play Dough

This recipe was developed for my son Daniel, who was given a packet of pastry cutters as a present but had nothing to use them with. The amount below makes a big ball – plenty to divide in two and freeze half for another rainy day!

vegetarian

Ingredients:

50g potato flour
50g rice flour (plus some for dusting)
100g ground almonds
25g softened butter
25 - 50g sugar
1 tbsp xanthan gum
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp (or to taste) ground cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, almond essence, vanilla essence
2 eggs
pinch of salt
oil (optional)

Photo:

see page 109, top left and middle panels

Preheat the oven to 190°C (375°F/GM5).

Mix together the dry ingredients (potato and rice flour, ground almonds, sugar, gum and salt). Then add the eggs, softened butter and essences/spices. You can make this in the food processor – just leave it running till the ingredients form one big ball (or almost!). Alternatively you can easily mix this by hand. If it's not all coming together, you can add a little oil to help it along.

Use rice flour to dust the work surface and the rolling pin and off you go! Once the shapes are cut, place them on a greased and lined baking tray and bake them at 190°C (375°F/GM5) for 10 - 15 minutes – keep an eye on them, since the exact time needed will depend on how thick or thin the dough has been rolled. It does help if they are all roughly a similar thickness....

Allow to cool on the tray. These keep well in an air-tight box.

Alternatives -

The spices and essence are only a guide; you could flavour these however you like. The exact amount and type of flours is flexible, so feel free to use whatever you have in the cupboard – I know I do!

If your children covet the violently-coloured versions in the shops, try using food colouring!

Cheese Biscuits

Makes approximately 24 little biscuits.

****vegetarian****

Ingredients:

1 egg
1 tsp xanthan gum
 $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp garlic powder
 $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp oregano
salt and pepper, to taste
75g total of ground almonds and rice flour
50g finely grated cheddar

Photo:

see page 109, middle row left and central panels, and bottom row middle panel

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

Mix together the ingredients until they form a ball. Divide the ball into quarters.

Dust the work surface and rolling pin with rice flour and roll out a quarter piece of the mixture.

Using pastry cutters, cut out circles (or whatever shape you fancy) and place them onto a greased and lined baking tray.

Repeat until all the mix is used, making approximately 24 little biscuits.

Bake at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for about 15 minutes, checking on them after 10 minutes or so.

Alternatives -

Sprinkle sesame seeds over the top before baking, but be sure to pat them into the mix a little, otherwise they simply roll off!

Blue Cheese Biscuits

A handy way to use up leftover blue cheese!

****vegetarian****

Ingredients:

1 egg
75g total ground almonds and rice flour
seasoning, to taste
40g crumbled blue stilton
handful finely chopped walnuts
white sesame seeds, to taste

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

Combine all the ingredients together to make a dough.

Break off small amounts of the dough, roll into a ball and flatten onto a greased and lined baking tray.

Bake for approximately 10 - 15 minutes.

Photo:

see page 109, middle right panel

Egg Pile Up

Just a quick idea for a lunch or hot snack.

** can be vegetarian**

Ingredients:

2 thick slice rice cakes per person
cheddar cheese
butter
2 eggs per person
bacon – optional

Preheat the grill. Melt a little butter in a frying pan.

If using bacon, fry the rashers (2 per person) until nice and crispy.

Fry the eggs as you like them, but ideally leave the yolks at least a little runny.

Thickly butter the rice cakes, place two on a grill-proof plate, then grate a layer of cheddar cheese over them.

Place a rasher of bacon on top of the cheese, then a fried egg on top of the bacon.

Top off with a generous layer of grated cheese, and place under the grill to thoroughly melt the cheese.

Photo:

see page 109, bottom left panel

Chapter 9 - Puddings



Baked Summer Fruits

Serves 2 - 4.

Ingredients:

568ml (1 pint) double cream

mixed berries e.g. raspberries,
red/white/black currants, cherries,
blackberries, fresh or frozen

sugar, to taste

Photo:

see page 120, top left panel

Place the berries in an ovenproof dish.

Mix the sugar and cream together, then pour this over the fruit.

Bake at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for 20 minutes.

Eat.

Alternative -

Replace the mixed berries with chopped rhubarb (enough to cover the base of your ovenproof dish). Combine the cream with the sugar and add ground cinnamon to taste. Pour this over the rhubarb with a sprinkling of cinnamon over the top to finish. Bake at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for 20 minutes.

Also nice cold the next day....

...if it lasts that long!

Apple Crumble

Or any other fruit you fancy. Makes as large a crumble as you want.

Ingredients:

The Crumble Topping -

100g ground almonds
50g rice flour
40 - 60g sugar (to taste)
50g slightly salted butter

The Filling -

cooking apples, peeled, skinned and sliced
2 tbsp sugar (or to taste)
pinch of ground cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves

Photo:
see page 120, bottom row

Preheat the oven to 160°C (325°F/GM3).

Layer the fruit into the bottom of an oven-proof dish and sprinkle with a couple of tablespoons of sugar, together with a pinch of ground cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves.

The Topping - blend the butter with 50g ground almonds and 50g rice flour. Pulse in the sugar. Remove the mixture from the blender into a bowl and add about another 50g ground almonds, rubbing it in with your fingers until it forms a nice crumb texture. If the crumbs are too sticky, add more ground almonds. If too dry, simply add more butter. Alternatively, place all the ground almonds, rice flour, sugar and butter in a bowl and rub into crumbs with your fingers – messy but it doesn't actually take that much longer, and removes the need for a blender.

Layer the crumble mix on top of the fruit and cook at 160°C (325°F/GM3) for about 45 minutes, until the topping is crunchy and golden brown.
Serve with ice cream, cream or custard.

Alternatives -

Apple and pear, apple and blackberry, apple and rhubarb, and just plain rhubarb.

Cheat tip -

If you haven't made quite enough topping to cover the fruit, just fill the gaps in with plain ground almonds...no-one will ever know!

Rice Puddings

Both of these are excellent comfort foods, and both so simple!

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

Classic Rice Pudding

85g pudding rice
568ml (1 pint) milk
30g caster sugar

Ground Rice Pudding

568ml (1 pint) milk
2 tbsp ground rice
1 tbsp sugar (or to taste)

Photo:

see page 120, top middle panel

Classic Rice Pudding

These quantities work for me, I find, but lots of recipes use less rice. Use whatever works for you. There are 3 ways you can make this. Pick whichever suits you!

1. Place the ingredients in a slow cooker (buttered, if you like) and cook for 2 - 3 hours on low.
2. Place the ingredients in a casserole dish (buttered, if you like) and bake in an oven at 160 - 180°C (325 - 350°F/GM3 - 4) for 1½ hours.
3. If you don't have hours to let it cook, you can make this on the hob. Put the rice & sugar in a pan and heat while adding milk slowly until absorbed (like a risotto), stirring it constantly. It's not quite as good but it is plenty quicker! Get the pan in soak as soon as you've served up.

For all the above, I recommend regular stirring to avoid milk skin (for this reason I don't add nutmeg until serving). Keep the milk bottle to hand - if the milk absorbs before the rice is cooked, just add more!

Ground Rice Pudding

Mix the rice and sugar into a little of the milk. Bring the rest of the milk nearly to the boil, then add to the rice/sugar mix. Return to the heat and stir until thickened to a consistency you like.

Vanilla Ice Cream

Makes just over one pint of ice cream.

Ingredients:

1 pint double cream
6 egg yolks
1 tsp vanilla essence
20ml honey
sugar, to taste

Blend all the ingredients up in a food processor and transfer to an ice cream maker. You can do the freezing with intermittent beating if you don't have an ice cream maker...

We like it made with honey; about 20ml of liquid honey for the flavour is nice. Add as much sugar as you need, to suit your taste.

Alternative -

Mango flavour:

Replace the sugar and honey with the flesh of one peeled, ripe mango – the mango gets placed in the food processor with the other ingredients, before going into the ice cream maker.

Photo:

see page 120, top right panel for ice cream served with chocolate brownie and fresh berries.



Key Lime Pie

Makes one 15cm (6 inch) diameter pie, or double the quantities for a 20cm (8 inch) pie.

dairy-free, vegan

Ingredients:

The Base -

75g unpitted dates
50g dessicated coconut
50g nuts – e.g. walnuts & mixed nuts
40g runny honey
½ tsp sea salt

The Filling - (all quantities to taste):

1.5 to 2 avocados, chopped
juice & rind of 1.5 limes
a huge squeeze of honey
kiwi fruit

The Base -

Pit the dates & blitz them for a few seconds in a food processor to break them up a bit. Add the coconut, nuts, salt & honey; blitz again until it starts to stick together. Pour into a lined cake tin or pie dish, squish down hard & freeze for 20 minutes or so.

The Filling -

Blend the avocados, lime juice and rind and honey until smooth. Test as you go along & adjust the quantities to taste. Pour this on top of the base & return the pie to the freezer.

Remove the pie from the freezer around 15 minutes before serving. Add slices of kiwi to the top directly before serving (not before freezing or you'll struggle to cut them!).

Photo:

see page 120, central panel

Lemon Cheesecake

Makes a 15cm (6 inch) diameter pie, or double the quantities for a 20cm (8 inch) pie.

Ingredients:

The Base -

75g unpitted dates
50g dessicated coconut
50g nuts
40g honey
½ tsp sea salt

The Topping -

250g tub of mascarpone
125g (or to taste) caster sugar
juice and rind of ½ lemon

Photo:

see page 126, bottom right panel

Make the cheesecake base as for the Key Lime Pie (see previous page).

Blend all of the topping ingredients and place them on top of the base.

Chill before serving.

This is really good: simple, fresh and rich - you won't need much, but may want to scoff lots!

Triple Layer Cheesecake

Makes a 20cm (8 inch) diameter cheesecake.

Ingredients:

The Base -

200g mixed chopped nuts (e.g. macadamias, almonds, walnuts)
50g butter
25g honey

The Middle -

handful of strawberries (or blueberries)
250g tub of mascarpone
250g crème fraîche
1 tsp vanilla essence
25g honey

The Top -

100g 70% cocoa chocolate
100ml double cream
25g butter
berries, to decorate (optional)

Photo:

see page 126, bottom left panel

The Base -

Place the nuts in a blender to chop them (if not already chopped). Melt the butter and mix this together with the nuts and the honey. Pack the mixture down well into the base of a round tin (preferably one with a removable rim). Allow the butter to solidify again.

The Middle layer -

Mix together the mascarpone and crème fraîche. Add the vanilla essence and honey. Layer some sliced strawberries (or blueberries) over the set nut-base, and then spread the mascarpone/crème fraîche over them.

The Top -

Melt the chocolate. Warm up the cream and then mix it in with the melted chocolate, and add the butter. Stir well until the mixture is even. Allow it to cool slightly, but while it is still liquid enough to be self-leveling, pour it on top of the cheesecake.

Place the cheesecake in the fridge and wait for the chocolate topping to set fully. Decorate the top with strawberries, blueberries or raspberries if you like. We sometimes coat them in chocolate too.

Quick Frozen Yoghurt

Serves as many as you like, depending on how much fruit and yoghurt you use!

Ingredients:

frozen fruit of your choice
natural yoghurt

orange juice, to taste
icing sugar, to taste

Blitz the frozen fruit in a blender.

Add the natural yoghurt - about the same amount of yoghurt as the fruit.

Add orange juice and icing sugar to taste.

Photo:

see page 126, top right panel

Crunchie and Banana Pudding

Serves...well it is up to you, but do you *really* want to share this?

Ingredients:

6 Crunchie Bars, broken into 2cm pieces

4 large bananas, sliced

850ml (1.5 pints) of double cream, whipped until nearly stiff

Prepare the ingredients.

Combine them all together and place into a large serving bowl.

Refridgerate for at least 1 hour, although this keep well in the fridge (and the middle of the Crunchie Bars go all gooey if you can leave them long enough).

Photo:

see page 126, top left and middle left panels



Chocolate & Nutmeg Egg Custards

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

1 level tbsp cocoa powder
1 tsp nutmeg, or to taste
284ml (½ pt) milk
142ml (¼ pt) cream
2 eggs
40g caster sugar

Pre-heat the oven to 190°C (375°F/GM5).

Mix the cocoa and nutmeg into a little of the milk.

Bring the rest of the milk to the boil, then pour into the cocoa mix.

Return to the saucepan and add cream: bring to the boil.

Beat the eggs & sugar.

Remove the milk from the heat & whisk it slowly into the egg mix.

Divide between 4 ramekins, cover each with foil & place in a baking tray with hot water in.

Bake for 35 - 40 minutes.

Allow to cool, then chill before serving.

Photo:

see page 126, central panel

Chocolate, Hazelnut & Biscuit Torte

Makes one shallow loaf-tin sized torte.

Ingredients:

The Biscuits -

75g ground almonds
25g each of potato and rice flour
½ tsp xanthan gum
pinch of salt
25g sugar
12g butter
½ tsp vanilla essence
1 egg

The Torte -

100ml milk
2 tbsp brandy
100g 70% cocoa chocolate
100g butter
1 tbsp (or to taste) honey
3 egg yolks
50ml double cream
100g chopped hazelnuts
1 tsp vanilla essence

Photo:

see page 126, middle right panel

First, make the biscuits -

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

Mix together the dry ingredients: the ground almonds, potato and rice flour, sugar, gum and salt.

Soften the butter and add it plus the egg into a well in the centre of the dry ingredients.

Mix it all together, adding the vanilla essence. It should come together as a nice, soft dough, and form one big ball in your bowl.

Using rice flour to dust your work surface and rolling pin, roll out a quarter of the dough at a time until it is approximately half a centimetre thick. Cut out circles with a pastry cutter, and place them on a greased and lined baking tray.

This makes about 22 - 24 biscuits for me, but it depends how thin you make them.

Bake them in the oven for about 15 minutes at 180°C (350°F/GM4) or until golden brown and hard. The aim is to make biscuits a bit like 'Rich Tea' ones. Remove them from the oven and allow them to cool.

To make the torte -

Measure out 150g of the biscuits (there will be a few left over, what a shame...). Break them into small pieces, mix together the milk and brandy, and pour this over the biscuit pieces. Mix well, and allow the biscuits to soak up as much liquid as they can – this can take about an hour for really nice soggy biscuits. Strain away the excess liquid.

Melt together the chocolate and butter. Allow to cool slightly, then stir in the egg yolks, mixing really well. Add in the vanilla essence, honey and then the cream – do this about a third at a time and mix well in between as you don't want the mixture to cool and set before you are ready. Add the soaked and drained biscuit pieces and the chopped hazelnuts and mix well.

Pour this mixture into a greased and lined loaf type tin (or whatever shape you want the pudding to be).

Place it in the fridge to set, preferably overnight.

Serve in slices.

Chapter 10 - Cakes and Biscuits



Chocolate Polenta Cake

****dairy-free, vegan****

Ingredients:

150g polenta
50g rice flour
250 - 300ml water
2 tbsp honey
1 tbsp sugar
2 tbsp cocoa powder
100g melted chocolate, for topping
ground cinnamon, raisins, cherries (to taste)
or: ground mixed spice and orange peel (to taste)

Photo:
see page 136, top left panel

Simmer all the ingredients in a saucepan until the water is absorbed and the mixture comes away easily from the side of the pan.

Add the ground cinnamon, raisins and cherries, or orange rind and mixed spice.

Pour into a greased and/or lined tin and leave to cool (in the fridge if necessary).

Top with melted chocolate.

This cake is quite soft, so added ingredients such as fruit are really good for texture and flavour!

Vegan Chocolate Buns

Adapted from a recipe by Dr. Eugenia Cheng, inspirational maths genius and baker.

Makes between 8 and 12 buns.

****dairy-free, vegan****

Ingredients:

110g rice flour
100g caster sugar
50ml olive oil
140ml water
20g cocoa powder
pinch of salt
1 tsp baking powder

Pre-heat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4). Place bun cases into a muffin tin (so they don't spread too wide).

Mix all the ingredients together and divide into the bun cases. Bake for about 15 minutes.

Preferably eat warm and crispy, straight from the oven....

Alternatives -

You can also make this into a **cake** by increasing the ingredients up to 1.5 times the size (i.e. 165g flour, etc). Bigger than that & it collapses very easily.

Choc-nut Terrine -

I made a cake (as above, but too big!) for a wedding reception & it collapsed around me but tasted fantastic, so I stirred in some warmed syrup & chopped nuts, squashed it into a loaf tin & wangled it in the fridge. I am now the proud creator of a delicious choc-nut terrine!

Surprise Buns -

Fill the bun cases only halfway and bake for 8 - 10 minutes until a little bit stiff. Then add a spoonful of chocolate spread and carefully cover with the rest of the mixture. Return to the oven to finish off. You can also do this with jam in the apricot buns recipe (see page 139).

Chocolate Brownies

Makes 9 - 16 squares.

Ingredients:

50g chocolate (70% cocoa)
50g Maya Gold chocolate (Green and Blacks)
100g butter
100g ground almonds
75 - 150g sugar
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp vanilla essence
2 eggs (large)
pinch of salt

chocolate chips for the top (optional)

walnut pieces (optional)

Photo:

see page 136, top middle panel

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

Melt the chocolates with the butter either in a glass bowl over a pan of simmering water, or in a microwave (medium setting, stir every minute, do not over heat). Then add the ground almonds, sugar, baking powder, vanilla, eggs, and salt. Mix well.

Pour the mixture into a greased and lined baking tin approximately 18cm square. Place in a preheated oven at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for 30 minutes. Remove from the tin whilst still hot and sprinkle with the chocolate chips. Allow to cool. Cut into squares, and eat!

Alternatives -

There is a huge range of sugar for this recipe. The sugar is responsible for the crisp top characteristic of brownies, so if you like sweet cakes and want the top to be brownie-like, you need to use a lot of sugar. However, we have found you can reduce the sugar to your taste and still have a delicious cake at the end so it's really up to you....

You can also add chopped walnut pieces.

Chocolate and Cointreau Cake

Makes 1 cake. How many it serves is up to you...

Ingredients:

The Cake -

50g Maya Gold chocolate (Green and Blacks)
50g chocolate (70 - 85% cocoa)
100g butter
3 eggs
2 tbsp Cointreau
100g ground almonds
75 - 100g sugar

The Topping -

50g Maya Gold chocolate (Green and Blacks)
50g chocolate (70 - 85% cocoa)
100g butter
2 tbsp Cointreau

Photo:

see page 136, top right panel

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

The Cake -

Melt the chocolates with the butter either in a glass bowl over a pan of simmering water, or in a microwave (medium setting, stir every minute, do not over heat). Then add the ground almonds, sugar, Cointreau and eggs. Mix together and divide into two round, approximately 18cm, greased and lined cake tins. Cook for 20 - 25 minutes at 180°C (350°F/GM4). Allow to cool thoroughly before icing and don't worry, they will be flat!

The Topping -

Melt the chocolates and the butter as before. Add in the 2 tbsp Cointreau and mix well. Allow to cool until it is the correct consistency for spreading – you can put it in the fridge (or even the freezer!) to speed up the process, but do give it a thorough mix every 5 - 10 minutes. Use approximately one third to sandwich the two cakes together, and use the remainder to coat the top, with a little round the sides too.

Alternatives -

You can use different liqueurs, for example rum or whiskey.

You can double the quantities for an extra large cake and it still works perfectly – but double the quantities for the topping too.

Tiffin-like Cake

So named because the first time Ken tasted it, he declared "its almost like Tiffin". The full proper name for this cake is really The Almost-Like-Tiffin Cake.

Ingredients:

The Base -

110g chocolate (70 - 90% cocoa)
100g chopped roasted hazelnuts
120g walnut pieces
75 - 100g sugar
1 tbsp honey
½ an orange-worth of finely chopped orange peel
30ml brandy
3 eggs
cinnamon, nutmeg and ground cloves, to taste
½ tsp each of vanilla essence & orange essence

The Topping –

100g chocolate (70% cocoa)
100g butter
double cream
mixed spice, to taste

Photo: see page 136, middle right panel

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

The Base -

Blitz the chocolate, hazelnuts and walnut pieces in a food processor until you have small pieces (not all crumbs). Then add the sugar, honey, orange peel, brandy, eggs, cinnamon, nutmeg, ground cloves, vanilla essence & orange essence (chopped cherries and dates if using, optional but nice). Mix well and pack down into a large (about 20cm) round, greased and lined tin, preferably one with a removable rim. Bake at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for around 40 minutes then allow to cool thoroughly.

The Topping -

Melt the butter and chocolate together. Add the double cream and mixed spice. Pour this over the base and leave to set in the fridge.

Alternatives -

Top the base with fresh raspberries & a pot of mascarpone (sweeten to taste with icing sugar, and 1 tsp vanilla essence) for a cheesecake alternative.



Oil Spice Cake

This is adapted from my mum's chocolate cake recipe. The oil & syrup keep it moist - don't be stingy with the syrup!

****can be made lactose-free****

Ingredients:

150g rice flour
2 tbsp ground mixed spice
(or your own spice mix to taste)
2 tsp baking powder
125g sugar
2 eggs
2 tbsp golden syrup
142ml ($\frac{1}{4}$ pint) vegetable oil
142ml ($\frac{1}{4}$ pt) milk
(lactose-free if required: works just as well)

Photo:

see page 136, middle left panel

Line a cake tin with greaseproof paper & pre-heat the oven to 160°C (325°F/GM3).

Mix the dry ingredients in a bowl. Whisk the wet ingredients thoroughly then add these to the bowl of dry ingredients. Whisk together really well & pour into the cake tin.

Bake for at least 45 minutes - check very carefully! Don't test it with a skewer as this will make it collapse if it isn't ready! Instead gently prod the top to see how it feels - if it goes 'wrong' you'll just have to make another one 'to practise'. Damn and blast.

This works nicely filled with apple & cinnamon jelly (see Christmas section, page 170) and/or plain glacé icing on top, perhaps with walnuts or chopped stem ginger. It's also delicious as is, of course!

Alternatives -

Swap the spice for 2 tbsp cocoa powder for a chocolate cake. I usually fill the chocolate version with half a jar of jam (raspberry, blackcurrant or bramble all work beautifully) and some chocolate hazelnut spread for extra indulgence (check it's gluten-free) & pour melted chocolate on the top.

Lemon Cake

Only for those who really like their lemons.

****dairy-free cake****

Ingredients:

The Cake -

3 lemons
3 large eggs
150 - 225g caster sugar
1 tsp baking powder
240g ground almonds

The Topping -

50g caster or icing sugar (or to taste)
225 - 250g mascarpone (1 pot)
grated rind and juice of 1 lime

Photo:

see page 136, central and bottom left panels

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

The Cake -

Scrub the lemons, place in a saucepan and cover with water. Leave to simmer for 1 hour, checking regularly. Add more water if it gets low.

Halve the lemons and remove the pips. Place the fruit in a food processor and blend to a pureé. Mix in the eggs, sugar, baking powder and almonds. Pour the mixture into a greased and lined cake tin (18cm) and bake at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for 1 hour. Allow to cool.

The Topping -

Mix all the ingredients together and stick it on the cake!

Alternatives -

Substitute 2 large oranges for the lemons, but make sure they are very tasty ones or you'll not get the right kick of flavour.

This cake recipe is ****dairy-free**** (i.e. no butter) so change the topping for one based on icing sugar mixed with lime juice and water, or even easier, just sprinkle some icing sugar on top for a dairy-free and gluten-free cake.

Aunty Karla's Apricot and Almond Cakes

If you omit the egg, this one is vegan as well as gluten-free and lactose-free...clever aunty Karla!
Makes 12 buns.

****lactose-free, vegan****

Ingredients:

110g rice flour
60g ground almonds
100ml olive oil
200ml water
pinch of salt
1 tsp baking powder
75g chopped dried apricots
1 tbsp almond essence
80 - 150g sugar (to taste)
1 egg (for the non-vegans)

Photo:
see page 142, bottom middle panel

Preheat the oven to 160°C (325°F/GM3).

Mix the oil and water. Add the dry ingredients, adjusting the sugar amount to taste.

Add the almond essence and mix well. Add the egg if no vegans around (!!).

Chop the apricots and mix them in too.

The mixture is quite sloppy but don't worry. If it seems too sloppy, you can always add more almonds.

Divide into 12 bun cases. Bake at 160°C (325°F/GM3) for about 20 minutes, until light golden brown.

Alternatives -

Christmas flavour buns - omit the apricots and add 75g raisins, 1 tbsp of brandy (optional) and 2 tsp of ground mixed spice.

Blueberry & Cinnamon - substitute 75g fresh blueberries for the apricots and add 1 tsp cinnamon.

Strawberries & Cream flavour - substitute 75g dried strawberries for the apricots and add 1 tsp vanilla essence. Top off with a mascarpone/vanilla essence/icing sugar mix.

Ginger and Banana Cake

This is delicious sliced and thickly buttered.

Ingredients:

3 medium or 2 large bananas
200g ground almonds
2 eggs
100g brown sugar
100g butter
4 tbsp black treacle
1 tbsp ground ginger
1 tbsp baking powder
2 tbsp yoghurt
150g rice flour

Photo:

see page 142, bottom left and right panels

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

Break up the bananas into big chunks and add these to the food processor. Blend well, until the fruit is a smooth paste.

Next, add the baking powder, ground ginger, ground almonds and eggs to the banana. Mix well.

Place the sugar, butter and treacle into a separate glass bowl and heat gently (hob or microwave) until the butter has melted and the treacle has softened. Mix well and then add this to the rest of the mixture.

Add the yoghurt and the rice flour. Give it all a final good mix and then turn it into a greased and lined loaf tin.

Bake for 1 hour at 180°C (350°F/GM4) until a skewer inserted comes away clean.

Cool thoroughly on a wire tray before slicing.

Walnut Cake

You can also add coffee essence to this for a traditional coffee and walnut cake.

Ingredients:

The Cake -

75g walnut pieces
150g ground almonds
3 eggs
100g melted butter
100g sugar
50ml water
(or 30ml water and 20ml walnut oil)
1 tsp baking powder

The Middle Icing -

100g butter
30g icing sugar
2 capfuls of Baileys

The Top Icing -

225- 250g mascarpone (1 tub)
15 - 30g icing sugar
1 tsp vanilla essence

Photo:

see page 142, central panel

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

The Cake -

Place the walnuts with the ground almonds in a food processor and blitz until the walnut pieces have turned to a similar consistency to the almonds – some small chunks is fine, and you will have some darker flecks from the walnut skins too (see photo on page 142, middle right panel). Place in a bowl and add the melted butter, sugar, baking powder and eggs. Mix well. Mix in the water and/or oil a bit at a time, until it is all added. Divide the mixture between two round, 18cm greased and lined baking tins and bake in a preheated oven at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for 25 minutes, until golden brown on top. Remove and allow to cool in the tins.

The Middle -

Mix the ingredients together. Place one cake on the plate it will be served on, and spread the Baileys butter icing on the top. Carefully place the second cake on top of the icing.

The Top -

Mix the ingredients together (add sugar to taste). Spread the icing all over the top of the cake and down the sides. Finish off with some whole walnuts to decorate the top.



Carrot Cake

For Zoë.

****can be dairy-free****

Ingredients:

The Cake -

175g carrot, finely grated
50g desiccated coconut
100g brown sugar
75g rice flour
25g ground almonds
50g raisins
90ml oil
2 eggs
1 tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp nutmeg
2 tsp baking powder
1 tsp vanilla essence
1 tsp orange essence

The Icing -

75g butter, softened
25g icing sugar (or to taste)
25g soft cream cheese
zest of ½ an orange
1 tsp orange essence

Photo:

see previous page, middle left panel

Preheat the oven to 190°C (375°F/GM5).

The Cake -

Mix together the grated carrot, coconut, sugar, rice flour, ground almonds and raisins in a large bowl. Then add the oil and the eggs, mixing well. Add the remaining ingredients: vanilla and orange essence, ground cinnamon, nutmeg and baking powder. Mix together really thoroughly, then place the mixture into a square, greased and lined tin. Bake for 25 minutes at 190°C (375°F/GM5). Remove from the tin and allow to cool.

The Icing -

Mix together the butter and cream cheese, then sift in the icing sugar and incorporate it into the butter cheese. How much you use is up to you and how sweet you like your icing, but beware – you can overdo it! Add the orange zest and essence, check the taste. Once your cake is thoroughly cooled, spread the icing all over the top.

Alternatives -

This cake can be made dairy-free if you change the icing for one based on water and icing sugar, rather than butter and cream cheese. Also this cake is nice and moist as it is, so it's rather good without any icing at all.

Peanut Butter and Chocolate Chip Cookies

Makes 16 cookies.

Ingredients:

50g butter
100g ground almonds
25g crunchy peanut butter
30 - 50g sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp baking powder
1 egg yolk
dark chocolate chips

Photo:

see page 142, top left panel

Preheat the oven to 160°C (325°F/GM3).

Melt the butter. Mix together with the ground almonds, melted butter, crunchy peanut butter, egg yolk, sugar and baking powder. The mixture should form a big ball. Add a handful of dark chocolate chips.

Roll into about 16 little balls, and place them onto a baking tray lined with grease proof paper. Flatten the balls very slightly with a fork. Doing this at right angles makes the nice criss-cross pattern on top.

Bake these at 160°C (325°F/GM3) for 20 minutes. They do expand a little in size when baked.

Allow to cool before lifting them from tray.

If they're too flat when they go in the oven, they just splurge outwards into thin, large and flat things! And then catch at the edges...

Chopped Hazelnut, Orange and Chocolate Biscuits

Makes 16 biscuits.

Ingredients:

70g butter, melted
35 - 50g sugar
100g ground almonds
15g chopped roasted hazelnuts
1 tsp orange essence
1 egg yolk (large)
½ tsp baking powder
25g dark chocolate chips

Photo:

see page 142, top middle panel (prebaked biscuits) and top right panel (baked biscuits)

Preheat the oven to 160°C (325°F/GM3).

Mix the melted butter with the ground almonds, sugar, baking powder and egg yolk. Mix well, until it starts to form a big ball.

Add the hazelnuts and orange essence and mix well again. Stir in the chocolate chips.

Divide the mixture into 16, roll into little balls and place on a greased, lined baking tray. Don't flatten.

Bake in a preheated oven at 160°C (325°F/GM3) for 20 minutes.

Allow to cool on the tray.

Stored in an airtight container these will stay nice and crispy (if they don't all get eaten first!).

Biscuits for Grown-ups

This recipe is a good basic one for biscuits, feel free to chop and change the flavours. Some examples of alternative flavours are given on the next page. Makes 16 biscuits.

Ingredients:

The Basic Biscuit Mix -

70g butter, melted
35g sugar
1 egg yolk
½ tsp baking powder
100g ground almonds

Grown-up Flavours -

1 tsp lime juice
zest of ½ lime, finely grated or chopped
½ tsp dried red chilli, very finely chopped
30g dark chocolate chips

Preheat the oven to 160°C (325°F/GM3).

Melt the butter, and then add the sugar, ground almonds, egg yolk and baking powder. Mix well until the dough forms a ball in your bowl. This is your basic starting point – now you can add whatever flavours you like!

For the '**grown-up biscuits**' add the lime zest, lime juice, chilli and dark chocolate chips (if your melted butter has warmed the dough up, beware adding the chips before it has cooled again, I've managed on several occasions to melt my choc chips. Still taste delicious, but not quite as pretty!).

Mix well, and then divide the mixture into 16 equal sized pieces (into four, and then each quarter into four again makes it nice and easy to judge). Roll each into a ball in your hands, then place them on a greased and lined baking tray. Do not squash the balls – they will flatten out slightly as they bake.

Bake in the oven at 160°C (325°F/GM3) for 20 minutes. Allow to cool on the tray before handling.



Cherry, Coconut and Almond Biscuits

Start with the basic biscuit recipe then add flaked almonds (toasted if desired) & chopped glace cherries to taste. Easy.

Photo: see page 136, bottom right panel

Chocolate & Ginger Biscuits

Follow the basic biscuit recipe except replace the sugar with brown sugar (35g), and add approximately 1 tsp ground ginger and some stem ginger cut into chunks (amount to taste) together with the chocolate chips. If you mix all the ingredients together in a pan on the hob, the chocolate will melt in, making the biscuit itself chocolaty: if you do it off the hob, stir in the chocolate last & the chips should retain their shape.

Honey, Almond and Ginger Biscuits

The only change to the basic biscuit recipe is to swap sugar for honey. Then add some lumps of stem ginger (to taste), some flaked almonds and 1 tsp almond essence.

Photo: see page 136, bottom middle panel

Chapter 11 - Christmas Food & Drink





Christmas Menus & Ideas

Just a few ideas for festive feasting...

For Christmas Day itself, we've decided not to provide recipes so much as a suggested menu and advice (having said that, read on for chestnut soup recipe & others). There are endless places that can help with the roast itself, and so many people have their own roast recipes that we couldn't face adding ourselves to the list. Pick whatever meat you want, but be sure to keep the juices, then thicken them with cornflour for your gravy. Add wine if you like (a dash of orange juice works well with duck, too), and cook it down to the consistency you want. Have whatever sides you fancy!

We've also decided not to provide a recipe for gluten-free Christmas pudding. For this, give yourself the preparation-time off and buy one: most supermarkets do perfectly satisfactory gluten-free puds now.

Boxing Day buffet - most of these can be prepared (or just bought) in advance, so you shouldn't feel too rushed on the day! We made the whole lot and quite frankly it was enough to see 8 of us through the whole day's eating.

Christmas Day Lunch

Starter:

Chestnut Soup (page 154)
or Smoked Salmon Tartlets (page 155)

Main:

Turkey (or other bird of choice: chicken, duck, goose)

Roast Potatoes & Parsnips

Carrots, Sprouts, Peas, (red) Cabbage, other veg of your choice

Pigs in Blankets (gluten-free sausages wrapped in bacon)

Sausagemeat Stuffing (page 159)

Homemade Gravy

Dessert:

Christmas pudding

with custard, cream, ice cream (page 119) or

brandy butter (page 163)

Cheese Board, with Cheese Biscuits (page 112, 113),

Grapes and Chutneys (pages 106 and 107)

Coffee and Mince Pies (page 162)



Boxing Day Buffet

Smoked Salmon Tartlets (page 155)

3 Colour Tartlets (page 76)

Sausagemeat Stuffing Balls (page 159)

Smoked Salmon Quiche (page 157)

Selection of Cold Meats and Salami

with Pickled Cabbage, Beetroot, Gherkins

Cheese Selection with Cheese Biscuits (112 and 113)

Chutneys (106 and 107)

Apple & Cinnamon Jelly (page 170)

Smoked Mackerel Pate (page 158)

**accompanied by Rice Crackers, Rice Cakes, Chopped Peppers,
Carrots and Cucumber**

Snowball Pudding (needs to be made over 2 days, page 160)

Mince Pies (page 162)

Seasonal Nibbles (see next page)

Zimtsterne (Cinnamon Stars - page 166)

Seasonal Nibbles

These are all great to keep for occasional (or not-so-occasional) nibbling, for when guests drop by, or for when you just feel you might need a little something to fill a hole...

Spiced Biscuits (page 167)

Vanilla Kipferl (page 164)

Salted Almonds (page 169)

Sweet & Spicy Nuts (page 169)

Seasonal Warming Drinks

Mulled Wine (page 172)

Eierpunsch (page 171)

Ginger Punch (chilled, alcohol-free, page 173)

Chestnut Soup

If you can find them, use pre-packaged chestnuts - they won't need any peeling with the seemingly inevitable finger-burning. If you can't find them (try the stuffing section of the supermarket), use slightly more fresh ones. Serves 6 - 8.

Ingredients:

370g pre-packaged chestnuts
1 medium onion, chopped
1 large carrot, chopped
1 litre vegetable stock
½ cooking apple, diced
cream & seasoning, to taste

Photo:
see page 156, top left panel

Fry the onions in oil or butter for a few minutes.

Add the stock, carrot & chestnuts, and simmer for 25 minutes.

Add the apple for a further 5 minutes or so.

Liquidize the whole lot, and then add cream and seasoning to taste.

Return to the heat, just to heat the cream through, and then serve.

Smoked Salmon Tartlets

A top tip for this is to buy the packs of smoked salmon trimmings: saves a whole load of ripping!
Makes 12 little tartlets.

Ingredients:

The Savoury pastry -

75g potato flour
75g rice flour
75g ground almonds
salt, to taste
1 tbsp xanthan gum
1 egg
50g butter
olive oil

The Filling -

100g smoked salmon
150g cream cheese
salt and pepper, to taste
chives, ripped, to taste
grated cheddar, to top

Photo:

see page 156, bottom middle and left panels

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

The Savoury pastry -

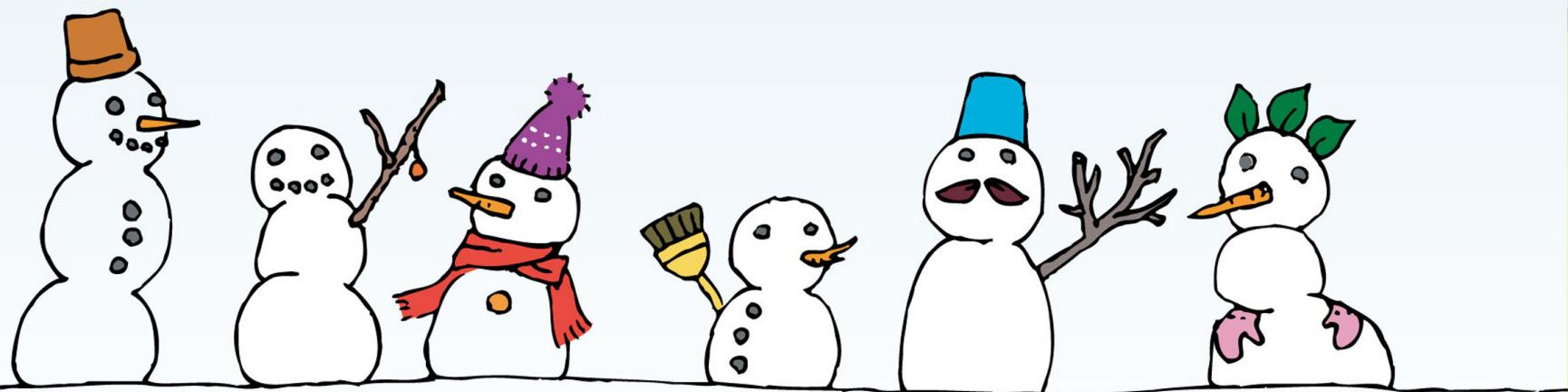
See 3 Colour Tartlets recipe, page 76.

Blind bake the pastry for 10 minutes at 180°C (350°F/GM4). Remove from oven, coat the pastry with egg wash and return to the oven for 2 minutes.

The Filling -

Mix the filling ingredients (except the grated cheddar) & fill the pastry cases. Bake for about 15 minutes, then top with the cheddar for a further 5 minutes or so, until the cheddar turns a bit crispy.

You can serve these warm or cold. Good for finger buffets.



Nutty-base Smoked Salmon Quiche

Buy smoked salmon trimmings for this if you want to save some chopping time!
Makes a 20cm (8 inch) diameter quiche.

Ingredients:

The Nutty-base -

50g chopped almonds
50g mixed chopped nuts
50g ground almonds
2 eggs
30g melted butter
pinch of salt
1 tbsp xanthan gum

The Topping -

150g smoked salmon
150g grated cheddar
350ml (12 fl oz) double cream
4 eggs
salt & pepper, to taste
chives, to taste
1 ball mozzarella, in 1cm cubes

Photo:

see page 156, bottom right panel

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

The Base -

Mix together the nuts with the melted butter, eggs, salt and xanthan gum. Use a tin approximately 20 cm (8 inches) in diameter (preferably with a removable base), grease the tin and line with grease-proof paper. Pack the nut mix firmly into the base and bake for 15 minutes at 180°C (350°F/GM4).

The Topping -

Place the salmon & mozzarella onto the precooked nut base. Sprinkle the grated cheddar over. Mix together the double cream, eggs, chives and seasoning to taste. Pour this mixture over the salmon and mozzarella. Bake at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for a further 50 - 60 minutes, until golden brown on top. Place a tray underneath to catch any drips!

You can serve this warm or cold and the firm base means it makes good finger food. It also keeps well.

Smoked Mackerel Pate

Serves many.

Ingredients:

equal weights of smoked mackerel fillet & cream cheese

seasoning & lemon juice, to taste

Flake the fish

Mix well with the cream cheese.

Add seasoning & lemon juice to taste.

That's it.

Lovely served as part of a buffet platter.

Nice with chopped salad vegetables such as carrot or peppers, or on rice cakes or gluten-free crackers.

Photo:

see page 156, top middle panel

Sausagemeat Stuffing

Very easy to make and works well either as a stuffing for turkey or rolled into little balls and baked in the oven.
Makes approximately 1kg.

Ingredients:

450g gluten-free sausagemeat
(or gluten-free pork sausages with the skins removed)

400g pork mince
1 red onion, finely diced
olive oil
4 cloves of garlic, crushed
salt and pepper, to taste
½ tsp ground nutmeg
2 sage leaves, very finely chopped
(or 1 - 2 tsp dried sage)
60g cranberries, dried, sweetened
50g ground almonds
2 eggs

Photo:

see page 156, top right panel for
Sausagemeat stuffing balls

Fry the red onion in the olive oil with the garlic until slightly brown. Leave to fully cool.

Place the sausagemeat in a large bowl and break it up into small chunks. Add the pork mince and mix well (by hand).

Then add the cranberries, red onion, sage, nutmeg and seasoning. Mix well.

Beat the eggs and then add them to the mixture with the ground almonds. Mix well. The mixture will start to come together into a large ball.

Either stuff this into the turkey immediately prior to roasting or use it to make individual stuffing balls. Take about a dessert spoon of stuffing, roll into a ball and place on a greased and lined baking tray. Bake in the oven at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for about 20 minutes.

Snowball Pudding

This is adapted from a recipe my mother makes every year. If you have company visiting, I recommend making double the quantities (see photo) for a three-layer, enormous pudding to impress everyone! This smaller version serves 4 well.

Ingredients:

For the sponge -

70g butter
85g sugar
1 egg & 1 yolk
55g rice flour
25g ground almonds
1 tsp baking powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp xanthan gum
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp milk
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp vanilla essence

For the pudding -

100g cream cheese
2 tsp caster sugar (optional)
40g melted butter
25g chopped hazelnuts
approx 2 tsp mixed peel
25g chopped glace cherries (plus extra to decorate)
25g chopped stem ginger
rind and juice of 1 orange & $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon
1 packet gelatine
150ml whipping cream

Pre-heat the oven to 180°C (130°F/GM4).

Mix all the sponge ingredients & bake in a lined 18cm sandwich tin. Allow to cool, then slice the cake in half (to make 2 very thin sponges).

Mix the cream cheese, sugar and butter in a large mixing bowl. Stir in the nuts, cherries, ginger & rind of the orange & lemon. Grease the inside of a pudding bowl. Line the bowl with the sponge cake (as if you were making an apple Charlotte: see photos next page). Now fill the bowl, alternating the cream cheese mix & sponge cake. Finish with sponge cake. Expect to get two layers of each, or three if you make double. With a skewer, prick lots of holes all the way through the pudding.

Mix the gelatine according to the instructions. Add to the citrus juice, then pour the whole lot carefully over the pudding until it all sinks in through the skewer holes. Place in the fridge overnight (it will keep fine for an extra day if you want to make it on Christmas Eve for serving on Boxing Day).

The next day, carefully turn the pudding out of the bowl. Cover liberally with whipped cream, sweetened if you really fancy it-but believe me, there's plenty going on in the rest of the pud. If you like, decorate with halved glace cherries.

This is quite a rich pudding and not to everyone's tastes, but it is worth the faff involved in making it!



Mince Pies

Makes 12 deep-fill type pies or 20 shallow-fill ones.

Ingredients:

The Sweet Pastry -

150g rice flour
150g ground almonds
2 tsp xanthan gum
pinch of salt
50g sugar
150g butter, cubed
1 egg

1 jar gluten-free mince meat

rice flour for dusting
egg, to brush
icing sugar to dust (optional)

Photo:

see page 168, central panel
see page 151, right panel

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

Combine the rice flour, ground almonds, xanthan gum, salt and sugar and mix well. Then add the egg and butter. If the pastry seems too dry, add a small amount of water at a time and keep mixing it well until it forms a nice, solid ball. If it seems too wet, add more flour. In my hands gluten-free pastry always seems quite moist compared to the gluten-full variety. Leave it to rest for 30 - 60 minutes in the fridge.

Roll out the pastry - leave it fairly thick when rolling it out, as gluten-free pastry will never be as elastic as pastry with gluten in. Flour your work surface well with rice flour (or roll out your pastry between two sheets of grease-proof paper). Be patient – you can always make the ball again and re-roll if you get holes...

Cut circles of pastry with a cutter (or anything round that's the right size!). Handle the pastry circles carefully, ease them into place in a 12-hole deep fill tin (one for muffins is ideal), gently push them into the holes and mould them into place. Fill each one with ample mince meat.

Use any remaining pastry to make little lids or cut out shapes to decorate the top of the pies (optional). Brush the pastry with a little beaten egg and cook in the oven at 180°C (350°F/GM4) for 25 – 30 minutes. Decorate with a little icing sugar once they are cooled (optional).

Brandy Butter

Perfect with mince pies or Christmas pudding - in fact, in a fit of desperation my sister once removed the icing from a piece of Christmas cake & microwaved it, just as an excuse to have some brandy butter!

Ingredients:

(all quantities to taste)

roughly equal quantities of butter &
icing sugar
brandy

Whisk the butter & icing sugar together well, as if making butter icing.

Add brandy to taste (don't let it get too wet - if it does, add more icing sugar).

Chill before serving.

Vanilla Kipferl

These are adapted from a traditional German recipe. They're good cold but particularly fine just out of the oven, warm and crispy.
Makes approximately 14 crescents.

Ingredients:

100g ground almonds
140g rice flour
vanilla essence
60g sugar
120g butter
icing sugar/ground cinnamon to dust
(optional)

Pre-heat the oven to 180°C (350°F/GM4).

Mix all the ingredients together to make a dough. If it falls apart too easily, add some olive oil.

Divide into 14 or 15, and carefully shape into crescents.

Place on a greased baking tray and bake for about 15 minutes.

Allow to cool slightly before moving onto a plate, then dust slightly with icing sugar and/or cinnamon, if desired.

Photo:

see page 168, middle left panel

Chocolate-coated Marzipan

A very simple recipe which uses about a quarter the normal amount of sugar – feel free to increase if you have an especially sweet tooth. Coat with flavoured chocolate for extra special marzipan.

Ingredients:

150g ground almonds
25g caster sugar
50g icing sugar
1 egg
1 – 2 tbsp almond essence
2 tsp vanilla essence
icing sugar, for rolling out
chocolate to coat

Photo:

see page 151, right panel

Sift the icing and caster sugar into a bowl. Add the ground almonds and mix.

Add the egg and the almond and vanilla essences. Mix well; the marzipan should come into a ball. If it is too wet, add a little more icing sugar (or ground almonds if you don't want to increase the sweetness). Adding more vanilla essence or perhaps a little honey will increase the flavour without the need for more sugar.

Cut a piece of grease-proof paper out and fold it in half. Unfold it again, and dust the inner surface with a little icing sugar. Place a small ball of marzipan on the paper and fold it so the marzipan is in the middle. Press down with your hands to flatten the ball, until it is 1 - 2cm thick. Unfold the paper, and use pastry cutters to cut out shapes from the marzipan. Place these on a grease-proof paper lined plate. Repeat this until all the marzipan has been cut into shapes. Dust the paper with icing sugar each time a new ball is flattened out. Place the shapes in the fridge for about an hour.

Melt the chocolate either in the microwave or using a bain-marie. Allow to cool a little, before placing each marzipan into the chocolate and turning it until well coated (I find forks the most useful for this). Place the coated shapes on a fresh piece of grease-proof paper, on another plate. Once they are all coated, allow the chocolate to set by leaving them in a cool place.

Using flavoured chocolates works well for this – my favourite is Green and Blacks ginger flavour chocolate...

Zimtsterne - Cinnamon Stars

Makes approximately 25-30 biscuits.

Ingredients:

2 egg whites
150g icing sugar
200g ground almonds
2 tsp ground cinnamon
zest of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon
1 tsp rum

Photo:
see page 151, bottom left panel

Whisk the egg whites till they're really stiff, then add the sugar a spoon at a time. Put aside about 2 tablespoons of the resultant mix into a separate bowl for later.

Stir in the almonds, cinnamon & lemon zest to make a dough. Roll out the dough to anything up to 5mm thick & cut out as many star shapes as you can. The dough is quite sticky, so it's important that when you roll it out you do so between 2 sheets of greaseproof paper. Place the stars onto baking trays lined with greaseproof paper.

Now, pre-heat the oven to 160°C (325°F/GM3).

Stir the rum into the egg and sugar mix you set aside, then paint it onto each star. Bake for about 15 - 20 minutes & leave to cool before removing from the baking trays.

Alternatives -

You could use these little biscuits (if fairly thin) as tops for mince pies - they'll look pretty, but there won't be that 'too much pastry' thing you often get with mince pies.

The first time I made this I had no cinnamon so used mixed spice: it works pretty well so feel free to experiment with flavours.

Spiced Biscuits

Makes approximately 15 biscuits.

Ingredients:

70g melted butter
35g sugar
1 egg yolk
½ tsp baking powder
100g ground almonds
1 tsp mixed spice
½ tsp ground cloves

Pre-heat oven to 160°C (325°F/GM3).

Mix all the ingredients together and form into approximately 15 balls.

Place on a lined baking tray & bake for 20 minutes.

Allow to cool before transferring to a plate.

Photo:

see page 168, top middle panel



Nuts for Nibbling

No quantities for these recipes as it really is a case of whatever suits your taste.

Sweet & Spicy Cashews see previous page, bottom middle panel

plain cashew nuts
butter
cinnamon
paprika
brown sugar

Heat up the butter in a flat-bottomed pan. Throw in all other ingredients & toss the nuts until well-coated and slightly caramelised. Allow to cool before serving.

Salted Almonds

see previous page, top right panel

whole almonds
butter
salt

As above but with salt. Alternatively, bake at 160°C (325°F/GM3) for 10 minutes, then coat with olive oil & add salt, then cook for another 5 minutes or so. Pat off the oil & allow to cool a little.

Salt & Pepper Cashews

see previous page, top left panel

cashews
olive oil
salt
pepper

As above (either hob or oven), but grind salt & pepper on.

Apple & Cinnamon Jelly

This is my Christmas jam - it makes a great homemade present. The recipe works equally well for jellies made with apples alone, and also with blackberries, raspberries etc. Makes approximately 5 x 1lb jars.

Ingredients:

4lb apples

3 pints of water

ground cinnamon to taste
(I use about one sixth of a jar)

jam sugar: 1 lb to 1 pint syrup
(see recipe)

Photo:

see page 168, middle right panel

Roughly chop the apples. Simmer to a mush in a saucepan. Strain the fruit overnight using a jelly bag.

The next day, discard the fruit pulp. Measure the resultant syrup & measure out the jam sugar accordingly (1lb jam sugar to 1pt syrup). Pour the sugar into a large, flat-bottomed pan and add the cinnamon. Stir the cinnamon in thoroughly at this stage then add the syrup (if you add the cinnamon after the syrup you will have lumps of cinnamon).

Boil the sugar & syrup - obviously, be very careful & don't let children in the kitchen in this stage! After a few minutes on a rolling boil, put a small spoonful of the jelly onto a saucer and push it with a fingernail: when the jelly crinkles when pushed, it will set & is ready to be put into jars.

Hints -

Don't waste time peeling the apples - they're going through a jelly bag later, which will catch the peel.

For these quantities, use two large saucepans with 2lb fruit & 1.5 pints water in each for the first stage.

If you don't have a jelly bag stand, then use an upturned stool or chair & pin the jelly bag to the feet.

When pouring, if you have a heatproof pouring jug, pour the jelly into this then into the jars. If not, use a ladle and wear rubber gloves.

Eierpunsch

This is like drinking boozy custard. It's the first drink I go for at a German Christmas market, & an essential of my Christmas! One mug goes far enough, though-beware overindulgence! Makes 1 litre.

Ingredients:

4 eggs
110g sugar
1 tsp vanilla essence
4 cloves
pinch cinnamon
250ml strong black tea, left to cool
juice of 1 lemon
1 bottle white wine (doesn't need to be particularly good wine)
whipping cream to serve

Whisk the eggs & sugar with a little of the wine. Add the rest of the ingredients (except the cream) and heat GENTLY on the stove, stirring constantly (we don't want the eggs to scramble), and without allowing it to boil.

Whip the cream until stiff enough to sit on the top of a mug full of liquid. (Do this before the above instructions if you're on your own - if not, get someone else to do it while you heat the drink.)

Remove the drink from the heat & remove the cloves. Pour into mugs & top with the cream. Provide a spoon (or a straw, if you have no shame...like me).

Photo:

see page 168, bottom left panel

Mulled Wine

Do you have some cheap red wine that needs help to be made palatable? You can make your own mulled wine. If you're particularly childish (and amused by bad hairstyles), you can learn the following joke: 'What do we do with cheap red wine?' 'Mullet!!' Hoho, etc.

Ingredients:

1 bottle red wine
1 orange, into which stick a handful of cloves
1 piece cinnamon stick
a splash of orange juice (optional)
sugar, to serve

Gently heat the ingredients together in a pan until warm and fragrant.

Serve with sugar to taste.

If serving in glasses, insert a teaspoon before serving to avoid the glass cracking.

Alternatives -

Add a dash of brandy or fruit liqueur to punch it up a bit.

Ginger Punch

Ginger wine is fairly readily available these days, both alcoholic & alcohol-free. Adjust the quantities according to taste and the potency of the wine! Serves 6 - 8.

****can be alcohol-free****

Ingredients:

75ml runny honey
juice of 2 lemons
150ml orange juice
70ml ginger wine
1l bottle ginger ale
300ml sparkling water

Photo:

see page 168, bottom right panel

Mix together the honey, juices & ginger wine.

Leave in the fridge for at least 2 hours.

Before serving, dilute with the ginger ale & sparkling water to taste.

Chapter 12 - Useful Information





The Gluten-free Day

Sometimes it's not recipes you want, but ideas! Some meals are trickier than others, and sometimes you just need a prod in the right direction. So here are some suggestions for times other than when you're cooking a main course.

BREAKFAST IDEAS

1. Bacon & Eggs

Eggs are so wonderfully versatile, quick to prepare and very good for you. Try them fried, poached, boiled, scrambled...for a full English breakfast, just add fried mushrooms, grilled tomatoes and gluten-free sausages.

2. Omelette or Scrambled Eggs

Try filling the omelette with grated cheese, goat's cheese, diced ham or even mushrooms in a soft cheese sauce.

3. Farmer's Breakfast

Fry some onion, bacon bits, leftover potatoes, then add an egg & scramble.

4. Poached Smoked Haddock

5. Quinoa Porridge

Boil the quinoa for 7-8 minutes, then stir in cream or milk, then add honey, raisins, pumpkin seeds to taste.

6. Yoghurts

Serve over berries, nuts, seeds to taste. Easy to make your own yoghurt at home too!

7. Fruit

LUNCH IDEAS

1. Soup in a Thermos

Try out these recipes – sweet potato and coconut soup (page 90), butternut squash and chilli soup (page 91), tomato soup with a kick (page 92), blue cheese and mushroom soup (page 94) and Greek vegetable soup (page 95). Don't forget your spoon!

2. Salads

Some simple suggestions... onto a base of mixed green leaves of your choice try adding:

'Greek' salad – cubes of feta, diced red pepper, cucumber, green olives, fresh thyme, black pepper and drizzles of balsamic vinegar and olive oil.

Chicken and Bacon – fry some streaky bacon until nice and crisp. Chop it up and mix with left over chicken meat and a generous dollop of mayonnaise.

Egg, Cheese and Bacon – fry some streaky bacon until nice and crisp, then chop it up. Hard boil some eggs (8 minutes), then cool, peel and slice. Cut some cheddar into cubes. Mix all these together with a generous dollop of mayonnaise.

Tuna Mayo – drain the tuna, mix with a generous dollop of mayonnaise and season well with black pepper. Add some tinned sweet corn, diced green pepper and/or some celery for a change.

3. Rice crackers or rice cakes

Have them with a thick layer of butter with cheese and chutney (pages 106 & 107), or ham or salami. Spread them with the butter and then wrap them up well in cling-film and/or an airtight box to keep them nice and crisp till lunchtime (otherwise they very easily go soggy). Keep the cheese and meat separate from the rice cakes till it's time to eat them.

4. Cheese biscuits (pages 112 & 113)

5. Spanish Tortilla (page 104)

6. Quiches (pages 41, 79, 157)

7. Cheesy Polenta Bread (page 105)

8. Onigiri

Sushi rice balls. Cook the rice, add a dash of sushi vinegar, then form them into balls. Flavour suggestions: fill with tuna or fish flakes; wrap in seaweed sheets; brush a little miso paste or soy onto the outside & lightly fry or grill before chilling.

9. Leftovers!

If you've made too much of something the night before, pop it into a box or tub & take it to work - this is especially useful if you have access to a microwave, of course.

10. Yoghurts e.g. Greek yoghurt, with fresh berries such as strawberries, blueberries, raspberries.

11. Simple selection of cheeses, cooked meats, salami and boiled eggs, dried fruits and nuts.



Hidden Gluten

We've all been caught out from time to time: this is a list of foods you might not expect to contain gluten, but beware! Most of these were discovered the hard way....make sure you keep checking the labels, as I'm still finding hidden gluten in unexpected places!

Baking powder: gluten-free is available

Frozen oven chips: coated with flour, watch out in pubs and other places serving chips

Deep fried chips: if cooked in the same oil as battered foods, they will be cross-contaminated

Stock cubes: gluten-free cubes are available

Vegetable soup: often thickened with flour or pearl barley, instant (packet) soup

Cheap, bulk spices and spice mixes: often bulked with flour/breadcrumbs rather than spices

Seasoning mixes: try out the Discovery Range, they label their gluten-free ones

Mustard powder: there are several brands of gluten-free mustard, shop around!

Packet suet

Cheese spreads

Salad dressing and some mayonnaise

Soy sauce: gluten-free is available, watch out in Chinese restaurants

Cooking sauces: gluten-free versions are available

Dry roasted nuts, pork scratchings, Bombay mix

Some processed meats e.g. ham

Some flavoured crisps: some brands label which flavours are suitable for coeliacs but it's not always the flavours you would expect...

Sachets of flavoured coffees, cocoa and instant hot chocolate drinks

Hot drinks from vending machines: been seriously caught out this way!

Cloudy drinks e.g. barley water type drinks

Malted milk/hot drinks

Beer, lager, stout, ale: gluten-free beers are available in most supermarkets now

Some medication tablets: check with the pharmacist

Pick and mix sweets: coated with flour to prevent sticking

Play Doh: easy enough to make your own at home (see page 111)

Some tea bags e.g. Yogi tea: some contain barley malt extract

Ready grated cheese: coated with flour to prevent sticking

Candied peel and glace cherries: gluten-free are available

Pickled Onions - avoid those containing barley malt extract



Other Names For Gluten

Reading ingredients lists on any processed foods should become routine to you if you follow a gluten-free diet, but manufacturers can call gluten by many other names.

And if the product in question has an ingredients list you need a chemistry PhD to understand, then beware!! Do you really want to eat this?

Barley starch
Barley malt extract
Binder
Bran
Bulgur, cracked wheat
Cereal
Cereal protein
Couscous
Durum wheat
Fillers
Flour
Kamut
Malt
Malted barley
Oat bran
Oat germ
Oatmeal
Pearl barley
Porridge oats
Rolled oats
Rusk
Rye starch
Semolina
Thickener
Triticale
Vegetable gum
Vegetable starch
Wheat bran
Wheat germ
Wheat meal
Wheat rusk
Wheat starch

Amazing!



The Technical Bit: Why is Gluten So Bad For So Many of Us?

We thought we'd ask Peter to add a little explanation of the technical side of things here. Please don't feel you have to read this bit - it's simply here for your information if you want it.

If you would like even more, including detailed discussions and debates covering various aspects of alternative nutrition, you can find Peter's blog at:

<http://high-fat-nutrition.blogspot.com/>

1. GLUTEN AND THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

a) Leaky Gut

Our gut is lined by a layer of cells with two roles: to aid the absorption of our food and to keep our semi-digested gut contents separate from the rest of our body and our immune system. Gluten, and in particular wheat germ agglutinin, opens up the normally minuscule and tightly regulated gaps between these cells. This opening of gaps allows substances never normally "seen" by our immune system (known as "foreign") to pass into the rest of our body, including food particles and normal gut bacteria.

When this happens, the immune system can now "see" these foreign substances from within the gut contents and will respond to them with an inflammatory response. Resulting symptoms can be localised to the gut itself, giving a mixture of diarrhoea, constipation and cramping, or predispose to distant injury as in the autoimmune diseases.

b) Autoimmune Diseases

As discussed previously, gluten can result in a marked inflammatory response within the gut. In the immunological war-zone which the gut lining subsequently becomes, it is even possible for your own body tissues to become targeted by the immune response. If an antibody produced against a foreign target accidentally locks on to normal tissues, the normal tissue will then be labelled as foreign and will also be targeted by the immune response. A process of self-attack can then start and an "auto-immune" disease is established (one where the immune system attacks your own normal body tissues).

An example of this is a molecule called tissue transglutaminase (tTg) which is part of the normal repair system within your body; under the conditions described above, the immune system can start to "see" tTg as a foreign molecule and produce antibodies directed against it (these antibodies are also one of the current hallmarks of coeliac disease). The consequences of this can be seen in other locations in addition to the gut. For example, if the immune system targets cardiac tTg (located in the heart rather than in the gut) this can result in a certain type of heart failure, due to the immune system attacking cardiac muscle. Most patients with this condition may well also have undiagnosed coeliac disease.

The list of auto-immune diseases associated with coeliac disease is very long. There are reputed to be 22 types of arthritis alone, together with thyroid damage, clotting cell (platelets) damage, nerve damage and vitiligo (a skin condition).

c) "Stress" Response in the Gut

Gluten fragments have an additional ability to trigger an immunological "stress" response. As part of a normal immunological pathway, cells under certain types of stress display a molecular marker known as **MIC** on their surface. The MIC is directly detected by immune cells and the stressed cell is subsequently destroyed, without the need for antibodies. For example, a virus-infected cell will produce MIC to signal its infection to the immune system, ensuring it and the virus it contains are promptly removed from the body.

It is well recognised that the gut-lining cells of untreated coeliac patients display MIC on their surface, which disappears with gluten elimination and returns on gluten challenge. This will result in these cells being targeted and destroyed by the person's own immune system without any need for antibody production. Furthermore, the gluten fragments responsible for this induction of MIC can cross the gut barrier and be detected in many other parts of the body. There is currently no evidence they induce MIC expression here, although it is an interesting idea and a hypothetical cause for idiopathic (unknown cause) immune-related diseases elsewhere in the body.

2. GLUTEN AND GUT CELLS

A second set of problems are due to the growth-promoting effects of wheat germ agglutinin. The gut surface is not flat in a healthy person. There are billions of microscopic finger-like projections called "villi" which are used to increase the surface area available for food absorption. In a normal, healthy person, the cells lining these villi are being replaced continuously by the cells at the base of the villi dividing, and the resultant immature cells gradually moving along to the tips of the villi, in a fashion similar to an escalator. This process is carefully controlled so that the immature cells produced down at the base of the villi will develop and mature as they move up toward the tips (the main digestion site). When they get to the tips they are in perfect working order and sport an array of food-processing systems, for example, enzymes including sucrase to breakdown table sugar, and isomaltase to complete the starch breakdown into glucose, as well as the main fructose uptake system.

Wheat germ agglutinin acts on the cells at the base of the villi and tells them to divide unnecessarily quickly. This results in the more rapid transition of cells up to the tips of the villi before they have had sufficient time to mature and to set in place their appropriate digestive surface components. For example, immature cells at the villi tips may have insufficient functional lactase, the enzyme responsible for breaking down lactose (the sugar found in milk). This would result in an apparent inability to digest lactose properly (i.e. lactose intolerance), which can often be seen secondary to gluten-related damage to the gut. Removal of gluten from the diet may in time mean a person can again tolerate lactose, as the process reverses.

3. GLUTEN AND THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

Within both our brain and our gut there are small signalling molecules known as endorphins, which are naturally occurring opiates. Unfortunately, there are certain parts of gluten fragments which resemble these endorphins. Furthermore, these gluten fragments can leave the gut and reach parts of the body where they should not be present and thus they can interfere with normal signalling processes.

The peptides from gluten are termed exorphins and they can interact with the brain by mimicking the normal nerve transmitters. There is an association between gluten intolerance and a wide assortment of emotional disorders, conceivably due to this process. There is evidence that there may be an association between gluten and depression or bipolar disorder and early epidemiology suggests a possible link with schizophrenia. These conditions are far more difficult to link to gluten.

In summary there are many conditions potentially related to gluten consumption and a trial period of gluten elimination is not going to damage anyone.



Stock Cupboard Essentials

This section contains various lists of things we think it's useful to have to hand on a day-to-day basis, especially items for gluten-free baking and specialist gluten-free alternatives (not too many of those, this is the incidentally gluten-free cookbook after all...).

Spices and Herbs:

We generally have all else besides this in the herb rack or growing on the windowsill, but these are the ones we come back to constantly:

Basil, fresh leaves

Bay leaves

Black pepper, ground and whole peppercorns

Bouquet garni

Cayenne pepper

Cardamom, ground and pods

Chilli powder

Chives, fresh

Cinnamon, ground and sticks

Cloves, whole and ground

Coriander, fresh leaves and ground seeds

Cumin, seeds and ground

Curry powder

Fennel seeds

Garam masala

Garlic, fresh and granules

Ginger, ground and fresh

Mint, fresh leaves

Mixed spice

Mustard seeds

Nutmeg, ground

Onion granules

Oregano, dried

Paprika (including smoked)

Sesame seeds

Thyme, dried

Turmeric

Essentials for gluten-free baking:

Rice flour
Ground almonds
Potato flour
Baking powder (gluten-free)
Butter
Eggs
Sugar
Vanilla essence
Almond essence
Orange essence
Chocolate
Chocolate chips (various)
Honey
Dried apricots, raisins
Xanthan gum
Peanut butter

Special **Gluten-free Items**

Although most of the recipes in this book are incidentally gluten-free, there are a few items where some care is needed - many supermarkets now have a special section for people with 'dietary needs' where you can find a variety of useful ingredients for the stock-cupboard. If buying these from elsewhere in the supermarket, be sure you check the packet and ingredients very carefully – the label should state gluten-free or suitable for coeliacs.

Mustards

Soy sauce

Baking powder

Stock cubes

Worcester sauce

Green pesto

Rice flour, potato flour

Xanthan gum

Also good to have:

Flaked almonds, chopped almonds or nuts

Mixture of nuts e.g. walnuts, whole almonds, macadamias, cashews

Tinned tomatoes, tomato purée, passata

Coconut milk, desiccated coconut

Tinned chickpeas, corned beef, tuna

Sesame oil, olive oils (including garlic-flavoured)

White dry sherry, cooking wine (red), Sake

White wine vinegar (red wine vinegar), balsamic vinegar

Mirin

Miso paste

Ready-chopped chillies

Our Other Favourite Cookbooks & How To Contact Us....

Favourite cookbooks:

Not necessary specialist gluten-free, just some of our favourite books you might also enjoy using...

Healthy Gluten Free Eating by Darina Allen and Rosemary Kearney

Seriously Good Gluten Free Cooking by Phil Vickery

Essential Madhur Jaffrey, Madhur Jaffrey's Indian cookery, Madhur Jaffrey's Curry Easy (anything Indian basically)

Red Velvet Chocolate Heartache by Harry Eastwood (cakes)

To contact us:

For further information, general support and the all important new recipes you can...

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