
Spices of Life

and herbs, too!

Recipes with locked-in tastes



Luísa Fortunato

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An e-cookbook

Hello, hello! I'm Luísa Fortunato



I am not a professional chef de cuisine. In fact, by trade, I am an interior designer.

But cooking, for me, is more than just a hobby. It is my oxygen.

Hence this e-cookbook, Spices of Life: 87 recipes with locked-in tastes.

Spices and herbs, what's the difference?

Spices and herbs are often lumped together, almost in a single word, “herbsandspices”. But what's the difference?

Spices are hot and spicy, and herbs are, well, herby, right?

Not exactly. Strictly speaking, a spice comes from the seeds of a plant, whereas herbs come from the leaves, or occasionally the root.

So juniper, vanilla, coffee and chocolate, on this definition, are spices, but not spicy; whereas curry leaves and ginger, though quite spicy, are herbs.

All this is a good reason for abandoning the distinction. What we need is a single word for the category. In fact, when I was young, my Italian parents in America used the word “spice” to cover the lot. That's why this book is called “The Spices of Life”, with the sub-line “and herbs, too!”, for the benefit of any pedantic readers.

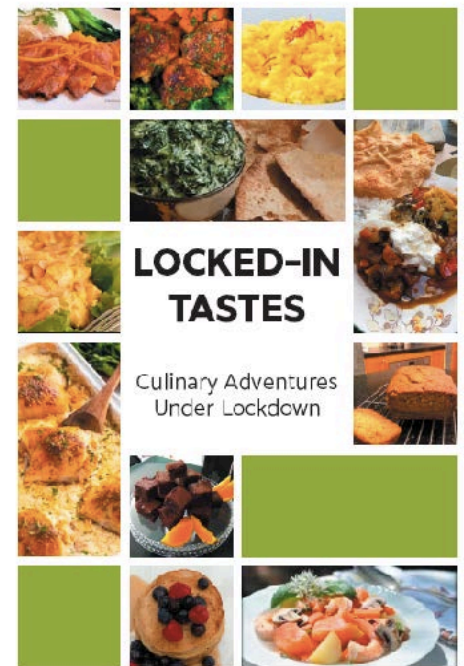


Locked-in tastes

My first venture into publishing was **Locked-in Tastes – Culinary Adventures under Lockdown**, an e-book which raised 120% of its target in donations for charity.

At the time of writing it, over three billion people were in lockdown: more than a third of the world's population.

But only some of the recipes in Locked-in-Tastes were mine. Most of the 60 recipes were contributed by ordinary people from over a dozen countries around the world under lockdown, in the hope that their recipes might help others in lockdown. Locked-in Tastes is still available and can be downloaded, free, from our website: www.lockedintastes.com.



This new e-book, **Spices of Life**, comprises 87 of my own favourite recipes, all involving a spice or a herb (or many). It's the book I've always wanted to write.

About Luísa Fortunato

Where does my passion for cooking and teaching cookery come from?

I grew up in a 100% Italian family on the east coast of the USA. Cooking was integral to our lives and it is no co-incidence that many of my favourite recipes in Spices of Life are Italian, several learnt from my mother or from one of my many aunts.



My career as an interior designer took me, in my 20s, to Thailand, where I was the only European working in one of South-East Asia's top architectural and design firms. I lived with a Thai family, learnt the language, and was rapidly shopping at the local market and being taught how to cook dozens of different dishes by incredibly helpful Thai friends and stall-keepers. So, again, it's no surprise that many of the recipes in Spices of Life have a South-East Asian touch, or in some cases are 100% traditional Thai recipes.

My life and career then took me to Switzerland, where the cuisine is kind-of high-quality fusion-European, but also where I discovered how to cook the perfect rösti. And it was in Switzerland where I met my British Yorkshire-pudding-loving husband. So a few recipes for roasts have crept into Spices of Life, too.

My husband and I divide our time between Switzerland and London, which is where I have come to share his tastes for Indian cuisine.

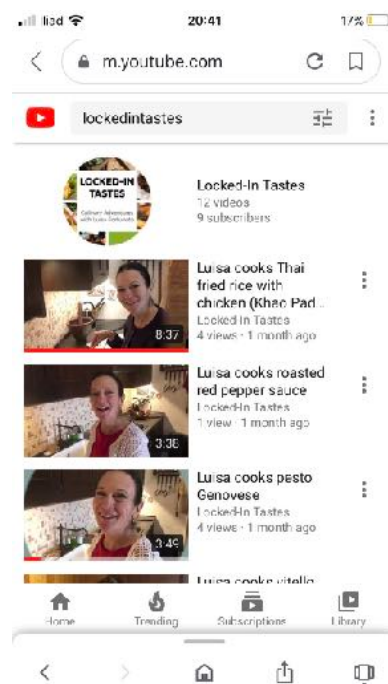
Never having visited India myself, I have nevertheless become fascinated by the London Indian restaurant culture, especially the “From Bombay with Love” theme epitomised by the innovative Dishoom chain of restaurants, which present Bombay street food to a discerning British public. I have experimented with many of these ideas. So you’ll find some Indian recipes in Spices of Life, too. Not surprising, given the title!

Demonstrations and Posts

Cooking demonstrations of some of the dishes in Spices of Life are available on my YouTube channel: [lockedintastes](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6W33333333333333333333)

And follow me and Locked-in Tastes on Instagram: [lockedintastes](https://www.instagram.com/lockedintastes)

I hope you will find something spicy that appeals to your tastes!



My “alphabet” of spices and herbs

Allspice – also known as **Бaxap** (Bahar) in Bulgarian, Ziele angielskie in Polish, Nové koření in Czech, Yeni Bahar in Turkish and Krydpeppar in Swedish, comes from the berries of *Pimenta dioica*, a mid-canopy tree native to the Greater Antilles, southern Mexico, Central America, and Jamaica. It has the aroma of a blend of cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg. Whole allspice is used mainly in pickling, and ground allspice is used in savoury dishes, baked goods, puddings and preserves.

Aniseed – originated in the Middle East, where it is grown today as a commercial crop. Small white flowers bloom in mid-summer, followed by tiny liquorice-flavoured fruits called aniseed. Aniseed adds rich flavour to biscuits, cakes, candies, bread, and apple-sauce.

Basil – Sweet, sweet basil, to Italians, is a symbol of love. What most of us adore is basil's pungent, spicy-clove flavour and aroma. Shred its leaves and breathe deeply: its pungent smell permeates.

Bay leaf – (*Laurus nobilis*, Lauraceae) Often used to give soups, stews, braises and curries a distinctive flavour and fragrance. It's best to remove the leaves before serving.

Capers – What is a caper? The flower buds of a small bush found in Mediterranean countries. These buds are dried and then pickled in vinegar with some salt. To reduce saltiness (but why?), rinse before using. The piquant taste of capers penetrates quickly. I ask: What would vitello tonnato be without capers?

Cardamom – is a member of the ginger or Zingiberaceae (love that crazy name) family, and is one of the most expensive of spices. It comes from southeast India and is widely used throughout Asia, but also in many Scandinavian dishes. Who knew?

Chili Powder – Chili peppers (which can be spelled chilli or chili), from which chili powder is made, have been a part of the human diet since at least 7500 BC, and were cultivated around the globe after Columbus's time. Scientific studies are investigating Capsaicin, the compound that gives red pepper its heat, which may inhibit the growth of fat cells – if true, it kind of makes you want to eat a handful everyday.

Chocolate – cocoa has been cultivated for at least three millennia in Central America and Mexico, with its earliest documented use around 1100 BC. This famous aphrodisiac has inspired lovers, writers, chefs and sweethearts to create imaginative tastes and shapes. The cocoa seeds are roasted, husked, and ground, often sweetened and saturated with vanilla – thank you, Côte d'Ivoire.

Cinnamon – is available powdered or in sticks. It is a member of the laurel or Lauraceae family and grows on the island of Sri Lanka and along the south-western coast of India. The inner bark of the tree yields the “bark cinnamon” sold in scroll-like sticks. Break these scrolls into as small pieces as possible and then grind them in a spice mill. Their aroma is positively hypnotic.

Cloves – are the unopened flower bud of a tree that grows in many of the warmer regions of the world, such as India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Sumatra, and Brazil. Cloves may be purchased either whole or ground and have an enchanting pungent aroma. Remember: less is more.

Coffee – essential to tiramisu and many early morning routines!

Coriander – is an annual herb in the family Apiaceae. Coriander (also called Cilantro) has thin, rounded, tooth-like bright green leaves resembling flat-leaf parsley, and is also called fresh coriander or Chinese parsley. It is tangy with citrus accents and is a secret ingredient in most Asian cuisine.

Cumin – has been in use since ancient times. Seeds excavated at the Syrian site Tell ed-Der have been dated to the second millennium BC. Cumin, ground or used as whole seeds, adds an earthy and warming feeling to food, making it a staple in certain stews and soups, as well as spiced sauces such as chili gravy.

Curry Leaves – (*Murraya koenigii*, or curry leaf tree) is a tropical to sub-tropical tree in the family Rutaceae and is native to India.

Besides being packed with carbohydrates, fibre, calcium, phosphorous, iron and vitamins such as Vitamin C, Vitamin A, Vitamin B and Vitamin E, curry leaves add a specific Indian touch to dishes and are believed to help heart function and fight infections.

Curry Powder – the basis of Indian cooking. Curry powder includes turmeric, ginger, mustard seeds, fenugreek, coriander, cinnamon, cayenne pepper and cardamom; and brings a range of health benefits. It is anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant, and aids cholesterol and blood sugar levels. The turmeric gives curry powder its bright yellow punch!

Dill – One of the oldest herbs, it is a native of southern Europe and western Asia. It has tender, feathery, blue-green fronds branching off a central stem. Both seeds and leaves have a sharp, slightly absinthian taste.

Fenugreek – Is an ancient spice which has been in use since the iron age and is an invaluable ingredient in Mediterranean, Middle-Eastern and South-east Asian cuisine. Fenugreek leaves, seeds, oil or powder all add a fresh taste.

Five Spice Powder – is an essential ingredient in Chinese and Vietnamese cuisine. In spite of its name, Five Spice powder actually incorporates up to seven components: ground star anise, cinnamon, nutmeg, black pepper, ginger, as well as fennel and cloves.

Galangal – is a rhizome of any of four plant species in the ginger family. Available in most Asian markets, it comes dried, as a powder, in a paste or (preferably) fresh. It is essential in South-east Asian soups and curries. It is also beloved to have medicinal value in promoting digestion and easing respiratory diseases and stomach conditions.

Garam Masala – comes from north India where it is home-ground from three to eight of the spices known as “warm” spices in the Ayur Veda book of medicine. These are dried chilis, black peppercorns, cinnamon, mace, nutmeg, cloves, coriander seeds and cumin seeds.

Ginger – is a warming herb with a pungent aroma and flavour. It enhances all kinds of foods, from confectionery and cakes to savoury dishes. It is widely used in the cuisines of the Far East, especially in curries and stir-fries.

Grenadine – a non-alcoholic syrup used to flavour and colour cocktails and cold drinks. Containing pomegranate, lemon juice and sugar, it is a colourful way to sweeten your favourite gin.

Herbs of Provence – is a classic herb blend using fresh or dried herbs. Very popular in the South of France, it is used to season everything from soups to grilled chicken. The traditional version uses lavender : soooooo provençale (and we love Provence!)

Juniper Berries – used particularly in European cuisine, they are not a berry as the name suggests but a cone (a female cone, in fact) and is the only spice derived from conifers. Also famous for giving gin its distinctive flavour

Kaffir Lime Leaves – found in Asian markets, they are thick, dark green and shiny on the top, but porous and pale on the back. Tear a leaf to smell the distinct aroma. These leaves add the quintessential flavour to Thai and South-east Asian cuisine. Add to curries and soups to taste the real Thailand. Don't even think of preparing a Tom Yam without them.

Lavender – During Roman times, lavender flowers were sold for 100 denarii per pound, which was about the same as a month's wages for a farm labourer, or fifty haircuts from the local barber. Lavender was commonly used in Roman baths to scent the water, and it was thought to restore the skin. Today lavender is mostly used in desserts and in tea, but it also lends its smoky, floral essence to meats, fish, seafood, and roasted vegetables.

Lemongrass – Ah, this fragrant herb that looks like a petrified scallion is a versatile one. It is widely used as a flavouring ingredient in South-East Asian dishes. There are more than 50 species in this collection of scented grasses.

Linden Leaves – (or Tirol Tea, *Tilia platyphyllos*) is a species of flowering plant in the family Malvaceae. It is a deciduous tree, native to much of Europe, growing on lime-rich soils. Linden flowers are used to treat colds, cough, fever, infections, inflammation and high blood pressure; and also as a diuretic, antispasmodic and sedative. The flowers were added to baths to quell hysteria, and steeped as a tea to relieve anxiety-related indigestion, irregular heartbeat, and vomiting. The leaves are also used to promote sweating to reduce fevers.

Marjoram – is an aromatic herb in the mint (Lamiaceae) family that has been cultivated for thousands of years. In Greek mythology, marjoram was grown by the goddess Aphrodite. Native to the Mediterranean, North Africa, and western Asia, marjoram is often called sweet marjoram to distinguish it from oregano varieties such as wild marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*) and pot marjoram (*Origanum onites*), also known as Turkish oregano.

Mint – Spearmint, lemon-mint, or peppermint. It is said that mint is the most popular flavouring in the world, appearing in so many foodstuffs and medicines that it seems almost ordinary. “Woe unto

you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cumín, and have omitted the weightier [matters] of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” (Mathew 23:23)

Mustard Seeds – are tiny seeds from three different varieties of the mustard plant: black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), brown Indian mustard (*B. juncea*), or white/yellow mustard (*B. hirta*/*Sinapis alba*). Crush into a powder, add salt and white pepper and a bit of vinegar – et voilà, you have prepared fresh mustard.

Nigella Seeds – (*N. sativa*) also commonly known as black cumín are used throughout Mediterranean, Middle-Eastern, Indian and Polish cuisine. One wonders how can this little seed can add such punch.

Orange Blossom Water – a pleasant surprise in many Mediterranean and Middle-Eastern desserts. One sniff and you are transported into a delicate orange grove. In Lebanon, it is added to boiling water to create a digestif known as White Coffee and finishes off a feast with a pleasant surprise. In India, orange blossom water pops up in many traditional desserts.

Oregano – Also called wild marjoram: similar to sweet marjoram but bushier and more spreading. Oregano is very assertive and peppery with hints of pine. Chop the leaves roughly or finely and add early in cooking. Oregano is best known as the “pizza herb”.

Pandam Leaves – (*Pandanus amaryllifolius*) Grown in most households in Sri Lanka and essential throughout South-East Asia, these leaves are used widely to sweeten cakes (steeping the leaves in coconut milk) or wrapping them around meat or fish on the BBQ to keep the food moist. They add a flowery flavour and, in baking, a marvellous green hue.

Paprika – is a spice made from the air-dried fruits of the chili pepper family of the species *Capsicum annuum*. The use of paprika expanded from Iberia throughout Africa and Asia and ultimately reached Central Europe through the Balkans, which were under Ottoman rule, explaining the Hungarian origin of the modern English term. In Spanish, paprika has been known as pimentón since the 1500s, when it became a typical ingredient across the western world.

Parsley – (*Petroselinium crispum*) is a delicate-tasting herb which is widely used in European, Middle-Eastern and American cuisine. The curly variety is mostly for decoration, while the flat-leaf variety has more flavour.

Pepper – Pepper is the most popular spice in the world and comes in many varieties: black, white, pink, red and green. For the most part pepper is imported from India and Indonesia.

Poppy seed – (*papaver somniferum*) is an oilseed from the opium poppy. Traceable back to the ancient Egyptians, it is now a favourite ingredient in Central European cuisine, but common usage dates back to the Egyptians.

Rose – (*Rosa*) Rosehips, rose petals, rose water, and rose syrup all come from this glorious flower of the perennial flowering plant, genus *Rosa*, and turn any beverage or dessert into a Vitamin-C-packed experience fit for royalty.

Rosemary – (*Salvia rosmarinus*) derived from Latin, *ros marinus* ("dew of the sea") is a perennial with tiny blue, pink, purple or white flowers in the spring. Plant it in your garden and, if trimmed, you will enjoy the benefits for 25 to 30 years to come. Add it to soups, marinades, roasts and focaccia and also to the baking tray when roasting potatoes, to add a woody aroma and crunchy texture.

Saffron – belongs to the Iridaceae family, which includes irises and crocuses. Saffron consists of the deep orange-coloured stamens of the crocus. It takes approximately 35,000 flowers to produce a pound of saffron, which makes it is the MOST expensive spice on the planet.

Sage – (*Salvia officinalis*) also known as garden sage or common sage, is a perennial, evergreen subshrub, with woody stems, greyish leaves, and blue to purplish flowers. It is a member of the family Lamiaceae and is native to the Mediterranean region, though it has

naturalized in many places throughout the world. It has a long history of medicinal and culinary use.

Salt – composed primarily of sodium chloride that is essential for animal life. There are forty-one verses which reference salt in the English translation of the King James Bible, the earliest being the story of Lot's wife, who was turned into a pillar of salt when she disobeyed and looked back at the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. (Genesis 19:26). The Roman army were paid in salt and this is the origin of the word salary. Mahatma Gandhi took a long parade called "Dandi March" or "Salt Satyagraha" against taxes levied by the then British rulers. Salt is great: it brings out the flavours of foods and, although technically neither a herb nor a spice, usually only a pinch is needed.

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Sesame Seeds - (*Sesamum indicum*) are one of the oldest oilseed crops known, domesticated for over 3000 years. It has many species, most being wild and native to sub-Saharan Africa. It is a common ingredient around the globe due to its rich and nutty taste.

Star Anise - (*Illicium verum*) is an evergreen tree native to Vietnam and Southwest China. The star-shaped seed resembles aniseed, but in fact is not related to it. It's commonly used in Chinese, Indonesian and Indian cuisine. It is also an important component of five-spice powder. Star Anise spice is also cultivated to produce shikimic acid which is used in pharmaceutical products such as Tamiflu, which seemed to help to combat the swine-flu pandemic in 2009, and also E-coli outbreaks.

Sumac – Nicknamed: The Spice of Life. The word 'sumac' traces its etymology from the Arabic summāq (سماق), and from Syriac summāq (ܫܡܐܩ) – meaning "red". The fruits of the genus *Rhus* are ground into a reddish-purple powder used as a spice in Middle Eastern cuisine to add a lemony taste to salads or meat in Arab cuisine.

Tamarind – (*Tamarindus indica*) A tropical tree that produces a pod-like fruit. Crack open its shell and eat the sweet/sour fruit directly from the pod, being mindful of the stones inside. As a pulp, tamarind is used in abundance in Indian curries and is added to chutneys and sauces.

Thai Basil – sometimes called anise basil or liquorice basil, because it has an aniseed or liquorice-like scent and taste, Thai Basil is different from the Western varieties and one should not be substituted for the other. Thai basil has thin, pointy, purple and green leaves and instantly transforms a salad or main dish into a quick trip to South-east Asia!

Thyme – clusters of tiny green leaves on a thin, woody stem. The most common variety for cooking is English thyme. Other varieties include lemon thyme and caraway thyme. Thyme has a subtle pine, lemon and spicy flavour. It is versatile and widely complementary to many dishes, but can overwhelm delicate foods. Use liberally but carefully.

Turmeric – has a musky, peppery flavour. Used mainly in ground form to colour foods yellow, especially Indian curries and soups. Use sparingly as an alternative to saffron.

Vanilla – climbing orchid of the genus *Vanilla*, esp. *V. planifolia*, its name derives from the Spanish word "vainilla", or little pod. The plant bears pod-like fruit, yielding an extract used in flavouring for ice-cream and also in perfume.

Violette – sometimes called crème de violette or liqueur de violette is made from violet flowers (*Viola* species) and adds that soft violet hue to cocktails, desserts and confections. It's truly a taste of spring!



The Recipes

The recipes which follow in this ebook are in alphabetical order of the main spice or herb featured. Below, for ease of search, the recipes are grouped by category, with Recipe Numbers.

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Recipe 1

5-Spice powder

Chinese plum sauce

Why not make your own sauce using fresh plums from the market rather than the industrial bottled supermarket version? It's easy and here's how!



Sauce

Makes 3 to 4 jars

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 30 minutes

Sterilising time: 15 minutes

Gluten-free

Chinese Plum Sauce

Ingredients

1kg plums, pitted and chopped
1 small onion, chopped
50ml cider vinegar
500g jam sugar
50ml soy sauce
3 tbs honey
4 tbs grated fresh ginger
3 tbs Chinese 5-spice powder
4 cinnamon sticks
4 star anises
8 cloves



Method

Place all ingredients except for the spices in a medium-sized saucepan and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer uncovered for 30 minutes. Use a hand-held mixer to make a very smooth purée.

Now add the 5-spice powder to the plum purée and simmer uncovered for 30 minutes until the purée is nice and thick.

In each of the sterilised jars place: 1 cinnamon stick, 1 star anise and 2 cloves. Ladle the hot plum sauce into the jars, filling them almost to the very top. Seal tight and place the jars in boiling water to sterilise for 15 minutes.

Remove the jars from the HOT water, test to make certain that the lid is nice and tight and then cool.

Label the jars. The plum sauce can be stored for up to one year.

Recipe 2

5-Spice powder

Sweet and Sour Prawns

Sweet, sour and always satisfying. Or substitute sliced pork loin, chicken or, for a vegetarian version, sliced tofu.



Main course

Serves 4

Prep Time: 10 mins

Cook Time: 20 mins

Gluten-free

Sweet and sour prawns

Ingredients

500g peeled and de-veined prawns
Drizzle of vegetable oil
150g brown sugar
50ml pineapple juice from can of pineapple chunks
75ml white vinegar
125ml tomato concentrate
3 tbs soy sauce
Splash of white wine
2 tbs 5-Spice powder
200ml canned pineapple chunks, drained (keep juice for the sauce)
1 red bell pepper seeded and cut into chunks
1 yellow bell pepper seeded and cut into chunks
6 spring onions cut into slices
Toasted cashews (generous)
Generous amount of dried Chinese red chillies
Sprigs of fresh coriander

Method

Over medium heat, add a drizzle of vegetable oil to the skillet or wok, then the bell peppers and cook for 4-5 minutes. Add the prawns and cook for 2 minutes. Then add the spring onions, pineapple chunks and stir.

In a bowl, combine the sugar, pineapple juice, vinegar, tomato concentrate and soy sauce. Stir until the sugar is dissolved. Pour the sauce into the skillet or wok, stir to coat the prawns, peppers and spring onions. Bring to the boil then reduce heat to medium and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring a couple of times.

To serve

On top, sprinkle the toasted cashews, dried red chillies and add the sprigs of fresh coriander. Serve immediately with steamed jasmine rice.



Recipe 3

Allspice

Jamaican jerk chicken

The secret of this fiery dish is to use freshly-ground spices



Main Course

Serves 8

Cooking time 30 minutes

Marinating time 9 hours

Gluten-free

Dairy-free

Jamaican jerk chicken

Ingredients

2 medium sized chickens,
quartered
1 onion, chopped
4 green onions, sliced
4 Scotch bonnet chilies,
seeds discarded and
chopped
1 tbs five-spice powder
1 tbs allspice berries, ground
3 tbs black peppercorn
2 tspn dried thyme, crumbled
1 tspn freshly-grated nutmeg
1 tspn salt
175ml soy sauce
1 tbs olive oil
2 limes quartered for serving
Sprigs of fresh coriander

Method

For the marinade: in a mortar and pestle grind the allspice and black peppercorns. Add the crumbled thyme and freshly-grated nutmeg. Then add the five-spice powder and salt. Pound until well combined.

Add the onion, green onions, chilies; and pound into a thick paste. Add the soy sauce and olive oil; and stir.

Place the marinade into a plastic re-sealable bag, add the chicken pieces, and place into the refrigerator to marinate overnight.

Grill the chicken pieces on a bbq or in the oven (medium to hot), turning occasionally until cooked: approx 35 minutes.

Serve with the lime wedges and fresh sprigs of coriander, steamed rice and your favourite summer salads.



Recipe 4

Aniseed

Italian aniseed biscuits

No celebration is complete without these biscuits!



Snack

Yields 40 biscuits

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 10-12 minutes

Italian aniseed biscuits

Ingredients

165g unsalted butter
165g flour
100g cornflour (sifted)
90g icing sugar
1 egg
1 tspn vanilla extract
1 tspn aniseeds

Method

Preheat oven 180°C

With an electric mixer, whip the butter and sugar for 10 minutes until it is very white in colour.

Add the egg, flour, cornflour, vanilla extract and aniseeds, to make a dough.

Put the dough into a pastry bag , fitted with a star-shaped tip, and squeeze the bag to make shapes (S-shapes or knots) on a baking tray lined with baking paper.

Bake for 10-12 minutes



Recipe 5

Basil

Basil oil

Even if you have no fresh basil, you can easily enjoy its fresh taste whenever and wherever you feel like it.



Sauce

Serves 12

Prep time: 10 mins

Ingredients

500g fresh basil leaves, closely packed
250ml extra virgin olive oil
1 tspn salt
Pinch of dried red chili pepper flakes

Method

Blanch the basil leaves in boiling water for 10 seconds and then chill in a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking process.

Place the basil in a mini food processor and pulse a few times.

Add the olive oil to the food processor and blend until you have a smooth sauce.

Use immediately or refrigerate and use for up to 7 days.

The flavours will intensify over time.



Recipe 6

Basil

Insalata di pomodori con burrata+basilico – Tomato salad with burrata & basil

Use only the freshest ingredients in order to enjoy this flavourful salad to the fullest!



First course

Serves 2

Prep time: 10 minutes

Gluten-free

Insalata di pomodori con burrata+basilico

Ingredients

300g beefsteak tomatoes, sliced
1 large burrata cheese, room temperature
1 bunch of fresh basil (small bright green leaves are best)
Generous drizzle of basil oil: from speciality shop, or make your own: recipe on Page 31.
Pinch of salt flakes
A generous amount of freshly-ground black pepper

Method

On a serving plate, arrange the sliced tomatoes. Position the burrata cheese in the centre.

Place the bunch of basil leaves, sprinkle the salt flakes and drizzle the basil oil on top.

Crack a generous amount of freshly ground black pepper over the salad, and serve.



Recipe 7

Basil

Pesto alla Genovese

This is the real thing. Recipe shared by dear friends who know what they are talking about, as Genova is their home!



Sauce
Serves 4
Gluten-free

Also see video on my YouTube channel: [lockedintastes](#)

Pesto alla Genovese

Ingredients

1 bunch of basil, stems
removed
1/2 tspn of salt
2 cloves of garlic, peeled
(optional)
10-15 pine nuts
15g pecorino, finely grated
15g parmesan cheese, finely
grated

Method

Wash and dry the basil leaves. Add a little salt, the garlic cloves and the pine nuts. Pound in a mortar until all is well mashed and forms a thick paste.

Note: The traditional recipe includes garlic; but if you're not a fan, simply omit it.

Add the cheeses to the pesto and mix.

Serve on top of piping-hot pasta, or on fish, or as a sauce with a caprese salad.

Storage: you don't have to use the pesto immediately. It can be stored in a glass jar, filled to the top with extra-virgin olive oil (to preserve it from oxidation) and kept in the refrigerator.



Recipe 8

Bay leaf

Salsa rossa estiva (Summer red sauce)

This is an amazingly versatile sauce that bursts with summer flavours. Try as a dip with fried zucchini or fritto di mare (fried seafood). It also makes a delicious spread on hunks of toasted crusty bread, served with an aperitivo. Or pour on top of ricotta gnocchi for a yummy first course.



Sauce

serves 4

prep time: 30 minutes

Gluten-free

Also see video on my YouTube channel: [lockedintastes](#)

Salsa rossa estiva

Ingredients

- 1 tbs olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 sprig fresh rosemary
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 sprig sage
- 8 leaves fresh basil
- 250g peeled, crushed tomatoes
- 2 red peppers, peeled, seeded and roasted

Method

Heat the olive oil over medium heat and sauté the onion. Tie the rosemary, bay leaves, and basil together with a string and add the bundle to the pan. Cook stirring for 3 to 4 minutes. Add the tomatoes and peppers; and cook for 5 minutes. Simmer on low heat for another 20 minutes.

Remove the herb bundle. Purée with a hand-held blender/mixer until the sauce is very smooth.

Serve warm.



Recipe 9

Bay leaf

Perfect roast beef

Epitomises the traditional Sunday lunch - just add roasted potatoes and Yorkshire pudding



Main course

Serves 6

Cooking time: 1 hour 5 mins

Plus 15 minutes resting time

Gluten-free

Ingredients

- 1.5kg of topside beef, room temperature
- 2 medium onions
- 2 celery stalks
- 1 bunch of fresh mixed herbs: bay leaf, thyme, rosemary & sage
- 250ml of beef bouillon
- Olive oil



Method

Preheat the oven 250°C

Wash and chop the vegetables (there's no need to peel them) into a large roasting pan, add the fresh herbs and drizzle with olive oil.

Pour the beef bouillon over the vegetables to prevent them from burning.

Place your joint on top of the herbs and vegetables. Drizzle the joint with olive oil and generously season with salt and pepper, making sure that the beef is well coated and the salt & pepper are rubbed into the meat.

Put the roasting pan into the oven and then turn the heat down to 200°C and cook for 1 hour for medium beef, 45 to 50 minutes for medium rare and 1 hour and 15 minutes for well-done.

Baste the beef half way through cooking.

When the beef is cooked to your liking, take it out of the oven and place on a cutting board to rest for 15 minutes, covered with aluminium foil.

Serve with gravy, horseradish sauce and/or mustard.

Recipe 10

Capers

Vitello tonnato

A classic dish served cold. Super as a first course, for a buffet or as a main course on a steamy day.



Main course

Serves 4

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 40 minutes

Chilling time: 1 hour

Also see video on my YouTube channel: [lockedintastes](#)

Ingredients

750g veal roast
125ml vegetable bouillon
2 shallots, peeled and halved
1 carrot, chopped into chunks
1 bulb of fennel, chopped into chunks
2 sage leaves
2 sprigs of thyme
1 sprig of rosemary
1/2 tspn salt
For garnish: sprigs of chives

For the sauce

1 can albacore tuna in oil
100ml plain full-fat yogurt
100ml mayonaise
50ml olive oil
50ml fresh lemon juice
2 tbs of capers (I prefer big fat ones)
Zest of one lemon



Method

Preheat the oven to 185°C. In an oven-proof casserole with a lid, add a drizzle of olive oil, the chopped vegetables, and the bouillon. Place the roast on top, add the herbs, cover with the lid and roast for 35 to 40 minutes.

Remove from the oven, place the roast on a cutting board, cover with aluminium foil and allow to rest while you make the sauce.

Why not reserve the broth for a future use? It's great for risottos and soups.

For the sauce

Combine the tuna, olive oil, yogurt, mayonaise and lemon juice in a mini food-processor. Whip until smooth. Pour into a jug.

With a sharp carving knife, thinly slice the roast and place the slices flat on to a serving dish. Pour over the sauce. Sprinkle the lemon zest, capers and a dash of paprika.

Chill for a least an hour to allow the flavours to combine. Serve with sprigs of chives.

Note: turkey breast can be substituted for veal. And, if you're crazy about anchovies, add some!

Recipe 11

Capers

Lemon sole with caper sauce

A lighter (and less pricey) version of Julia Child's Sole Meunière



Main course

Serves 2

Cooking time: 15 minutes

Lemon sole with caper sauce

Ingredients

4 lemon sole filets
Sea salt
Freshly ground black pepper
2 tbs unsalted butter
3 tbs of extra virgin olive oil
1 shallot, minced
250ml dry white wine
Juice from 1 lemon plus zest
2 tbs of parsley, minced
2 tbs of capers
100g flour (for dredging)

Method

Rinse the sole filets, pat them dry with kitchen towel, then dredge in the flour and season with salt and pepper.

In a sauté pan, melt the butter and add the olive oil. Cook the filets on one side for 4 minutes; and then flip and cook for a further 2 to 3 minutes. (Be careful not to overcook, or the fish will become dry). Remove from the pan and place on serving plates.

Using the same pan, sauté the shallot and zest. Pour in the wine and then the lemon juice. Add the capers and stir.

Finally add the parsley and pour the sauce over the sole filets

Serve with boiled new potatoes.



Recipe 12

Cardamom

Peach crumble with cardamom crust

The far-eastern taste of cardamom transforms this Southern American traditional favourite into an exotic dessert.



Dessert

Serves 4

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 40 minutes

Peach crumble with cardamom crust

Ingredients

1.5 kg yellow peaches (about 8),
halved, stones removed, cut
into wedges
2 tbsp caster sugar
Softened butter, for brushing
1 tsp cornflour
2 tbs coarse granulated sugar
Vanilla ice cream

Cardamom crust

300g plain flour
110g caster sugar
1 tsp baking powder
1 tbs ground cardamom
150g cold unsalted butter, in small
pieces
200 ml milk

Method

For the cardamom crust

Sift flour, sugar, baking powder, cardamom and ½ tsp salt into a bowl. Add butter and rub in with your fingertips until the mixture resembles fine crumbs. Add milk and combine by hand, then gently knead until the mixture comes together.

For the peach crumble

Preheat oven to 180C. Butter a 9 inch (22 x 22 cm) ovenproof baking dish. Combine peaches, sugar and cornflour in a bowl and spoon into the baking dish. Using your fingers, crumble the cardamom dough over the peaches to cover, scatter with the sugar and bake for 35-40 minutes or until golden and bubbling.

Serve hot with vanilla ice cream.



Recipe 13

Cardamom

Tandoori chicken

An instant flavour trip to the Punjab



Main course

Serves 4

Prep time: 15 minutes

Marinating time: 4 to 8 hours

Cook time: 30 minutes

Gluten-free

Tandoori Chicken

Ingredients

2 skinless chicken breasts
4 skinless chicken thighs
Vegetable oil

Marinade

4 cloves
1 tspn cumin seeds
1 tspn coriander seeds
4 green cardamoms, seeds only
2 black cardamoms, seeds only
1 tspn fenugreek seeds
1 tspn fennel seeds
225ml full-fat plain yogurt
2 tbs fresh lemon juice
2 tspn salt
2 tbs sweet paprika
4 tbs Tandoori powder (more if you like it spicier)
1 tspn ground turmeric
2 tbs fresh ginger, grated
2 tspn honey



Method

Heat a dry pan over medium heat. Add the cloves, cumin seeds, coriander seeds, cardamom seeds, fenugreek, and fennel. Toss the pan regularly to rotate the spices and prevent burning. Toast until they emit a very rich aroma: about 3 minutes. Immediately place the seeds in a dish to cool. Once cool, use a mortar and pestle to grind the spices to a powder.

Put the yogurt in a medium bowl and add the powdered spices, along with the remaining marinade ingredients. Combine thoroughly.

Cut 2 or 3 shallow diagonal cuts into the top of each piece of chicken.

Place the chicken pieces in a shallow baking dish. Pour over the marinade, ensuring the chicken is thoroughly coated on all sides, and rub the marinade inside the diagonal cuts. Cover and refrigerate for 4 hours, preferably more.

Preheat the oven to 250°C. Place a sheet of aluminium foil on a baking tray and place the chicken on top. Drizzle the vegetable oil over the chicken (this prevents burning). Grill (or roast if your oven does not have a grill setting) for 30 minutes,

Serve immediately with rice or with naan bread.

Recipe 14

Chili Powder

Gazpacho

A spicy cold soup for hot summer days



Starter

Serves 2

Prep time: 15 minutes

Chilling time: 30 minutes

Gluten-free

Ingredients

500ml roasted tomatoes, skins removed
1 medium-sized cucumber, peeled, seeded and quartered
1 shallot, finely chopped
Juice of 1 lime
1 tbs chili powder
2 tbs coriander powder
3 tbs olive oil
1 tspn fine sea salt
1 pinch sugar
1 tspn cumin powder

Method

Purée the tomatoes, cucumber and shallots until they become a smooth liquid (about 5 minutes).

Add the spices, lime juice and olive oil; purée for another 3 minutes.

Chill for a minimum of 30 minutes, or ideally longer.

Garnish with sprigs of coriander, wedges of lime and chunky croutons, as you wish.

Chef's suggestion: add chilled steamed king prawns to create a more substantial first course.



Recipe 15

Chili powder

Roasted cauliflower with chili

Great as a side-dish with Sunday roast. Or dip into a cheese fondue for a gluten-free alternative to cubes of bread



Side dish

Serves 4

Cook time: 30 minutes

Gluten-free

Roasted cauliflower with chili

Ingredients

1 large cauliflower, cut into florets
4 tbsp olive oil
1 tbs chili powder
1 tspn sweet paprika
1 tspn ground cumin
1 tspn garam masala
Salt and pepper to taste

Method

Preheat oven 200°C

Wash and dry the cauliflower and place inside a re-sealable large plastic bag.

Add the chili powder, paprika, cumin, garam masala and the olive oil to the plastic bag.

Shake the contents so that the cauliflower is well coated, and pour on to the baking tray.

Place into the oven and roast for 15 to 20 minutes.

Remove from oven and serve as desired.



Recipe 16

Chocolate

Flourless chocolate cake

A cake where every bite bursts with rich, locked-in chocolate taste



Dessert

Serves 8 to 10

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 45 minutes

Flourless chocolate cake

Ingredients

500g chocolate, such
as Lindt 64% or more
250g unsalted butter
60ml brewed espresso
coffee
1 tspn vanilla extract
8 large eggs
250g sugar
Double-processed cocoa
powder

Method

Preheat the oven to 225°C. Butter a 22 cm diameter springform pan. Line the bottom and the sides with baking paper.

In a medium saucepan, melt the chocolate, butter, coffee and vanilla over low heat until smooth.

In a bowl, using an electric mixer, beat the eggs and sugar until the mixture is thick and a pale yellow colour (approximately 6 to 8 minutes).

Fold 1/3 of the egg mixture into the chocolate and mix for 2 minutes. Then add the rest of the mixture and beat for 5 minutes. Pour into the springform pan. Wrap the bottom and sides with aluminium foil to make pan watertight. Leave the top uncovered.

Create a bain-marie by placing the springform pan into a roasting dish with hot water reaching 2/3 up the sides of the springform pan. Bake for 5 minutes at 225°C, then reduce the temperature to 185°C.

Butter a sheet of aluminium foil and now cover the top of the springform pan tightly and continue to bake for another 35 to 40 minutes.

Remove from bain-marie and dispose of foil. Let the cake cool in the springform pan for 2 hours. Then loosen the clip of the springform pan, peel off the baking paper and flip the cake onto your serving dish. Dust double-processed powder cocoa over the top and serve with whipped cream and red berries.



Recipe 17

Cinnamon

Forest-fruit clafoutis

A version of this French classic, created to be gluten-free and dairy-free



Dessert

Serves 6

Prep time: 15 mins

Cook time: 45 mins

Gluten-free

Dairy-free

Ingredients

500ml fresh or frozen (& thawed)
forest fruits, such as blackberries
and raspberries
5-6 tbs caster sugar
15g dairy-free spread
85g gluten-free flour
1 tbs ground cinnamon
4 eggs
400ml coconut milk
icing sugar, to dust

Method

Preheat oven to 180°C.

Drain the fruit, reserving the juice. Toss berries with 1 tbs sugar, then spread in an even layer in a 24cm round ovenproof dish, greased with vegetable spread.

Sift the flour and cinnamon into a large bowl and stir in the remaining sugar.

In another bowl, beat the eggs and coconut milk together, then whisk into the flour mixture to make a smooth batter. Pour the batter slowly over the fruit, then bake for 40-45 mins.

Dust the clafoutis with icing sugar and serve.



Recipe 18

Cinnamon

Luisa's banana bread

I designed this recipe during the 2008 financial crisis. I'm amazed, but perhaps not surprised, that it became a household staple again during Lockdown 2020.



Snack

Serves 6

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 45 minutes

Ingredients

110g butter
200g caster sugar
75ml honey
1 tsp vanilla extract
2 tbs cinnamon
2 eggs
75g plain yoghurt
250g mushy very ripe
bananas (about 3)
15g baking powder
Pinch of salt
250g powdered almonds
560g flour

Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

In a small saucepan, melt the butter and pour into a large mixing bowl. Add the sugar and mix, using an electric standing or hand mixer until well blended. Then add the honey, vanilla extract, cinnamon and eggs and continue to mix for 1 minute.

Add the bananas and mix until blended.

Add baking powder, salt and powdered almonds. Mix for 30 seconds.

Add 250g flour, then the yogurt, and then another 250g of flour. Mix until blended. If your batter is too thin, add the other 60g flour.

Pour into a buttered and floured loaf pan and bake for approx 45 minutes.

Test with a toothpick: if the toothpick comes out dry then your banana bread is ready.

Loosen the bread from the sides of the loaf pan with a knife. Allow to cool completely before removing it from the loaf pan and slicing.



Recipe 19

Cloves

Roast gammon with mango chutney glaze

A traditional Boxing Day roast, but delicious at any time of year



Main course

Serves 8

2 hours + 35 minutes prep

Gluten-free

Dairy-free

Roast gammon with mango chutney glaze

Ingredients

2.5-3kg gammon joint,
rolled and tied
1 large onion
2 carrots
6 cloves
2 bay leaves
2 sprigs of thyme
4 allspice berries
6 peppercorns

For the glaze

150g mango chutney
100ml cream sherry
Cloves for studding

Method

Put the gammon into a deep pan or casserole and cover with water. Boil for 5 minutes, then drain. Rinse away the white starch from the gammon and clean the pan.

Put the gammon back into the pan and cover again with water. Stud the onion with cloves and add it to the pan, along with the spices, herbs, carrots and celery. Bring to the boil, then reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 2 hours. Use a meat thermometer to check that the internal temperature has reached 70°C. Remove the gammon from the pan and place on a cutting board.

Preheat the oven to 200C.

Cut off the strings and outer crust of the gammon, exposing the fat on the top and leave only a bit of the fat on the underneath side of the roast. Score a diamond pattern on the fat (the top side) and stud with the cloves.

For the glaze:

Put the mango chutney and the sherry into a small saucepan and boil until the liquid is nice and thick.

Brush the glaze over the gammon until it is well coated with the thick glaze. Place the gammon back into the oven at 200°C and roast until the glaze is a deep rich colour (approx 20 minutes).

Carve into slices and serve.



Recipe 20

Coffee

Tiramisu

Inspired by the late Maida Heatter: definitely the best tiramisu recipe EVER! If serving as an evening dessert, why not use de-caffeinated espresso coffee. Your guests will be grateful for your thoughtfulness.



Dessert

Serves 12

Prep time: 45 minutes

Chilling time: 4 to 12 hours
but best if chilled overnight

Ingredients

300ml espresso,
cooled
40–45 ladyfingers
450g mascarpone
4 large eggs,
separated
100g granulated
sugar
480ml whipping
cream
1/8 teaspoon salt
Cocoa powder,
unsweetened

Method

Use a large 20x30cm baking pan/dish with at least 3 litre capacity. You will form 2 layers of dipped ladyfingers & mascarpone mousse.

First layer

Pour the espresso into a shallow bowl. One at a time, quickly dip each side of the ladyfingers. Do not over-saturate or make them soggy. Make a solid layer of the dipped ladyfingers in the baking pan. If necessary, cut some to fill empty spaces. Reserve remaining espresso and ladyfingers for the next layer.

For the mascarpone mousse

With a mixer, beat the mascarpone on medium speed in a large bowl until smooth. Set aside.

Put the egg yolks into a double boiler, or use a heat-proof bowl over a small pan of simmering water. Add 50g of the sugar and whisk for about 5 minutes until light and foamy. Remove from the heat and pour into the mascarpone. Beat on medium speed with a mixer until all is combined.

In a separate bowl, whip the heavy cream with a mixer. Add the vanilla extract and continue to beat until medium peaks form: about 3-4 minutes. Fold the whipped cream into the mascarpone mixture and set aside.

Add salt to the egg-whites and beat, at medium speed, with a clean/dry whisk attachment, for about 1 minute until foamy. Increase to high speed and slowly pour in the remaining 50g sugar. Beat until stiff peaks form, about 4-5 minutes. Do not over-beat or the egg-whites will be dry. Gently fold the egg whites into the mascarpone mixture to make a mousse. Spread half of this mousse evenly over the bottom layer of ladyfingers. **CONTINUED...**

Second layer

Dip remaining ladyfingers into the rest of the espresso and arrange one-by-one on top of the mascarpone mousse. Gently press each down so they are nice and compact.

Spread remaining mascarpone mousse evenly on top. If you're using a large enough pan/dish, it will fit but do not be afraid if it is puffy and higher than the sides.

Refrigerate uncovered for 2-3 hours, then sift a dense layer of cocoa powder all over the top.

To serve

Using a sharp knife, slice the chilled tiramisu into servings. Wipe the knife clean between cuts. A small square metal spatula is very helpful to lift nice clean squares out of the baking dish.

Cover any leftover tiramisu and store in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.



Recipe 21

Coriander

Gai Yang – Grilled North-Eastern Style Thai chicken

The recipe was explained to me one evening by a gai yang vendor while I was shopping in the night market at Tha Sadet, Nong Khai, Thailand.



Main Course

4 Servings

Prep time: 15 min

Marinate time: 8 hours

Cook Time: 35 mins

Gluten-free

Gai Yang – Grilled North-Eastern Style Thai Chicken

Ingredients

250ml fish sauce or light soy sauce
3 green chili peppers, seeded and chopped
30g sugar
120ml shallots, finely chopped
175ml fresh ginger, peeled and grated
200g fresh lime juice (4 limes)
50g water
1 large bunch fresh coriander (preferably with roots)
1.5kg chicken, halved or cut up
Spring onions and coriander leaves for garnish

Method

With a mortar and pestle, pound the ginger; then, one by one, add the coriander, shallots and chilies and continue to pound (be careful not to get chili in your eyes while pounding – ouch!) Then stir in the lime juice, sugar and water to complete the marinade. If the marinade is too salty, too sweet, or too hot, just add a little more water. (I'm not a fan of garlic, but for those who are: just add a few cloves at the pounding stage.)

Place the marinade into a large re-sealable plastic bag; add the chicken and chill for 8 hours or up to a day.

Drain chicken and discard the marinade. Place the chicken on the bbq or under the grill and cook thoroughly for approx 35 minutes.

Transfer chicken to a platter, garnish with spring onions and coriander leaves and serve with steamed sticky rice and individual bowls of dipping sauce, either a typical sweet chili sauce (look for a Thai brand) in an Asian speciality shop, or try my recipe for Versatile Thai dipping sauce in this book.



Recipe 22

Coriander

Roast pumpkin and chickpea salad with coriander dressing

This nutritious salad with exotic Indian flavours makes a satisfying lunch or supper



Main course

Serves 2

Cooking time: 1 hour

Vegetarian

Gluten-free

Roast pumpkin and chickpea salad with coriander dressing

Ingredients

500g pumpkin, seeded and cut into chunks
200g tinned chickpeas (drained and rinsed)
2 tsp ground cumin
2 tsp ground coriander
2 tsp smoked paprika
2 tsp dried chili flakes
1 bag of baby spinach
50g feta cheese, cubed
2 tbs tahini
100g natural yogurt
1 lemon, juiced
1 bunch of coriander
4 tbs extra virgin olive oil

Method

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

Coat the pumpkin with the olive oil and dried spices and toss until the pumpkin is well coated. Pour on to a baking tray and bake for 30 minutes. Add the chickpeas to the tray and bake for another 20 minutes.

While the pumpkin and chickpeas are baking, prepare the dressing by putting the yogurt, tahini, lemon juice and fresh coriander into a mini food processor and whizz until the dressing is smooth and green.

Remove the baking tray from the oven (the vegetables should be well cooked and a bit charred and crispy) and leave to cool for about 5 minutes.

Pour the salad sauce on to the baked vegetables, add the baby spinach and toss again.

Place on to individual serving plates, crumble the feta over the top and serve.



Recipe 23

Cumin

Moroccan-style couscous

A fabulous, nutritious side-dish with easy-to-source ingredients – winter, spring, summer and autumn



Side dish

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 25 minutes

Dairy-free

Moroccan-style couscous

Ingredients

- 1 large red bell pepper, cored, seeded and sliced
- 2 medium carrots, cut in 2cm slices
- 1 small red onion, diced into chunks
- 2 small zucchini, halved lengthwise and cut into 2cm slices
- 4 tbs olive oil
- 2 tbs fresh lemon juice
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 pinches of salt
- 400g dry couscous
- 450ml chicken broth
- 2 tsp turmeric
- 175g dried apricots, sliced
- 100g slivered almonds
- 450g chick peas, drained and rinsed
- 1 tbs fresh coriander, minced
- 1 tbs fresh mint, minced



Method

Preheat oven to 250°C. Place baking paper on to a baking tray. Add the pepper, carrots, onions and zucchini, drizzle with 1tbs of olive oil and season with salt. Toss to evenly coat. Roast in oven for about 20 minutes or until tender, tossing once half-way through roasting.

While vegetables are roasting, in a small mixing bowl, whisk together remaining 3tbs olive oil, lemon juice, cumin, coriander, and cinnamon. Season with a pinch of salt. Set aside.

In a saucepan, bring chicken broth, together with a pinch of salt and the turmeric, to a boil.

Now place couscous, apricots and almonds in a large mixing bowl. Pour the hot chicken broth over the couscous and stir. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and let rest for 5 minutes.

Add the roasted vegetables, together with the chick peas, coriander, mint and lemon to the couscous and toss to evenly coat.

Taste and add more salt if desired.

Serve warm.

Recipe 24

Cumin

Tandoori lamb chops

A quick and easy method to enjoy a taste of India



Main course

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Marinating time: 2 hours

Cook time: 10 minutes

Gluten-free

Tandoori lamb chops

Ingredients

8 cm piece of ginger, grated
2 limes, zest and juice
1 tbs coriander seeds
1 tbs cumin seeds
1 pinch of garam masala
1 pinch of salt
1 large pinch dried chili flakes
8 tbs pomegranate molasses
12 lamb chops, trimmed
A large bunch of mint leaves

Method

Toast the cumin and coriander seeds in a small frying pan for 30 seconds, remove from heat and grind to a fine powder. Add salt and the garam masala; mix.

Add to this mixture the grated ginger, chili flakes, zest and lime juice, and 4 tbs of the pomegranate molasses. Pour into a large re-sealable plastic bag. Place the lamb chops into the bag and marinate for 2 hours. Turn the bag occasionally.

Heat your grill or grill pan to a high temperature and cook the lamb chops for 2 to 3 minutes on each side. The lamb chops will be slightly crispy and charred on the edges.

Place the chops on to a serving platter.

Drizzle the remaining 4 tbs of pomegranate molasses over the platter, sprinkle the pomegranate seeds, and toss liberally the torn mint leaves.

Serve with raita and roasted potatoes.



Scallopini alla Milanese with chicken

East meets west in this traditional Italian classic



Main course

Serves 4

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 30 minutes

Scallopini alla Milanese with chicken

Ingredients

2 chicken breasts, sliced very thin, into "scallopini"
250g breadcrumbs
250g flour
1 tbsp Madras curry powder
Pinch of salt
2 eggs
2 tbs heavy cream
Juice of 1 lemon
100g of parmigiano shavings
75ml olive oil, plus some to drizzle
2 tbs of butter
2 handfuls of rocket salad
3 tomatoes, quartered

Method

Mix the breadcrumbs and flour in a shallow bowl, while adding the curry powder and salt.

In another shallow bowl, crack the eggs, add the cream and beat until frothy.

Pour the 75ml of olive oil into a large sauté pan, add the butter and melt.

Dredge the scallopini of chicken into the egg mixture and then into the breadcrumb mixture. Then gently place into the hot oil.

Cook on one side for 7 minutes. Then flip and cook for an additional 5 minutes and drain on kitchen towels.

Using a large serving platter, make a bed of rocket salad, place your scallopini on top, and finish with a generous squeeze of lemon juice.

Serve with quartered tomatoes and fresh parmigiano shavings.



Recipe 26

Curry powder

Curry sauce for ravioli

Ideal with salmon or crab ravioli. Or almost any ravioli. Use prepared ravioli or make your own. The choice is yours. But whichever, please serve this delicious curry sauce with the ravioli, and you will be forever grateful that you did.



Primo piatto

Serves 4

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cooking time for ravioli: 15 minutes

Curry sauce for ravioli

Ingredients

For the sauce

60ml olive oil
2 shallots chopped
2 leeks, white part only,
washed & thinly sliced
1 fennel bulb, chopped
1 pear, peeled, cored and
thinly sliced
3 tbsp brandy
3 tbsp curry powder, a mild
and very yellow one
2tbs cornflour
750ml rich chicken stock
125ml coconut cream



Method

For the sauce

Heat the olive oil in a large sauté pan over medium high heat. Add the shallots, leeks and fennel and cook until they are soft, about 6 minutes. Reduce heat to medium. Add the pear and cook the mixture for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Pour on the brandy. Allow it to heat and carefully ignite it, using a long kitchen match. Swirl the pan until the flames die.

Add the chicken stock slowly, whisking constantly. Add the curry powder. Cook until the sauce begins to thicken. Then lower the heat and allow it to simmer uncovered for 20 minutes, stirring frequently.

Strain the sauce through a sieve into a medium saucepan.

Add the coconut cream to the sauce. Allow the sauce to simmer for 10 minutes.

For the ravioli

Prepare your favourite recipe or purchase fresh ravioli from the shop and follow the recommended cooking instructions.

Serve with fresh sprigs of parsley and toss black sesame seeds on top.

Recipe 27

Dill

Cucumber and dill salad

A quick and easy-to-whip-up summer-fresh favourite, full of crisp tastes. A great complement to a BBQ.



Side dish

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Gluten-free

Cucumber and dill salad

Ingredients

1 cucumber
250g low-fat Greek-style yogurt
1 lemon, freshly squeezed
Bunch of fresh dill, fronds only
Salt and pepper to taste

Method

Peel and slice the cucumber and place into a mixing bowl.

Add the yogurt, lemon juice and dill.
Toss until well combined.

Add salt and pepper to taste.

Serve chilled.



Recipe 28

Dill

Gimme a gimlet, please!

Dill, such a sophisticated herb to sip!



Apéro

Serves 1

Prep time: 5 minutes

Gimme a gimlet, please!

Ingredients

50ml dry London gin
50ml Rose's lime cordial
1 lime slice
Juice of half a lime
2 dill sprigs plus one to garnish
1 slice of cucumber
Ice cubes

Method

Fill half of the cocktail shaker with ice cubes.

Pour in the gin and lime cordial, then squeeze in the lime and add 2 dill sprigs.

Place the lid on the shaker and shake until the sides become frosty.

Strain into a chilled martini glass.

Add the lime and cucumber slices, plus the sprig of dill. Then serve!



Recipe 29

Fenugreek

Murgh makhani (Indian butter chicken)

For years I used to avoid Indian cuisine, until I tasted my friend Prisha's butter chicken! And now I am a convert.



Main course

Serves 6

Prep time: 20 minutes plus marination

Cooking time: 30 minutes

Murgh Makhani (Indian butter chicken)

Ingredients

125ml natural Greek-style yogurt
1 tbs tandoori masala powder
750g boneless, skinless chicken
breast, cut into 3cm pieces
1 onion, chopped
Piece of fresh ginger
3 tbs cooking oil
1 tbs garam masala
1 tspn Indian chili powder
250ml tomato passata
175ml coconut cream
2 tbs butter
1 tbs dried fenugreek leaves or
2 tspn fenugreek powder
1 tspn salt
1 lime cut into wedges, for
garnish
Coriander leaves for garnish



Method

Stir the yogurt and tandoori masala powder together in a large bowl until combined. Add the chicken and toss to coat evenly. Marinate in refrigerator for 1 hour. Discard any excess marinade.

Purée the onion and ginger with a little water in a mini food processor until it forms a smooth paste. Set aside.

Heat 1 tbs oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Cook the chicken in the oil until lightly browned on all sides, about 5 minutes. Remove from the frying pan and set aside. Heat the remaining 2 tbs of oil in the pan. Fry the onion/ginger paste in the hot oil, about 3 minutes. Add the garam masala and chili powder and cook 1 minute more. Now pour in the tomato passata, reduce heat to medium-low, and cook for another 5 minutes. Return the chicken to the pan and add the coconut cream; bring to a boil. Add the butter, fenugreek, and salt; reduce heat to low and simmer uncovered until the chicken pieces are no longer pink in the middle, 15 to 20 minutes.

Garnish with freshly torn coriander leaves and lime wedges. Serve with basmati rice and warm naan bread.

Recipe 30

Galangal

Tom kha goong (Thai prawn and coconut-milk soup)

A perfectly balanced, elegant start to any celebration, whatever the type of cuisine. Not too spicy, not too tart, and not too sweet or salty.



Starter

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes plus chilling time

Cooking time: 10 minutes

Gluten-free

Dairy-free

Tom kha goong (Thai prawn and coconut-milk soup)

Ingredients

200g prawns, peeled & de-veined
100g tofu, firm variety, cubed
400ml chicken or vegetable broth
400ml coconut milk
1 tspn fish or soy sauce
1 tbs shallots, minced
Juice of 1 lime
1 knob of galangal (if fresh cannot be found, use 50g galangal paste)
2 stalks of lemongrass, hard outer leaves removed, thinly sliced
4 white peppercorns
2 tbs fresh ginger, minced
1 tbs coriander leaves
2 red chili peppers, seeded and sliced
2 kaffir lime leaves, ripped so as to release their flavour

Method

Using a mortar and pestle, pound the white peppercorns into a powder, then add the ginger and shallots. Continue to pound into a thick paste.

Pour the broth and coconut milk into a saucepan and heat to a boil. Add the galangal, ginger paste, fish sauce, lemongrass and lime juice. Stir and boil for 5 to 7 minutes.

Add the prawns and tofu. Cook for 2 minutes and stir gently so that the tofu stays in its cubed form.

Remove the knob of galangal.

To serve: pour the soup into a large bowl, and top with the coriander leaves, sliced chilies and the kaffir lime leaves.

Or serve with a portion of steamed jasmine rice, as a small meal in itself!

Variation: chicken breast sliced in chunks, as an alternative to prawns. Adjust the cooking time to 10 minutes.



Gaeng keow waan gai (Thai green curry with chicken)

My husband's favourite. If left to his own devices, he would eat this every day! I hope that you find this authentic recipe equally additive.



Main course

Serves 4

Prep time: 40 minutes

Cooking time: 35 minutes

Gluten-free

Dairy-free

Gaeng keow waan gai (Thai green curry with chicken)

Ingredients

5 green Thai chili peppers, seeded and chopped
4 tbs fresh ginger, minced; or 5 tbs ginger paste
2 shallots, minced
1 bunch of fresh coriander (with roots is best if you can find)
2 stalks of lemongrass, sliced
Juice of 2 limes
2 tbs fish sauce
5 white peppercorns
2 tbs sugar
2 pinches of salt
250ml of chicken broth
400ml coconut milk
250ml coconut cream
A 4 cm piece of galangal or 2 tbs of galangal paste
2 chicken breasts, sliced into bite-sized pieces
5 kaffir lime leaves (three for the curry and two to garnish)
3 Thai green eggplants (from Asian markets. Or use courgettes).
Bunch of Thai pea eggplants (omit if you can't find).
2 tomatoes, quartered
1 large potato, in chunks



Method

First, make the green curry paste either in a food processor or for a richer flavour use the ancient method of adding ingredients one at a time to a mortar and pestle. First pound the white peppercorns into a powder. Then add, one after the other, green chilies, ginger, shallots, coriander, lemongrass, lime juice, fish sauce, sugar and salt, pounding after each to make a thick green paste. Trust me, this is not as complicated as it sounds!

In a large saucepan bring the chicken broth and coconut milk to a boil. Add the galangal, and the potato (not authentic, but the starch thickens and adds texture). Now add your green curry paste and stir.

Next add the eggplant, the Thai pea eggplant, tomato and 3 torn kaffir lime leaves. Continue stirring.

Then add the chicken and coconut cream. Stir and reduce heat to a simmer and cook for 30 minutes. Remove the galangal and the dark green kaffir lime leaves.

Spoon the curry into a serving bowl. Garnish with freshly torn kaffir lime leaves and chopped coriander. Serve with steamed jasmine rice. Variant: replace chicken with prawns or tofu.

Recipe 32

Garam masala

Chicken Tikka

Pssssst! A chef's secret...for the most tender grilled chicken, marinate in Indian tonic for 24 hours. You'll be so happy that you did!



Serves 4

Prep time: 30 minutes plus marination

Grilling time: 12 minutes

Gluten-free

Ingredients

2 whole boneless chicken breasts
125ml of Indian tonic
150g natural full-fat Greek-style
yoghurt
100g ginger paste
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp ground coriander
1 tsp red chilli powder, plus extra
if required
1 tsp turmeric
2 limes, juice only
2 tsp garam masala powder
Salt and white pepper, to taste

Method

Cut the chicken breast into large cubes and place into a re-sealable plastic bag. Add 125ml Indian tonic water into the bag, seal and put into the refrigerator to marinate for 12 to 24 hours.

In a bowl, add the yoghurt and all the remaining ingredients. Blend to a smooth paste. Taste, and add more chili powder if needed.

Drain the chicken and mix into the yoghurt mixture. Cover with cling film and leave the chicken to marinate 4–5 hours.

Prepare and light the BBQ.

Skewer the chicken pieces and place on to the hot grill. Cook for 10 to 12 minutes, turning occasionally.

Serve with mango chutney and rice. How about trying turmeric and lime rice?



Recipe 33

Garam masala

Poached peaches with ricotta butter-cream and crunchy panko topping

A savoury and refreshing summer salad with just a touch of sweetness



First course

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 10 minutes

Poached peaches with ricotta buttercream and crunchy panko topping

Ingredients

3 ripe large yellow peaches,
thinly sliced
200g sugar
Juice of 1/2 lemon
3 cloves
200g fresh ricotta cheese
3 tbs of natural Greek yogurt
2 tbs unsalted butter
A bed of rucola
Honey drizzle
Panko breadcrumbs, toasted
1 tbs garam masala

Method

Dissolve the sugar in 250ml of boiling water. Add the sliced peaches, lemon juice and cloves and poach for 10 minutes. Let the peaches cool in the liquid.

In a mini food processor, blend the ricotta cheese, butter and yogurt until smooth.

Make a bed of rucola on a serving platter. Layer the poached peaches and dollop the ricotta mixture on top. (Reserve the liquid for another use: delicious when added to a Bellini cocktail, or to make peach confiture.)

Finally, drizzle the finest honey that you have, and sprinkle the toasted panko breadcrumbs and garam masala.

Serve with Parma ham and freshly baked focaccia.



Recipe 34

Ginger

Thai moo sarong (Pork wrapped in golden threads)

A recipe from the Ayutthaya Era (1351 - 1767), when Chao Wang food was created and chefs prepared specialities for the royal family & the court. Complicated, a bit fiddly, but worth the learning curve. Give it a try?



Starter

Serves 4

Prep time: 30 minutes plus chilling time

Cooking time: 5 minutes

Thai moo sarong (Pork wrapped in golden threads)

Ingredients

200g minced pork
1 tspn fish or soy sauce
1 tbs shallots, minced
Juice of 1/2 lime
1 tbs coriander stems and root,
minced (or use coriander
leaves if root unavailable)
2 tbs fresh ginger, minced
8 whole white peppercorns
5 salt flakes
1 tsp sugar
1 egg yolk
2 tbs cornflour
100g of thin ba mee khai noodles
(use tagliolini if Thai/Chinese
egg noodles difficult to find)
250-300ml soy bean or vegetable
oil for deep frying

Method

Using a mortar and pestle, pound the white peppercorns into a powder. Add the salt flakes, then the coriander root, ginger, shallots. Continue to pound into a thick paste.

In a separate bowl, combine the egg yolk with the minced pork, then add the cornflour, fish sauce, lime juice, ginger/coriander paste and mix thoroughly.

Place the pork mixture into the refrigerator for 15 minutes to allow the flavours to blend (it will become sticky – that's good).

Remove from refrigerator and, by rolling between your fingers, create balls of 2cm diameter. Chill for 20 minutes.

While the pork balls are chilling, cook the egg noodles in salted boiling water (with a drop of oil in the water) for approx 3 minutes. Drain and pour cold water over the noodles; drain again and separate the noodles with your fingers and lay flat on a lined tray

Using 5 cooked noodles ,wrap each meatball as if you are making a ball of string. Tuck in the end of each noodle to prevent unraveling. **CONTINUED...**

Thai moo sarong (Pork wrapped in golden threads)

Method (continued)

Heat the vegetable or soy bean oil in a deep saucepan and fry each ball until it becomes golden and crispy. Drain on kitchen towels.

Serve with Thai sweet chili sauce, fresh slices of cucumber and coriander leaves. Do not skimp on the presentation – you are creating food fit for kings and queens!

Variation: try minced prawns or chicken as an alternative to the pork



Recipe 35

Ginger

Thai sweet chili sauce

A spicy sauce designed for dipping!



Sauce

Serves 4

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 5 minutes

Ingredients

120ml rice vinegar
60g sugar
2 tbs fresh ginger, minced
2 tspn hot chili peppers, chopped
1 tspn ketchup
Pinch of salt
1 tspn cornflour

Method

Pour the vinegar, plus 60ml of water, into a small saucepan and bring to a rapid boil.

Stir in the sugar, ginger, chili peppers and ketchup. Simmer for 5 minutes.

In a mug, dissolve the cornflour in a little hot water. Stir vigorously to remove any lumps and whisk into the sauce until it thickens.

Pour into a serving bowl, cover and allow to cool.

Dip your favourite Asian appetisers into the sauce, and enjoy!



Recipe 36

Ginger

Versatile spicy Thai savoury sauce

A salty, spicy, savoury sauce. So versatile: use as a salad sauce, a marinade for grilled meats and vegetables, or as a dip for spring rolls or dumplings.



Sauce
serves 4
prep time: 10 mins

Also see video on my YouTube channel: [lockedintastes](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCk0edintastes)

Versatile spicy Thai savoury sauce

Ingredients

60ml fish sauce, soy sauce or teriyaki sauce
60ml freshly squeezed lime juice
20ml water
2 red chilies, seeded and cut with scissors
125g of finely grated ginger
2 pinches of sugar

Method

Pour the liquid ingredients into a glass jar and shake. Then add the ginger, sugar, water and chili and shake again.

The sauce can be stored for up to a week in the refrigerator.

Suggestion

If using the sauce as a marinade, also add a drizzle of sesame oil.



Recipe 37

Grenadine

A Swiss Kiss

A cocktail not to miss!



Apéro

Serves 2

Gluten-free

Vegetarian, Vegan

Also see video on my YouTube channel: [lockedintastes](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCk0edintastes)

Ingredients

One part dry gin
One part grenadine
One part fizzy lemonade
One freshly-squeezed lemon

Method

Fill a cocktail shaker with ice cubes.

Pour the gin, grenadine and lemon juice into the shaker.

Shake until the sides of the cocktail shaker become frosty.

Pour into martini glasses.

Top with the fizzy lemonade.

Serve.



Recipe 38

Grenadine

Singapore Sling

Inspired by Raffles Hotel, Singapore



Apéro
Serves 1

Singapore Sling

Ingredients

5ml Cointreau
110ml pineapple juice
15ml lime juice
40ml gin
10ml grenadine
10ml cherry liqueur
A dash of angostura bitters
5ml DOM Benedictine
A splash of soda water to give
the cocktail a bit of fizz.
Or try tonic water instead

Method

Fill a cocktail shaker with ice. Pour all ingredients (except for the soda/tonic water and cherry liqueur) into the shaker. Shake until the outside of the shaker becomes nice and frosty.

Strain into highball glasses filled with ice cubes and top up with the soda or tonic water.

Drizzle the cherry liqueur on top and garnish with a slice of lime... and sip!



Recipe 39

Herbs of Provence

Roast whole chicken

There are many ways to cook a chicken, but this is the typical French bistro way. Why not try it at home?



Main course

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 45 minutes

Gluten-free

Roast whole chicken

Ingredients

1 whole chicken, rinsed
2 lemons, sliced in half
2 tbs Herbs of Provence
50ml olive oil
50g unsalted butter, sliced
into chunks
Salt and pepper to taste
125ml brandy or cream sherry
125ml chicken bouillon

Method

Preheat oven 200°C.

Place the chicken in a roasting pan with the breast side facing up. Rub the surface of the chicken with olive oil on all sides.

Squeeze the lemons on to the chicken, then place the squeezed lemons into the cavity.

Sprinkle the Herbs of Provence on top of the chicken and season with salt & pepper.

Press the butter firmly on the breast, so that it does not slide off.

Pour the chicken bouillon and brandy/cream sherry over the chicken allowing the excess to collect in the roasting pan.

Roast for 45 minutes. You will know that the chicken is cooked when clear juices run from the meat and the skin is golden brown and crispy.

Remove from oven and leave to rest for 10 minutes.

Remove the lemons from the cavity, carve, and serve with pommes frites.



Recipe 40

Juniper berries

The remedy - G & T

The imperial cocktail that kept the British healthy while battling malaria across the Empire. So it's not just a drink, but a remedy!



Apéro

Serves 1

Mixing time: 5 minutes

Ingredients

60ml Gin
150ml Indian tonic
1/2 lemon

Method

In highball glass with ice, squeeze the lemon, pour the gin and then top up with the tonic.

Swirl the with a non-metallic stirrer and serve.



Recipe 41

Kaffir lime leaves

Yam wun sen – Seafood & cellophane noodle salad

This Thai noodle salad is the perfect crisp, spicy, seafood starter to any meal. My version uses the cool flavours of lime leaves to calm the hot chilli zing.



Starter

Serves 6

Cooking time: 10 minutes

Dairy-free

Yam wun sen ~ Seafood & cellophane noodle salad

Ingredients

200g wun sen noodles: thin, thread-like, "cellophane" vermicelli noodles
400g baby scallops, rinsed
300g prawns, peeled and deveined
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
2 shallots, peeled, finely sliced
2 roma plum tomatoes, cut into wedges
125g fresh coriander leaves
2 tablespoons toasted peanuts, chopped
6 kaffir lime leaves, torn
2 red chilli peppers, seeded and sliced

Dressing: Versatile spicy Thai savoury sauce, in this e-book.



Method

Soak the noodles in lukewarm water in a bowl for 10 minutes to soften slightly. Drain.

Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil. Cook the noodles for 1 minute. Drain and transfer the noodles back to the bowl. Use scissors to cut them into 4 cm lengths.

Place the baby scallops and prawns in another bowl. Add the oil and toss to combine. Then stir fry in a wok at high heat to cook for 2 or 3 minutes.

Remove the scallops and prawns from the wok and transfer them to the bowl of noodles, tossing them together, and adding the dressing (the Versatile Thai savoury sauce, in this e-book), and also the shallots, tomato, coriander, and chili peppers. Transfer to a serving plate. Sprinkle with the peanuts and the torn kaffir lime leaves and chilies.

Serve with cucumber slices and lime wedges.

Recipe 42

Lavender

Lemon madeleines with lavender

Once the fields are in bloom, I rush to collect handfuls of lavender and prepare these delicate treats.



Snack - Tea time
Makes 24 madeleines
Prep time: 40 minutes
Cooking time: 7 to 8 minutes

Lemon madeleines with lavender

Ingredients

175g unsalted butter, melted, plus
more for the baking pans
375g cake flour, sifted (not self-rising)
1/2 tspn baking powder
1/4 tspn coarse salt
3 large eggs plus 2 large egg yolks
175g granulated sugar
2 tbs finely grated lemon zest
2 tbs fresh lemon juice
2 tbs edible (untreated) lavender
petals - ask your grocer or florist

Method

Preheat oven to 200°C. Butter two madeleine pans; set aside.

Sift flour, baking powder, and salt into a bowl; set aside.

Put eggs, egg yolks, granulated sugar, lemon zest and juice into the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Mix on medium-high speed until pale and thickened, about 5 minutes. Mix in the butter and lavender petals. Using a spatula, fold flour mixture into egg mixture. Let rest 30 minutes.

Pour batter into buttered pans, filling the moulds 3/4 full. Bake for 7-8 minutes, until edges are crisp and golden. Let the madeleines cool slightly in the pans. Invert, un-mould and serve on one of your prettiest desert dishes.



Recipe 43

Lemongrass

Nam Manao - Limeade with lemongrass

Refreshing, thirst-quenching and a real crowd-pleaser



Beverage

Serves 4

Preparation time: 20minutes

Chilling time: 60 minutes

Nam Manao - Limeade with lemongrass

Ingredients

250ml freshly-squeezed lime juice, reserve rinds
3 stalks of lemongrass, sliced thinly
Half a litre of water
250g sugar
1 pinch of salt
Soda water (to top up the glasses and add some fizz)
Lime slices, fresh mint leaves and lemongrass stalks to garnish
Ice cubes

Method

In a saucepan, heat the water to a boil, add the sugar and salt. Stir to dissolve. Take the pan off the heat. Add the lemongrass and the lime rinds and allow to steep for 15 minutes.

Strain and pour the liquid into a pitcher.

Add the lime juice, stir and refrigerate until ready to serve.

Pour the limeade into cocktail glasses over plenty of ice, filling 3/4 of the way. Top up with the soda water and garnish with lime slices and a lemongrass stalk.



Linden Leaf Tea

A calming tea for any time of the year



In June, when the Linden tree is in bloom, pick some of the pale green leaves, together with the flowers. Spread the leaves and flowers on to a wooden board and keep in the driest part of your home for a couple of days. Then put the partially dried leaves and flowers into a paper bag for about one week. Once the leaves & flowers are nice and dry, pack them into a clean glass jar.

Take a handful and brew a cup of Linden Leaf Tea whenever you wish.



Recipe 45

Marjoram

Sweet sautéed carrots with orange and marjoram

A lovely complement to a Sunday roast



Side dish

Serves 4

Prep time: 7 minutes

cooking time: 10 to 12 minutes

Sweet sautéed carrots with orange and marjoram

Ingredients

3 tbs olive oil
16 carrots cut, on the diagonal,
into 4cm slices
1 tspn honey
1 tbs orange marmalade
1/2 tspn freshly-ground black
pepper
2 pinches of salt
1 tbs dried marjoram
1 tbs fresh marjoram
2 tbs fresh orange juice
2 tbs Grand Marnier

Method

In a medium non-stick sauté pan, heat 1 to 2 tbs of the oil over moderately low heat. Add the carrots, honey, orange marmalade, salt, pepper, and the dried marjoram. Cook, covered, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes.

Uncover the pan. Raise the heat to moderate and cook, stirring frequently, until the carrots are very tender and start to brown, about 8 minutes longer.

Pour the Grand Marnier and carefully light, allowing the alcohol to burn off.

Remove the pan from the heat. Stir in the remaining 1 to 2 tablespoons of oil and the orange juice, place in a serving bowl, pour over the pan juices and sprinkle the fresh marjoram.



Recipe 46

Mint

Mojito

Mojito memory: sipping my first (ever) at the Sunset Pier, Key West, FL while watching the sunset = CHEERS!



Apéro
Serves 2

Ingredients

50ml lime juice

20 mint leaves

100ml white rum

20ml sugar syrup

Top up with tonic to give
it fizz

Method

Divide the mint between 2 cocktail glasses and crush them with the back of a wooden spoon to release the mint oil from the leaves.

In a cocktail shaker filled with ice, pour in the sugar syrup, lime juice and rum. Shake until the sides of the shaker become frosty.

Pour into the glasses and top up with tonic.

Garnish with sliced lime, mint and (if you can find it) sugar cane.



Recipe 47

Mint

Orange and pineapple with mint sugar

Quick, easy and deliciously fresh!



Dessert

Serves 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Gluten-free

Dairy-free

Orange and pineapple with mint sugar

Ingredients

4 oranges, peeled and sliced
1 pineapple, sliced and cut into
chunks
4 tablespoons of mint leaves
4 tablespoons of caster sugar
1 lime
Pinch of salt

Method

Arrange the fruit on a serving platter or on individual dessert plates.

Squeeze the lime over the fruit.

Mince the mint leaves until very fine and mix with the sugar (a mini food processor makes short work of this step) and the pinch of salt.

Sprinkle this mint sugar over the fruit and serve.



Recipe 48

Mustard seeds

Piquant potatoes

Indian flavours to spice up some spuds



Side Dish

Serves 4

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 15 minutes

Gluten-free

Also see video on my YouTube channel: [lockedintastes](#)

Piquant potatoes

Ingredients

750g potatoes (waxy or all-purpose),
peeled and cut into cubes

Drizzle of olive oil

3 tsp black mustard seeds

1 tsp cumin seeds

1 tsp freshly ground black pepper

1 bunch of coriander, chopped

1 freshly squeezed lemon

Pinch of salt

Method

Boil the potatoes until they're tender, then drain and dry.

Heat a drizzle of olive in a non-stick frying pan and, when it's hot, add the cumin and mustard seeds and wait a moment until they start to pop.

Quickly add the potatoes and stir until they start to brown at the edges, then add the black pepper and two pinches of salt.

Keep stirring and frying until the potatoes are nicely browned and a bit crispy on the edges.

Toss in the coriander, stir, then squeeze the lemon juice, stir again and serve hot.



Recipe 49

Nigella seeds

Mango chutney

Serve with your favourite Indian curry or tandoori. Also delicious with raclette.



Makes about 4 small glass jars

Cook time: 60 mins

Preserving time: 30 mins

Mango chutney

Ingredients

4 tbs fresh ginger, finely grated
2 red chilis, sliced
2 tspn whole nigella seeds
1 tspn ground coriander
1 tspn ground cumin
1/2 tspn turmeric powder
10 toasted cardamom seeds
5 whole cloves
1 tspn ground cinnamon and 2
whole cinnamon sticks
¼ teaspoon salt
4-5 mangoes (about 250-300 grams
each), peeled and diced
500g white granulated sugar
175ml white vinegar

Method

In a large saucepan, sauté the ginger, garlic and red chilies in a little water for a minute. Add the spices and sauté for another minute. Add the diced mangoes, sugar, salt, and vinegar and stir to combine. Bring to a rapid boil and then reduce to medium-low heat. Steady simmer for 45 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to cool.

Storage

The chutney will keep in the fridge for approximately 6 weeks, but for a longer shelf-life you may prefer to pour the hot mixture directly into sterilized jars and boil the jars in a water bath, submerging the glass jar completely for 15 minutes.



Recipe 50

Nigella seeds

Raita

A lovely way to cool down a fiery curry



Starter or side dish

Servings 4

Prep time: 15 mins

Chill time: 2 hours

Ingredients

1 large cucumber
480g plain yogurt
1 tbs nigella seeds
1 tbs ground cumin seeds
1/2 tspn ground coriander seeds
1/2 tspn salt
1/2 tspn sugar
1/4 tspn cayenne
Juice of 1 lemon
1 bunch of mint, chopped

Method

Slice the cucumber in half. Use a spoon to scrape out the seeds and discard them.

Then grate the half-cucumbers onto a kitchen towel. This will remove the excess moisture. Set aside.

In a bowl, stir together the yogurt, cumin, coriander, cayenne, lemon juice, sugar, salt and pepper. Add the cucumber and stir to combine, then stir in the mint. Taste and adjust the seasoning as you wish.

Cover and refrigerate for a couple of hours to allow the flavours to combine.

Top with the nigella seeds and serve as a starter with poppadoms or to accompany your favourite Indian curry.



Recipe 51

Nutmeg

Chestnut gnocchi with Gorgonzola & pear

An autumn favourite from Northern Italy.



Primo Piatto

Serves 8

Prep Time: 2 hours

Cook Time: 10 minutes

Gluten-free

Chestnut gnocchi with Gorgonzola & pear

Ingredients

For the Gnocchi

4 large floury-type potatoes
400g of chestnut flour, and some
more for dusting
225g ricotta cheese
1 large egg
1 tspn salt

For the Gorgonzola & Pear Sauce

2 tbs butter
2 firm but ripe pears
225ml heavy cream
1 tbs brandy or cream sherry
200g Gorgonzola cheese

To serve

Pinches of nutmeg
Sprigs of fresh thyme

Method

Making the gnocchi

Scrub and wash the potatoes and place in large pot of boiling water. Cook for about 20 minutes with salt, until fork-tender. Remove from water and place in a colander to cool and drain.

Peel the potatoes when cool, then finely grate them using a box grater, or a rice mill, on to a baking tray lined with baking paper and place into a warm oven at 100°C to "dry" for half an hour.

Form the potatoes into a mound on a large work surface. Pile the 400g of chestnut flour on top. Sprinkle salt around the base of the mound.

Make a hole in the middle of the mound, creating a "well". Crack the egg into the well and add the ricotta. Blend these with your hands, from out to in, to make a dough. Knead the dough only enough to incorporate all the ingredients. Form the dough into a fat log shape about 20cm x 6cm. Cut the log into about 8 even slices. Dust with flour as you shape each slice into a rope by rolling with your hands. Do not over-flour. The rope should have about the width of your middle finger.

CONTINUED...

Chestnut gnocchi with Gorgonzola & pear

Then slice the rope into pieces about 2 cm long to create the gnocchi. Roll the back of a fork over the gnocchi, flicking each into a curl-shape.

Place the gnocchi in a colander, dust well with extra flour, and set aside. Start your sauce while you heat the water for cooking the gnocchi.

Gorgonzola & Pear Sauce

Remove skin and core from pears. Chop into small bite-size pieces.

Melt butter over medium high heat in a heavy-bottom sauté pan. Add pears and brown slightly for about 3 minutes. Don't over-cook.

Remove pan from hob. Add brandy or cream sherry. Gently swirl pan to incorporate cognac for 30 seconds. Return to heat.

Add gorgonzola. Let the cheese melt before adding milk, cream & nutmeg. Keep simmering on low heat. The sauce will thicken slightly while you start boiling your gnocchi.

Boiling the gnocchi

Gently shake the flour off of the gnocchi and drop them into the boiling water. Don't overcrowd the pan. It will take a few batches.

When the gnocchi rise to the surface, remove them with a slotted spoon, and drain on towel.

To serve

Once cooked, place the gnocchi in serving bowls, pour over the sauce, add the obligatory pinch of nutmeg and garnish with a sprig of thyme.



Recipe 52

Nutmeg

Gratinato di finocchio con noce moscata (Fennel gratin with nutmeg)

A flavourful accompaniment to a Sunday roast or a baked fish dinner



Side dish

4 servings

Prep time: 20 minutes

Baking time: 30 minutes

Gluten-free

Gratinato di finocchio con noce moscata

Ingredients

3 bulbs of fennel, sliced
3 tbs butter
125ml cream
125g gorgonzola cheese
125g breadcrumbs, gluten-free preferred
125g parmesan cheese, grated
1 tspn nutmeg, freshly grated
1 tbs salt



Method

In a large saucepan, add 1 litre of water, salt and bring to the boil. Add the fennel and reduce the heat to medium. Boil the fennel until fairly tender (about 10 minutes). Drain and set aside.

Preheat the oven to 185°C. Butter a large oven-proof baking dish, or individual baking dishes.

Using the large saucepan again, melt 2 tbs of butter, then add the cream, gorgonzola cheese, and stir. Turn off the heat. Add the fennel and stir until the mixture is creamy and well combined

Spoon the fennel mixture into the baking dishes.

In a separate bowl, mix the breadcrumbs and parmesan cheese together.

Sprinkle the breadcrumb mixture over the fennel and grate the nutmeg, using a nutmeg grater, over the top. Dab the remaining 1 tbs of butter on top of the breadcrumb topping

Bake for 30 minutes and serve HOT.

Recipe 53

Orange blossom water

Sicilian blood orange and fennel salad

The fresh taste of Sicily in the form of a crisp salad to serve with your favourite fish or seafood recipes



Side dish

Serves 4

Prep time: 15 minutes

Chilling time: 60 minutes

Dairy-free

Sicilian blood orange and fennel salad

Ingredients

2 large blood oranges (or, if not available, navel oranges),
peeled, pith removed and
sliced
1 large bulb of fennel, sliced
1 tbs of very thinly sliced red onions
3 tbs extra virgin olive oil
2 tbs of orange blossom water
Mint leaves, torn
2 tbs crushed pistachios (optional)
Salt and pepper to taste

Method

Toss the orange and fennel together in a large bowl, add the orange blossom water and olive oil and toss again. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Cover with cling film and chill for 1 hour.

Sprinkle the crushed pistachios and add freshly ground pepper and salt to taste. Serve with torn mint leaves.



Recipe 54

Orange blossoms

Ramos Gin Fizz

Inspired by Henry C. Ramos who invented this version at his bar, the Imperial Cabinet Saloon, in New Orleans in 1888. It remains a fab way to cool down on a hot summer's day.



Apéro
Serves 1
Gluten-free

Ingredients

15ml fresh lime juice
15ml fresh lemon juice
50ml gin
20ml sugar syrup
15ml single cream
1 egg white
1 tspn orange blossom water
Top up with soda water
Slice of fresh orange for garnish

Method

Shake all ingredients, except for the soda water, in a cocktail shaker filled with ice until the outside of the shaker becomes frosty (about 15 to 20 seconds).

Pour into a highball glass, top up with soda water and serve with a slice of fresh orange.



Baked aubergine with tomatoes and feta

A super-satisfying & easy casserole to prepare at any time of the year



Serves: 6 as a side dish or...

4 as a main course

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 30 minutes

Gluten-free

Baked aubergine with tomatoes and feta

Ingredients

2 medium aubergines, peeled
and chopped into cubes
480g tinned chopped tomatoes
and their juice
250g feta cheese cut into cubes
2 tbs of fresh oregano (or dried if
fresh not available)
Olive oil to drizzle
50g breadcrumbs or (even better)
pine-nuts, to create a
crunchy topping

Method

Preheat oven to 185°C.

Drizzle olive oil in the bottom of a 20 x
30 cm baking dish.

Add the aubergine cubes and toss with
the olive oil.

Layer the tinned chopped tomatoes
over the aubergine cubes, then the feta
cheese. Sprinkle the breadcrumbs (or
pine-nuts) and oregano on top.

Drizzle a little more of olive oil and bake
for 30 minutes.



Recipe 56

Oregano

Roast rack of lamb

A British and Australian favourite, but my Mediterranean version is how we make it at home



Main course

Serves 4

Prep time: 60 minutes

cooking time: 12 minutes

Gluten-free

Dairy-free

Roast rack of lamb

Ingredients

2 racks of lamb (8 ribs each),
trimmed
2 lemons
1 tbs freshly cracked pepper
1 tbs salt
Handful of fresh oregano, pulsed;
or 40g of dried
250ml olive oil
Crema di balsamico: a drizzle

Method

Separate the racks with a sharp pointed knife, counting 2 chops per cut, and place into a resealable plastic bag. Pour in 250ml of olive oil and marinate in the refrigerator for 12 hours. The olive oil trick creates just the most luscious tender chops.

Remove from the plastic bag, drain off the oil and place in a shallow roasting pan.

Squeeze the lemon juice over the lamb and place the lemon rinds into the pan.

Season with salt and pepper, toss the oregano on top and leave to rest for one hour.

Preheat the oven to 220°C

Cook the lamb. For medium rare, 6 minutes on each side.

Serve with roast potatoes, grilled vegetables and a drizzle crema di balsamico.



Recipe 57

Pandan leaves

Pandan juice

A mainstay for Southeast Asian desserts and tastier if you make your own. (Recipe inspired by Anita Jacobson)



Sauce

Prep Time: 15 mins

Total Time: 15 mins

Makes 125ml of pandan juice

Ingredients

18 fresh or frozen pandan leaves

125ml water

Method

Rinse the leaves. Then with a pair of scissors cut the leaves into pieces and fill a blender with them.

Add the water and blend. Continue blending until the leaves are reduced to tiny bits.

Use a strainer or sieve to strain.

Transfer the pandan juice into a sterilised glass jar.

Store refrigerated for up to one week.



Pandan coconut ice cream

Taste of far-away lands where being green is definitely cool!



Dessert

Serves 4

Prep and cooking time: 30 minutes

Chilling time: 4 hours

Gluten-free

Dairy-free

Vegan

Pandan coconut ice cream

Ingredients

250ml coconut cream

400ml (1 can) full-fat coconut milk

8 tbsn pandan juice (see Pandan Juice: Recipe 57)

100-125g sugar, adjusted to the sweetness of your tooth

Pinch of salt

Method

Place all ingredients into a medium-sized saucepan and bring to a rapid boil. Then lower the temperature to simmer and cook for 10 minutes, to create a custard.

Pour the custard into an ice-cream maker and follow the machine-manufacturer's instructions,

If you do not have an ice-cream maker, no worries: simply pour your custard into a plastic container and place in the freezer. After 1 hour, the custard will start to form crystals. Gently stir the custard from time to time and continue to check it every hour and, in about 4 hours, your ice cream will be ready to serve.



Sandra's roasted potatoes

Potatoes that work with every dish, every day, at any time



Side dish

Serves 4 - 6

Prep time: 25 minutes

Cook time: 45 minutes

Gluten-free

Also see video on my YouTube channel: [lockedintastes](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UClockedintastes)

Sandra's roasted potatoes

Ingredients

1kg floury potatoes, such as King
Edward or Maris Piper, peeled
and sliced into cubes
1 tbs salt
2 tbs paprika
2 tbs butter, cubed
2 tbs olive oil
Sprigs of fresh rosemary and sage
Salt and pepper to taste

Method

Preheat the oven to 185°C.

Boil the potatoes in a large
saucepan with 1 tbs salt until tender.
Drain and place on to a baking tray.
Drizzle olive oil and drop pieces of
butter on to the potatoes, sprinkle
the paprika and roast for 45 minutes
or until the potatoes are well-roast-
ed and crispy.

Add salt and pepper to taste.

Serve with sprigs of fresh rosemary
and sage.



Recipe 60

Parsley

Carciofi (artichokes) alla Romana

In springtime, keep your eyes open for mammola or cimarolo artichokes (medium-sized globe artichokes). These beauties are perfect for this traditional Roman speciality.



Starter

Serves 4

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 30 to 40 minutes

Gluten-free

Dairy-free

Carciofi (artichokes) alla Romana

Ingredients

4 globe artichokes
3 lemons, quartered
1 bunch of flat-leaf
parsley, chopped
250 to 300 ml
vegetable stock
60ml dry white wine
120ml olive oil
Salt and pepper

Method

Cut the tip off of the artichokes (about the top third). Rub the cut surfaces with the lemon to prevent them from turning brown.

Peel the tough outer covering of the stem to reveal the white flesh underneath. Snap off the leathery outer leaves, to expose the tender light green leaves beneath. And trim with a knife the dark green parts around the base of the artichoke. The size of the artichokes will be vastly reduced – don't worry, you are creating a melt-in-your-mouth experience!

From the top of each artichoke, reach down with your fingers to expose the prickly, thorny choke (towards the bottom of the globe) and remove it carefully with a small knife.

Rub the cut surfaces with the lemon quarters. Now drop the trimmed artichokes into a bowl of water with the juice of half a lemon, to prevent browning. Reserve the squeezed lemon sections for cooking.

In a separate bowl, mix the chopped parsley, salt and pepper and the juice from one lemon.

Remove the artichokes from their bowl and dry with a kitchen towel. Rub the parsley and salt mixture into the leaves and crevices of the artichokes.

Pour olive oil into a casserole and heat to a simmer.

CONTINUED...

Method (continued)

Place the artichokes, top side down/stems pointing up and arrange the squeezed lemon halves around the artichokes.

Add the vegetable stock and the white wine. The liquid should reach half way up the artichokes.

Cover and cook over medium heat until the artichokes are cooked through (approx 30 to 40 minutes). To test, poke a knife through the centre of an artichoke to see if it is tender. You may need to add more stock during the cooking process to make up for some evaporation. The liquid will become a flavourful reduced sauce.

Let the artichokes cool in the sauce to room temperature.

Place each artichoke into a shallow serving bowl. Spoon over the sauce and garnish with chopped parsley and a lemon wedge. Serve with extra virgin olive oil (to drizzle) and chunks of crusty bread for dipping into the tasty sauce.



Recipe 61

Pepper

Cacio e pepe con tagliolini

Cheese, pepper and pasta - what else??



Primo piatto

Serves 2

Cooking time 25 minutes

Cacio e pepe con tagliolini

Ingredients

250g tagliolini
2 tbs butter
1 tbs olive oil
Peel of one lemon, thinly sliced
300g pecorino cheese, finely grated,
plus more for serving
Cracked black pepper to taste

Method

In a large saucepan of boiling salted water, cook the pasta until al dente. Drain the pasta in a colander and set aside. But reserve 200ml of the pasta water.

Using the same large saucepan, melt the butter and the oil. Add the lemon peel and stir, then add a generous quantity of cracked black pepper and stir until the mixture becomes fragrant.

Add 100 ml of the reserved pasta water and mix.

Using tongs, toss in the pasta, add the cheese and toss again. If the sauce is too thick, add more pasta water and toss.

Serve with more grated cheese and cracked black pepper.



Recipe 62

Pepper

Salad of cherry tomatoes, fraises des bois, mesclun and shaved parmesan cheese

Fraises des bois are a summer treat and a winner in this salad.



First course

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Gluten-free

Salad of cherry tomatoes, fraises des bois, mesclun and shaved parmesan cheese

Ingredients

400g cherry tomatoes, halved
100g mesclun
200g fraises des bois
75g shavings of parmesan cheese
Drizzle of extra virgin olive oil and
crema di balsamico
A generous amount of freshly
ground black pepper

Method

On a serving platter, or in 4 individual salad plates, arrange the mesclun leaves, cherry tomatoes, fraise des bois and shavings of parmesan cheese.

Drizzle the finest extra virgin olive oil you have and then the crema di balsamico.

Crack a generous amount of freshly ground black pepper and serve.



Lemon poppy-seed fairy cakes

A sunny taste of home



Breakfast or with afternoon tea

Makes 12 fairy cakes

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 20 minutes

Lemon poppy-seed fairy cakes

Ingredients

325g white flour
125g sugar
2 tbs poppy seeds
1 tbs baking powder
125g melted unsalted butter
125g full-fat plain Greek-style yogurt
50ml heavy cream
2 large eggs
Pinch of salt
Zest from one unwaxed lemon
3 tbs lemon juice (juice of one large lemon)
Icing sugar

Method

Preheat oven to 225°C.

Line your fairy-cake pan with paper wrappers.

Whisk the butter and sugar, adding the eggs, yogurt, heavy cream, lemon juice, baking powder and salt together to create a batter.

Add flour and poppy seeds to the batter and mix until thick.

Divide the batter into the 12 fairy-cake cups, filling each cup 2/3 full and wiping off any batter that may have spilled into the baking pan.

Bake the fairy cakes for 5 minutes at 225°C, then reduce the heat to 185°C and continue baking for another 12 to 15 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the thickest part of a fairy cake comes out clean or with a few moist crumbs.

Turn the pan upright to cool. Remove the fairy cakes when completely cooled.

Dust with icing sugar.



Recipe 64

Rose petals

Duchess of Cambridge cocktail

Inspired by a recent visit to Rules restaurant in London and their talented bar staff. Sip the flavours of regal luxury.



Apéro

Serves 2

Prep time: 5 minutes

Duchess of Cambridge cocktail

Ingredients

120 ml pomegranate and rose gin
120 ml elderflower and rose cordial
Juice of 1 lime
A small bunch mint leaves, crushed
Fizz (Champagne or Prosecco), to top
up the glasses
Dried rose petals

Method

Fill a cocktail shaker with crushed ice.

Pour in the pomegranate and rose gin, elderflower and rose cordial, lime juice and crushed mint leaves.

Put the lid on the cocktail shaker and shake until the sides become nice and frosty.

Pour into the prettiest champagne glasses that you own!

Top up the glasses with some fizz.

Garnish with dried rose petals, and sip!



Rose and pomegranate ice cream

Pretty in pink and blossoming into delicate scented flavours



Dessert

Serves 4

Cook time: 15 minutes

Chill time: 10 hours

Gluten-free

Rose and pomegranate ice cream

Ingredients

500ml double cream
1 tbs rose water
400g condensed milk
2 tbsp pomegranate molasses
400ml pomegranate juice
Pomegranate seeds to toss
on top
Dried rose petals

Method

Pour the cream, rose water, condensed milk and pomegranate molasses into a mixing bowl. Use an electric mixer to whisk into soft peaks. Drizzle in the pomegranate juice and whisk by hand until it just becomes thickened. Pour the mixture into a freezer-proof container and freeze for about 2 hours.

Remove from the freezer and whisk thoroughly by hand again. Return the container to the freezer and freeze for another 2 hours. Then whisk again and freeze for a further 5 - 6 hours.

Remove from the freezer 5 minutes before serving and scoop the ice cream into bowls. Sprinkle pomegranate seeds and dried rose petals on top, and serve.



Recipe 66

Rosemary

Rosemary focaccia

“There’s rosemary, that’s for remembrance; pray you, love, remember.”

William Shakespeare



Bread

Serves 4

Prep time: 3h 30 minutes

Cooking time: 30 minutes

Ingredients

2 tbs active dry yeast
370ml warm water
1 pinch of sugar
950g unbleached all-purpose flour, plus some for dusting
1 tspn salt
70ml extra virgin olive oil, plus some to drizzle
2 pinches coarse ground pepper
1 pinch dried oregano
1 pinch dried sage
1 pinch dried marjoram
1 pinch mild curry powder
Salt flakes to sprinkle
Cracked pepper to sprinkle
3 or 4 sprigs of fresh rosemary
Polenta for baking

Method

Combine the yeast and water in a small bowl, stirring until the yeast is dissolved. Add the pinch of sugar and set aside for 5 minutes.

To create the focaccia dough, sift the flour into a large, warm bowl. Make a hole (a "well") in the middle of the flour and gently fold in the yeast. Cover with plastic wrap and let rest in a warm place for 25 minutes.

Turn out the dough on to a lightly-dusted floured surface. Knead for 8 to 10 minutes, until the dough is smooth and elastic, adding flour (if necessary) to prevent it from becoming too sticky.

Slightly oil the large bowl and place the dough into it. Turn the dough to coat on all sides. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place until it doubles in size: 1 to 2 hours.

Punch down the dough on to a lightly dusted floured surface and gently knead in the olive oil, dried herbs and curry powder.

Line a baking tray with baking paper and sprinkle the polenta on to it. Set aside.

CONTINUED....

Method (continued)

Roll out the dough on to a lightly dusted floured surface into a rectangle, 4 cm thick. Place the rectangle into the baking tray, cover with a tea towel and let rise until double in size: about 20 to 25 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 225°C.

Remove the tea towel and press indentations using your index finger into the dough and place a leaf or two of rosemary in each of these indentations.

Sprinkle with salt flakes and cracked pepper. Drizzle a little olive oil.

Place the baking tray into the hot oven and bake for 10 minutes. Then reduce the heat to 180°C and bake another 20 minutes

Remove and transfer to a wire rack to cool.



Recipe 67

Rosemary

Lonza di maiale alle nocciole (Pork loin with hazelnut sauce)

A treat from the northern Italian region of Piemonte, with black truffles and hazelnuts!!



Main course

Serves 6

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 50 to 60 minutes

Lonza di maiale alle nocciole (Pork loin with hazelnut sauce)

Ingredients

1kg pork loin joint
2 tbs unsalted butter
2 tbs olive oil
2 tbs shallots, chopped
3 sprigs of fresh rosemary (plus extra to garnish)
2 bay leaves
250ml heavy cream
250ml rich beef broth
400g of hazelnuts, toasted and finely ground
Black truffle shavings: optional
1/2 tspn freshly-ground white pepper
Pinch of salt



Method

Preheat the oven to 185°C.

Using your cooktop, in a roasting pan over medium heat, melt the butter and olive oil, add the shallots, rosemary and bay leaf and then brown the pork joint on all sides. Add the broth, cream, salt and pepper and stir.

Put the roasting pan into the oven and roast until the meat thermometer reads 65°C (about 45 minutes). Remove from the oven and place the roast on to a cutting board. Discard the rosemary and bay leaf from the pan and add the hazelnuts to the sauce and stir. With a sharp knife carve the roast into thick slices (approx 3cm), cover with the sauce and return to the oven to cook for 5 minutes.

To serve

For a true treat from Piemonte, shave black truffle on top, garnish with fresh rosemary and serve with a full-bodied Barolo wine.

Recipe 68

Saffron

Saffron chili butter

A buttery golden sauce. Serve on top of grilled sea-bass, sautéed scallops or steamed asparagus.



Sauce

Serves 2

Prep time: 5 minutes

Gluten-free

Ingredients

100g unsalted butter, softened
A generous pinch of saffron threads
1 large red chili pepper, seeded and
finely chopped
Zest from one lime

Method

Using a fork, mix the saffron threads, red chili and lime zest into your softened butter.

Add dollops of the saffron butter on top of your fish, sea-food, asparagus or whatever. And serve.



Recipe 69

Saffron

Risotto alla Milanese with lemon

An elegant way to start a festive dinner. Buon appetito!



Primo piatto

Serves 4

Cooking time: 45 minutes

Gluten-free

Also see video on my YouTube channel: [lockedintastes](#)

Risotto alla Milanese with lemon

Ingredients

750ml chicken stock, preferably homemade
250ml dry white wine
2 tbsn extra-virgin olive oil
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 preserved lemon, sliced and chopped
300g arborio rice
2 pinches of saffron threads
250g Grana Padano cheese, finely grated
2 tbsp unsalted butter
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste



Method

In a medium saucepan, bring the chicken stock to a simmer; keep warm.

In a large frying pan, heat the olive oil, add the onion and cook over moderate heat, stirring, until softened: about 5 minutes. Now add the rice to the pan and sauté for about 1 minute, stirring constantly until the rice turns a bright white colour.

Add 250ml of the warm stock and cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until nearly absorbed.

Add the preserved lemon and stir.

Continue to add the stock 250ml at a time, or until the liquid is nearly absorbed.

In a mini mortar & pestle, grind the saffron into a fine powder and then add it to the wine, stirring until the wine colour changes from a pale yellow to a bright orange.

Add the wine to the pan and stir occasionally until well absorbed.

Stir in the Grana Padano and butter.

The risotto is cooked when the rice is al dente and suspended in a thick, creamy sauce: about 40 minutes total.

Season the with salt and pepper to taste and serve with dried red pepper flakes and heaps of finely grated Grana Padano cheese.

Chef's Note: If your risotto appears to be drier than you wish, simply add a bit more of the stock or, preferably, more wine!)

Recipe 70

Sage

Stuffed zucchini flowers (fiori di zucca)

Enjoy these treats of the first signs of summer. It is pure luxury to munch on these tender and sweet blossoms.



First course

Serves 4

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 7 to 10 minutes

Also see video on my YouTube channel: [lockedintastes](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCk0eDintastes)

Stuffed zucchini flowers (fiori di zucca)

Ingredients

8 zucchini flowers
75g fine/dry breadcrumbs
125g ricotta cheese, drained
75g parmesan cheese, finely
grated
150g minced veal or turkey
75g diced pancetta or bacon
lardons
125g minced parsley
6 sage leaves, finely chopped
Pinch of nutmeg, grated
Flour for dusting
1 egg, beaten
Olive oil

Method

Combine the veal, diced pancetta, breadcrumbs, sage, and parsley into a mini food-processor and mix until well blended.

Add the cheeses and nutmeg. Pulse a few times in the food-processor to mix thoroughly.

Stuff the flowers with the meat mixture. Roll them into the flour, then into the egg. Then sauté in olive oil until lightly browned.

Once the flowers are brown and crispy, the meat will be cooked: 7 to 10 minutes.

Serve immediately with cracked pepper and slices of lemon.



Roast pork with perfect crackling

Inspired by the chef James Martin



Main course

Serves: 6

Prep time: 30 minutes plus marinating

Cooking time: 2 hours plus 10 minutes to rest

Roast pork with perfect crackling

Ingredients

2 tsp freshly-ground black pepper
2 tsp sea salt
2 tbsp fennel seeds
60 ml olive oil
1.5 kg rolled & tied pork loin with
skin scored (or ask your
butcher to prepare)
1 large bulb of fresh fennel, thinly
sliced
2 leeks, thinly sliced
2 lemons, sliced

For the gravy

2 tbsp cornflour
200 ml Marsala wine
500 ml hot vegetable or chicken
stock

Method

Place the pork, skin-side up, in your very clean kitchen sink. Pour over a kettle of boiling water to tighten the skin, which will turn white. Let rest for 5 minutes.

Pat dry with kitchen towels and place on a chopping board.

Rub the olive oil, salt and pepper all over the roast.

In your baking pan, layer the lemon slices first, then the fennel, and finally the leeks. Place your seasoned pork on top.

Leave to rest for 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 230° C.

Drizzle a little more olive oil and sprinkle the fennel seeds on the top of the pork.

Roast for 30 minutes at 230° C, then turn the heat down to 180° C and continue to roast for 1 hr 15 mins.

Remove the pork, cover loosely with aluminium foil and let rest for 30 mins. Your crackling should be very crisp. If not, place the roast under the grill for 5 minutes or so.

CONTINUED...

Method (continued)

While the roast is resting, it's time to make your gravy:

Drain all but 1 tbsp of the fat from the roasting pan into a saucepan.

Add the cornflour, bits of the fennel, leeks and lemon and slowly add the hot stock, stirring constantly. Pour in the Marsala and let it bubble for a few minutes and then simmer gently for about 10 minutes. Adjust seasoning if needed.

Carve and serve, with loads of healthy green vegetables, roasted potatoes and gravy.



Recipe 72

Salt

Whole sea bass baked in salt with lemon

A grand presentation which creates a super moist fish dish



Main course

Serves 4

Cooking time: 30 minutes

Resting time: 10 minutes

Gluten-free

Dairy-free

Whole sea bass baked in salt with lemon

Ingredients

1 whole sea bass, cleaned,
about 1kg-1.5kg
2 lemons, sliced
3 bay leaves
A bunch of fennel tops
2-3kg coarse salt
A drizzle of lemon-infused
olive oil

Method

Preheat oven to 200C.

Wash and dry the fish, stuff the cavity with the herbs and lemons and place it on a bed of salt approx 1cm deep in your roasting pan. Cover the whole fish with the remaining salt.

Place the fish in the preheated oven for and bake for 30 minutes.

Remove the fish and allow it to rest for approx 10 minutes. Note: the fish will continue to cook during the resting time.

To serve

Crack the salt and pull it away from the fish. The skin should pull away with the salt crust.

Gently de-bone the fish as you place the pieces onto your serving platter. Drizzle with lemon-infused olive oil. Serve with new potatoes, fennel & orange salad and lots fresh lemon.



Chinese lemon chicken

Also fabulous with prawns, thick white fish such as cod, or tofu!



Main Course

Serves: 2

Cook Time: 20 mins

Gluten-free

Chinese lemon chicken

Ingredients

2 chicken breasts, cut into cubes
2 egg whites
50g cornflour
1/2 tspn salt
2 tspn sherry or rice vinegar
1/4 tspn baking powder
1/8 tspn baking soda

For the sauce

1 tbs fresh ginger, minced
375ml strong chicken broth
2 tbs fresh lemon juice
1 tbs lemon zest
1/2 tbs soy sauce
75ml fresh lemon juice
50ml rice vinegar
250g granulated sugar
2 red chilis, sliced & seeded or
1/4 tspn red pepper flakes
3 tbs cornflour
2 tbs water
1/2 tspn sesame oil
Secret ingredient: splash of
Limoncello

To serve

Sesame seeds
Fresh lemon slices

Method

Combine the egg whites, cornflour, salt, sherry, baking powder and baking soda in a medium bowl and stir. Pour over chicken in a re-sealable plastic bag and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Remove the chicken pieces from the bag, shake off the excess liquid, and give them another roll in cornflour (to create a thicker coating).

To make the sauce, in a bowl stir together all sauce ingredients, except for the ginger, green onion and lemon slices. Set aside.

Pour vegetable oil into a hot wok or a heavy skillet and carefully drop the chicken into the oil. Fry until crispy golden brown on all sides. Using tongs, transfer the chicken pieces to kitchen paper to absorb the excess oil.

Rinse out the wok/skillet, add a teaspoon or so of oil. Sauté the ginger for 30 seconds, then add the sauce. Bring the sauce to the boil. Reduce heat to low. Simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Return the cooked chicken pieces to the wok/skillets and add green onions. Stir to coat, and bring the sauce to a low simmer. Add the splash of limoncello and cook for 5 minutes.

Garnish with sesame seeds and serve with steamed rice and fresh lemon.



Recipe 74

Sesame seeds

Teriyaki salmon

Recipe inspired by Chef Chris Bavin. I believe you will find it's a winner.



Main course

Serves 4

Cooking time: 15 minutes
plus marination time

Gluten-free

Ingredients

6cm piece of fresh ginger, peeled and grated
4 tbsp soy sauce, gluten-free
2 tbsp sweet chili sauce
1 tsp sesame oil
Zest and juice of 1 lime
4 x 150g salmon fillets
1 tbsp vegetable oil

To serve

Pak choi or tenderstem broccoli
1 tbsp sesame seeds
1 chili pepper, deseeded and sliced, to taste
Small handful of coriander
Slices of lime
Steamed rice



Method

In a dish that is large enough to fit the salmon, mix together the ginger, soy sauce, chili sauce, sesame oil, and the zest and juice of the lime. Place the salmon fillets in the sauce and turn them over to cover them completely.

Marinate in the fridge for 8 or up to 24 hours.

Heat the oil in a frying pan over medium heat. Remove the salmon from the marinade, letting any excess sauce drip off. Put the sauce to one side.

Place the salmon in the pan, skin-side down. Cook the salmon for 3 minutes, then pour the reserved marinade over the salmon and turn it over to cook for another 5-6 minutes. If the sauce becomes too thick and sticky, simply add a tablespoon of white wine.

Place on to a serving platter. Sprinkle the sesame seeds, chili, coriander and slices of lime. Serve with steamed rice and pak choi or broccoli.

Recipe 75

Star Anise

Spicy grilled beef filet

The star anise provides a unique and welcome zing to this dish.



Main Course

Serves 4

Prep Time: 15 mins

Marinating time: 2 hours

Cook time: 8 -15 mins

Gluten-free

Spicy grilled beef filet

Ingredients

450g beef filet
Versatile spicy Thai savoury
sauce (see Recipe 36)
20g star anise
10g roasted cumin seeds
30g Szechuan pepper
Red and green chilis, seeded
and sliced, to garnish
Coriander leaves, to garnish

Method

In a jar, first prepare a portion of the Versatile spicy Thai savoury sauce (Recipe 36).

Put the star anise, roasted cumin seeds and Szechuan pepper into a grinder or pestle & mortar, and grind until fine. Then add these ground spices to the jar and shake, to make a spicy marinade.

Trim the filet, removing all sinew, and slice it into thick slices, each 100g to 120g. Put these into a re-sealable plastic bag and pour in the spicy marinade. Allow the beef to marinate for 2 hours.

Heat your grill or grill pan (if cooking on your hob). Shake the excess marinade off of the beef and place the beef on to the grill. Cook until rare, medium or well-done, as preferred.

Garnish with torn coriander leaves and sliced green and red chili peppers, and serve.



Recipe 76

Sumac

Grilled Mediterranean vegetables with lemon-infused olive oil

A healthy side dish filled with the flavours from the Middle East



Side dish

Serves 4

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 30 minutes

Gluten-free

Grilled Mediterranean vegetables with lemon-infused olive oil

Ingredients

1 medium aubergine
1 medium courgette
1 red pepper
1 yellow pepper
4 to 5 bunches of vine cherry tomatoes
60ml of extra virgin olive oil
drizzle of lemon infused olive oil (home made or purchased)
1 tspn salt
2 tbs crushed sumac
Fresh sprigs of rosemary, for garnish

Method

Cut the aubergine and courgette into 1cm slices and place into a large bowl. (Chef's trick: to remove the bitter taste from the slices of aubergine, sprinkle them with salt and place into a colander with a bowl of water on top to act as a weight. Leave for 3 hours for the bitter juice to "sweat" out of the aubergine. Then rinse and pat dry.)

Cut the peppers in half and remove the seeds and white membranes. Then halve the halves and place into the bowl with the aubergine.

Drizzle the olive oil and sprinkle the salt and sumac over the vegetables. Toss and leave to rest for 10 minutes.

Preheat the grill to 220° C. Put the vine cherry tomatoes on to the hot grill first, then the aubergine, courgette and peppers.

Cook the aubergine, courgette and peppers on one side for 8 minutes and then flip and cook for an additional 4 to 6 minutes. (The tomatoes do not need to be flipped. But keep an eye on the courgette as it may cook faster than the aubergine and peppers.) Remove from grill and place on a serving platter.

To serve: Drizzle with lemon infused olive oil and garnish with sprigs of rosemary.



Recipe 77

Sumac

Salad Olivieh

This dish, of Russian origin, was created by Chef Lucien Olivieh for the Hermitage in 1860. It is popular not only in Russia but throughout eastern Europe and is now also a staple in most Iranian restaurants.



Side dish or starter

Serves 4

Prep time: 60 minutes

Chilling time: 60 minutes

Gluten-free

Ingredients

1 whole chicken breast, cooked and shredded
5 medium potatoes, peeled, boiled and chopped into chunks
2 eggs, hard boiled and chopped
125g peas, cooked
250g mayonaise
250g natural Greek-style yogurt
Juice of 1 lime
Salt and pepper to taste
1 tbs sumac
Romaine lettuce leaves

Method

The cooked ingredients are best pre-cooked and then chilled, in order to assemble the salad quickly.

In a bowl, mix together the mayonaise, yogurt and lime juice.

Add the shredded chicken and stir.

Mix in the potatoes, peas and eggs.

Chill for 1 hour

Place the salad on a bed of crispy romaine lettuce, sprinkle the sumac over the dish and serve.



Roast quail with tamarind & orange glaze

A flavourful Asian twist on a classic British dish



Main course

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 25 minutes

Gluten-free

Roast quail with tamarind & orange glaze

Ingredients

4 quails
4 tbs of tamarind paste
250ml of freshly-squeezed
orange juice
Juice of one lime
1 whole orange, sliced
1 tbs ginger paste
2 large red chilies, seeded
and chopped
4 tspn garam masala
100ml honey
100g butter
100ml cream sherry
Large bunch of chopped
coriander
2 green onions
1 tspn sesame seeds
Salt, to taste

Method

Place the tamarind, orange juice, lime juice, ginger paste, garam masala, chilies, honey, butter and white wine into a saucepan and simmer for 5 to 7 minutes to reduce. Salt to taste.

Preheat the oven to 220°C.

Rinse the quails and place them into a baking dish, breast side up.

Pour half of the tamarind sauce on the quails and place sliced oranges around them. Keep the rest of the sauce on a low simmer, to reduce.

Roast for 20 to 25 minutes. The quails should be golden and the juices clear.

Place the quails on to a serving dish and spoon over the rest of the now-reduced tamarind sauce. Sprinkle with torn coriander leaves, sliced green onions and sesame seeds. Now serve!

Variation: try a whole salmon filet instead of quails.



Pad Krapao

Thai basil with mince of your choice: pork, chicken, turkey or plant-base



Main course

Serves 3-4

30-35 minutes

Gluten-free

Also see video on my YouTube channel: [lockedintastes](#)

Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 shallots, thinly sliced
- 2 stalks lemon grass, thinly sliced
- 6 cm piece of ginger, minced
- 3 red Thai chili peppers, de-seeded and thinly sliced
- 500g mince (of your choice)
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon fish sauce
- 2 tablespoons dark soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons oyster sauce
- 2 limes, squeezed
- 200ml chicken broth or white wine
- 3 kaffir lime leaves, cut into matchsticks with scissors
- 1 large bunch of Thai basil (do not substitute Italian basil)
- 1 medium cucumber, sliced
- 2 more red chili peppers sliced to add as a garnish



Method

To make the chili paste: in a mortar and pestle, first pound the chopped ginger and then continue to pound while adding the shallots, lemongrass and red chili peppers until it all becomes a well-incorporated thick paste. Set aside.

In a wok, over medium high heat, add the oil, then the chili paste, and fry for 2-3 minutes.

Crank up the heat to high, and add the mince, breaking it up into small bits and allowing it to crisp up. Add the fish sauce, dark soy sauce, oyster sauce, lime juice and the sugar.

Stir-fry for another minute and add the wine or broth. Because your pan is over high heat, the liquid should cook off very quickly while adding tons of flavour. Add the kaffir lime leaves and the Thai basil and stir-fry until the basil wilts.

Garnish with sliced cucumbers and red chili peppers and serve with steamed jasmine rice.

Recipe 80

Thai basil

Thai red curry with duck breasts (Gaeng pet ped yang)

Totally addictive and authentic tastes of Thailand in every bite



Main course

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 30 minutes

Thai red curry with duck breasts

Ingredients

2 duck breasts, skin removed, sliced into strips
150gr red curry paste (ingredients below)
250 coconut milk
125ml chicken or vegetable stock
1 courgette, halved and sliced into thick pieces
2 tomatoes, cubed
6 baby corn, sliced and quartered
Beansprouts to garnish
A bunch of fresh Thai basil leaves
Coconut cream, to drizzle

For the red curry paste

125gr ginger, minced
4 red chili peppers, seeded
2 shallots
Juice from 2 limes
1 tbsp sugar
30ml fish sauce or light soy sauce
Pinch of salt
2 stalks of lemongrass, chopped



Method

To make the paste

In a mini food processor, place the ginger, shallots, lemon grass, chili peppers, lime juice, fish sauce, sugar and salt. Pulse until it forms a thick paste about 5 to 7 minutes.

In a medium-sized saucepan, bring the stock and coconut milk to the boil. Then spoon in the red chili paste and simmer for 10 minutes.

To prepare the dish

Add the duck and continue to simmer for 25 minutes. (It's a good moment to steam or boil your jasmine rice.)

Add your vegetables to the saucepan and simmer for another 5 minutes.

Add the Thai basil to the saucepan 10 seconds before you are about to serve.

Spoon curry into a serving bowl or on to individual plates. Drizzle the coconut cream and garnish with bean sprouts.

Serve with steamed jasmine rice.

Variation: try beef or salmon instead of duck

Recipe 81

Thyme

Polenta with roasted mushrooms & thyme

Mountain cuisine at its best - hearty, rustic and full of flavour



Main course

Serves 4

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 30 minutes

Polenta with roasted mushrooms & thyme

Ingredients

1 litre chicken broth
500g polenta
2 tbs olive oil, plus a drizzle
700 g of mixed exotic mushrooms
such as porcini, cremini,
oyster, maitake, shiitake or
chanterelles
2 tbsp of butter or goose fat
200g of grated pecorino, grana
padano, or parmigiano
A bunch of fresh thyme
Truffle oil to drizzle
Salt and pepper

Method

Bring the chicken broth to a rapid boil. Slowly pour in the polenta, whisking aggressively to eliminate lumps. Take care, as the polenta may bubble and spit.

Reduce the heat and continue whisking gently for about 5 minutes. The polenta will start to thicken. Then cover and simmer for a further 30 minutes.

While the polenta is simmering, rinse the mushrooms to remove any grit and dry them in a salad spinner. Slice and set aside.

Preheat the oven to 220°C.

Melt the butter or goose fat in a baking tray under the oven grill for 30 seconds. Remove quickly before it starts to burn.

Place the mushrooms in the baking tray, sprinkle in salt and cracked pepper, and 8 sprigs of fresh thyme. Stir so that the mushrooms are well coated. Place the tray under the grill and roast for 7 to 10 minutes. Remove from oven and stir.

Divide the polenta into serving bowls, spoon the mushrooms on top and sprinkle generous amounts of grated cheese. Drizzle with truffle oil, garnish with fresh sprigs of thyme, and serve.



Recipe 82

Thyme

Stuffed peppers in a mascarpone tomato sauce

A warming meal to enjoy on a chilly night



Main course

Serves 4

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 40 minutes

Gluten-free

Stuffed peppers in a mascarpone tomato sauce

Ingredients

For the stuffed peppers

2 large red peppers, seeded and sliced in half
2 large yellow peppers, seeded and sliced in half
100g cooked basmati rice
2 chopped shallots
70g chopped fennel
1 egg, beaten
Splash of olive oil
250g minced lamb or, for a vegetarian version, use a meat substitute
150g crumbled feta cheese plus 100g for serving
A large handful of fresh thyme leaves, stems removed
Salt and pepper
2 tbs olive oil

For the mascarpone sauce

400g of tinned crushed tomatoes
Splash of olive oil
Pinch of sugar
100ml vegetable stock
50ml red or white wine
100g of mascarpone cheese
Drizzle of crema di balsamico
Salt and pepper

Method

The stuffed peppers

In a sauté pan, drizzle the olive oil and heat over high heat. Add the chopped shallots and fennel and cook for 5 minutes or until they are soft. Place in a large mixing bowl.

Now add to the mixing bowl the cooked rice, minced lamb, thyme, feta cheese, egg, salt and pepper and mix until the ingredients are well combined.

Stuff the peppers with the mixture and place into a roasting pan. Set aside while you make the sauce.

The mascarpone sauce

In a medium sized saucepan, over high heat, drizzle the olive oil and add the tomatoes. Stir and cook for 3 minutes.

Lower the heat to medium and add the stock, wine, pinch of sugar, salt and pepper and stir occasionally for 5 to 7 minutes.

CONTINUED...

Method (continued)

Now whisk in the mascarpone cheese and cook for another 5 minutes.

Add the drizzle of crema di balsamico and continue simmer for 5 minutes more.

Oven cooking

Pour the sauce over the stuffed peppers, cover with a lid or aluminium foil, and bake for 35 minutes. Then remove the cover, sprinkle the remaining feta cheese and bake for an additional 5 to 7 minutes.

Serve with crusty bread.



Recipe 83

Turmeric

Grilled aubergine with turmeric, mint and pomegranate seeds

Exotic South-Asian tastes from the grill to your table



Starter or side dish

Serves 4

Cook time: 20 minutes

Gluten-free

Grilled aubergine with turmeric, mint and pomegranate seeds

Ingredients

4 small aubergines, sliced in half
100ml olive oil, plus a little more for brushing
1 tspn ground turmeric
Juice of one lime
1 pinch of salt
1 pinch of sugar
A handful of pomegranate seeds
Fresh mint leaves, torn to release the flavour

Method

Slice the aubergines in half and brush liberally with olive oil. Sprinkle the turmeric, together with the pinches of salt and sugar, over the aubergines and then toss. The flesh of the aubergines will turn a brilliant yellow.

Fire up your grill. When very hot, place the aubergines face down and grill for 10 minutes, then flip and cook the other side for 5 minutes, checking to make sure that they are not burning!

Remove and place on to a serving platter. Drizzle some olive oil, the pomegranate seeds and torn fresh mint leaves and serve with grilled flat bread and Greek-style yoghurt.



Recípe 84

Vanilla bean

Vanilla crème brûlée

A satisfying, vanilla-infused, creamy, crunchy ending to a meal



Dessert

Serves 6

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 35 minutes

Chilling time: 4 to 5 hours

Gluten-free

Vanilla crème brûlée

Ingredients

6 large egg yolks
100g caster sugar
1 vanilla bean
50g turbinado sugar
(light brown raw sugar)
500ml heavy cream

Also needed

6 ramekins
Kitchen blow-torch

Method

Preheat the oven 160°C.

Pour the cream into a medium sized saucepan and allow to simmer over low heat.

Slice the vanilla bean down the middle, scrape the seeds into the cream and then drop in the pod as well. (The pod adds more flavour.)

In a mixing bowl, beat the egg yolks and pour in the sugar in a stream. Beat until pale yellow in colour and frothy.

Gradually add the warmed cream into this egg and sugar mixture, constantly whisking with a wire whisk to make a custard. Remove the pod and any skin that may have formed.

Pour the mixture into individual ramekins. Place them into a roasting pan, surrounded by hot water, two-thirds of the way up. Cook in the oven until set: 30 to 35 minutes. (The custard will be a bit jiggly-wiggly in the centre.)

Remove ramekins from the oven, allow to cool and then place in the refrigerator to chill for 4 to 5 hours.

Before serving, sprinkle the raw sugar on to each ramekin. Then caramelize the sugar with the blow-torch. If you like your topping to be extra crunchy and thick, repeat this step to make a second layer!

Serve immediately.



Recipe 85

Vanilla

Sautéed green beans with vanilla salt and butter

Flavoured salts are innovative and allow us to blend tastes delicately rather than overpowering our palate.



Side dish

Serves 4

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 15 minutes

Gluten-free

Sautéed green beans with vanilla salt and butter

Ingredients

500g fine green beans,
trimmed
3 tbs of unsalted butter
1 tspn vanilla salt
Pinch of sugar

Method

In a large sauté pan, bring 125ml of water to the boil, add the green beans and cook for 10 minutes.

Drain the beans and place them back into the hot pan so that the excess water evaporates (approx 1 minute). Place into a serving dish.

In a small saucepan melt the butter on medium heat, taking care that it does not burn. Add the pinch of sugar and the vanilla salt and cook for 1 minute.

Pour the vanilla-salted butter over the hot beans and serve.



Recipe 86

Vanilla

Salzburger Nockerl

An iconic dessert from Salzburg, representing the three surrounding hills, the Gaisberg, Mönchsberg & Kapuzinerberg. The golden tops of this soufflé are dusted with icing sugar to create a snow effect. In the grand dining rooms in Salzburg, happy patrons applaud when this much-anticipated dessert arrives.



Photo: Café Mozart,
Salzburg, Austria

Dessert

Serves 4

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cooking time 15 - 20 minutes

Gluten-free

Dairy-free

Salzbürger Nockerl

Ingredients

4 eggs, separated
125g caster sugar
1 pinch salt
30g cornflour
1 tbs lemon juice
1 sachet (about 13g) vanilla
sugar
Icing sugar for dusting

Method

Preheat oven to 200° C. Line baking dish with a piece of parchment paper/ baking paper.

To make the meringue, whip the egg whites with the pinch of salt until fluffy. Slowly add the caster sugar – one tea-spoon at a time, and then add the lemon juice while continuing to whip. When the egg whites are super firm, add the cornflour and the 4 egg yolks and blend by hand. Do not over-blend.

Now form mountains of meringue in the baking dish and sprinkle them with vanilla sugar.

Place in the oven and bake for 15-20 minutes until the Salzbürger Nockerl turns a golden colour and the meringue is stiff and not runny.

Remove from oven, dust with icing sugar and serve immediately. Accompany the dessert with bowls of warm strawberry compôte that has a hint of vanilla.



Aviation cocktail

A classic from the golden age of cocktails. A novelty because of its colour and the rarity of crème de violette



Apéro
Serves: 2
Gluten-free
Vegetarian
Vegan

Aviation cocktail

Ingredients

125ml gin

1 dash maraschino liqueur

1 dash crème de violette

25ml lemon juice, freshly
squeezed

Garnish: lemon peel twist

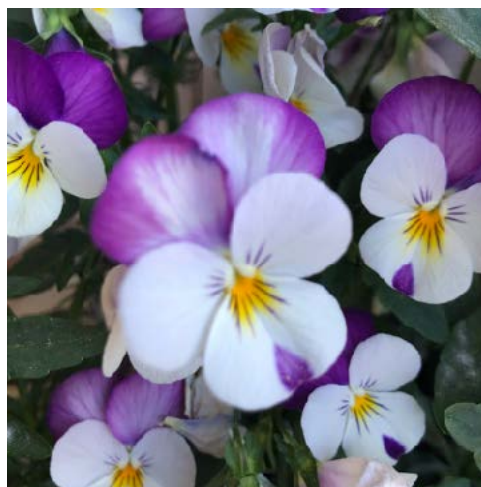
Method

Pour the gin, liqueurs, and lemon juice into a cocktail-shaker filled with ice.

Shake well until the sides of the shaker become frosty.

Strain into martini glasses.

Garnish with the lemon twist



Menu Suggestions



Friends have asked me how to combine some of these 87 recipes into menu suggestions, whether for a three-course meal, or for an important celebration.

Saturday night dinner for 6

Aviation cocktail. [Recipe 87](#)

Insalata di pomodori con burrata + basilico. [Recipe 6](#)

Rosemary focaccia. [Recipe 66](#)

Perfect roast beef. [Recipe 9](#)

Sautéed green beans with vanilla salt and butter. [Recipe 85](#)

Sandra's roasted potatoes. [Recipe 59](#)

Tiramisu. [Recipe 20](#)

Wine suggestion

French Bordeaux or Burgundy

An Indian-inspired celebration

Ramos Gin Fizz. [Recipe 54](#)

Chicken Tikka. [Recipe 32](#)
with Mango chutney. [Recipe 49](#)

Piquant potatoes. [Recipe 48](#)

Grilled aubergine with turmeric, mint and pomegranate seeds [Recipe 83](#)

Butter chicken. [Recipe 29](#)
serve with basmati rice

Tandoori lamb chops. [Recipe 24](#)
with Raita. [Recipe 50](#)

Peach crumble with cardamom crust. [Recipe 12](#)

[Wine suggestion](#)

Italian rosé

Australian merlot

Afternoon tea

Linden tea. [Recipe 44](#)

Lavender lemon madeleines. [Recipe 42](#)

Lemon and poppyseed fairy cakes. [Recipe 63](#)

A cold lunch buffet

Duchess of Cambridge cocktail. [Recipe 64](#)

Lemongrass limeade. [Recipe 43](#)

Gazpacho. [Recipe 14](#)

Salad Olivieh. [Recipe 77](#)

Poached peaches with ricotta buttercream and crunchy panko topping.
[Recipe 33](#)

Vitello Tonnato. [Recipe 10](#)

Moroccan style couscous. [Recipe 23](#)

Wine suggestion:

Prosecco

Rosé from Provence

Thai time

Singapore Sling. [Recipe 38](#)

Moo sarong - pork wrapped in golden threads. [Recipe 34](#)
with Thai sweet chilli sauce. [Recipe 35](#)

Yam won sen - seafood and cellophane Thai noodle salad. [Recipe 41](#)

Gaeng pet ped yang - Thai red curry with duck breasts. [Recipe 80](#)
serve with steamed jasmine rice

Pandam coconut ice cream . [Recipe 58](#)

or

Orange and pineapple with mint sugar. [Recipe 47](#)

[Wine suggestions:](#)

Chenin blanc from South Africa

Rioja from Spain

A Sunday lunch

The Remedy - G & T. *Recipe 40*

A Swiss Kiss. *Recipe 37*

Risotto alla Milanese with lemon. *Recipe 69*

Roast rack of lamb. *Recipe 56*

Gratinato di finocchio con noce moscata. *Recipe 52*

Sweet sautéed carrots with orange and marjoram. *Recipe 45*

Forest-fruit claufoutis. *Recipe 17*

Wine suggestions

Ribolla Gialla

Barolo



Conversion Tables

Length

1cm	1/2 inch
2.5cm	1 inch
15cm	6 inch
20cm	10 inches
30cm	12 inches

Volume

5ml	1teaspoon (tspn)	
15ml	1 tablespoon (tbs)	
30ml	1 fl oz	1/8 cup
60ml	2 fl oz	1/4 cup
75ml		1/3 cup
120ml	4 fl oz	1/2 cup
150ml	5 fl oz	2/3 cup
175ml		3/4 cup
250ml	8 fl oz	1 cup
1 litre	1quart	4 cups

Weight

25g	1oz
50 g	2oz
100g	3.5oz
200g	7oz
250g	9oz
300g	10oz
400g	14oz
500g	16oz
1ka	2.25lb

Oven Temperatures

°Celsius	°Fahrenheit
140	275
150	300
160	325
180	350
190	375
200	400
220	425
230	450
250	500

Internal cooking temperature guide

Beef

Rare	120°F to 125°F	45°C to 50°C
Medium-Rare	130°F to 135°F	55°C to 60°C
Medium	140°F to 145°F	60°C to 65°C
Medium-Well	150°F to 155°F	65°C to 70°C
Well Done	160°F and above	70°C and above

Lamb

Rare	135°F	60°C
Medium-rare	140°F to 150°F	60°C to 65°C
Medium	160°F	70°C
Well done	165°F and above	75°C and above

Chicken

165°F to 175°F	75°C to 80°C
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Turkey

165°F to 175°F	75°C to 80°C
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Fresh Pork

145°F	63°C
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Ham (Fully-Cooked)

140°F	60°C
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Ham (Uncooked)

145°F	63°C
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With gratitude

Spices of Life (and herbs, too!) has been cooking up in my subconscious for about 10 years and its collection of recipes for over 30. I am grateful to my mother, who taught me how to cook. In the kitchen. I remember begging her to let me stir, sift, roll and flip and also...to lick the bowl! Over time, she would gently and generously give me more responsibility until one day, the tables turned and it was my pleasure to host the family for Sunday lunches and holiday celebrations.

Thank you to my husband Gordon and to my friend Sandra, who patiently tasted, commented on, researched, edited, and provided invaluable technical support. They gave me courage and kept me smiling. And also to Ulrich of Meticulous Graphics for updating lockedintastes.com and to Mary Ellen for proofreading all of these 212 pages.

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Thank you to the chefs from starred restaurants, to street food vendors who inspired and shared ideas, techniques and tastes.

Thank you to my friends and family, who over the years have accepted lunch and supper invitations. Your enthusiasm, encouragement and positivity have driven me to try harder, to keep practising and to produce a cookbook which includes my most requested recipes.

And to you, my readers, for your curiosity and interest. I wish you the spices of life!

Thank you



Bon appétit
Buon appetito
กินข้าว
Enjoy your meal

