

THE THREE TOWERS
MONTHLY RECIPES
MAY 2011 to AUGUST 2020



As a child, I was difficult when it came to food. I don't think I was overly picky; I was just stubborn. I remember huge battles with my parents over clearing my plate which would leave me sat at the kitchen table staring at a plate of cold peas while everyone else had moved on to the sitting room to watch Dr Who. All that changed when I became a student. Something about having to pay for my own food made me eternally grateful for whatever was put in front of me. Ever since then I've tried to savour each meal as if it were my last (with the possible exception of "fast food" – that's asking a bit much).

When I arrived fresh-faced at the Community of the Resurrection in Mirfield (a monastery in West Yorkshire) to start my three years training for the Priesthood, I discovered that Christianity and food were linked in a way that I hadn't previously been aware of. There, amidst the green, grey and ever-present rain, I discovered the importance of the two-tables – the table of fellowship (food) and the Lord's Table (altar). So, serving one another at table was, I soon learned, just as important as getting the liturgy (the services) right. Making people aware of the presence of God in worship was as important as welcoming them to the common meal (pretty much all meals at Mirfield were eaten together with the serving and cleaning looked after by the students). In the almost seventeen years since, there have been many highlights and most of them have involved one or other of those two tables. When drawn together in fellowship, love and faith, even a baked potato with cheese can seem like a foretaste of the heavenly banquet and a very special occasion indeed.

As I write this short introduction, I'm reminded of the splendid legacy of food that Jane Clark cultivated here at Edenham Regional House. I will always associate Jane with scrumptious soups, breads, quiches, pies and puddings. What a blessing then to have a collection of recipes by Jane and a few others for us all to attempt at home. The only thing I can really add is to encourage you to try to make them with love and faith and, ultimately, to share them with others in fellowship. The faith, love and fellowship bit really does make a difference! I've come to appreciate it more and more over the years and I've never failed to perceive it in Jane's cooking. So, enjoy and here's to many moments of scrumptious bliss!

Fr Edward

August 2020

Editor's note:

This booklet is a compilation of all the recipes printed in The Three Towers from May 2011 through to August 2020. The majority of recipes are "**Jane's Seasonal Recipes**" which were provided by our Advertising Manager, Jane Clark; other recipes are from Frances Plummer, Katy McWilliams, Julia Thompson, Philippa Longstaff, Jo and Gene Pews and Bob's aunt! Recipes with no contributor name are all from Jane.

Thank you to all the above for your monthly suggestions.

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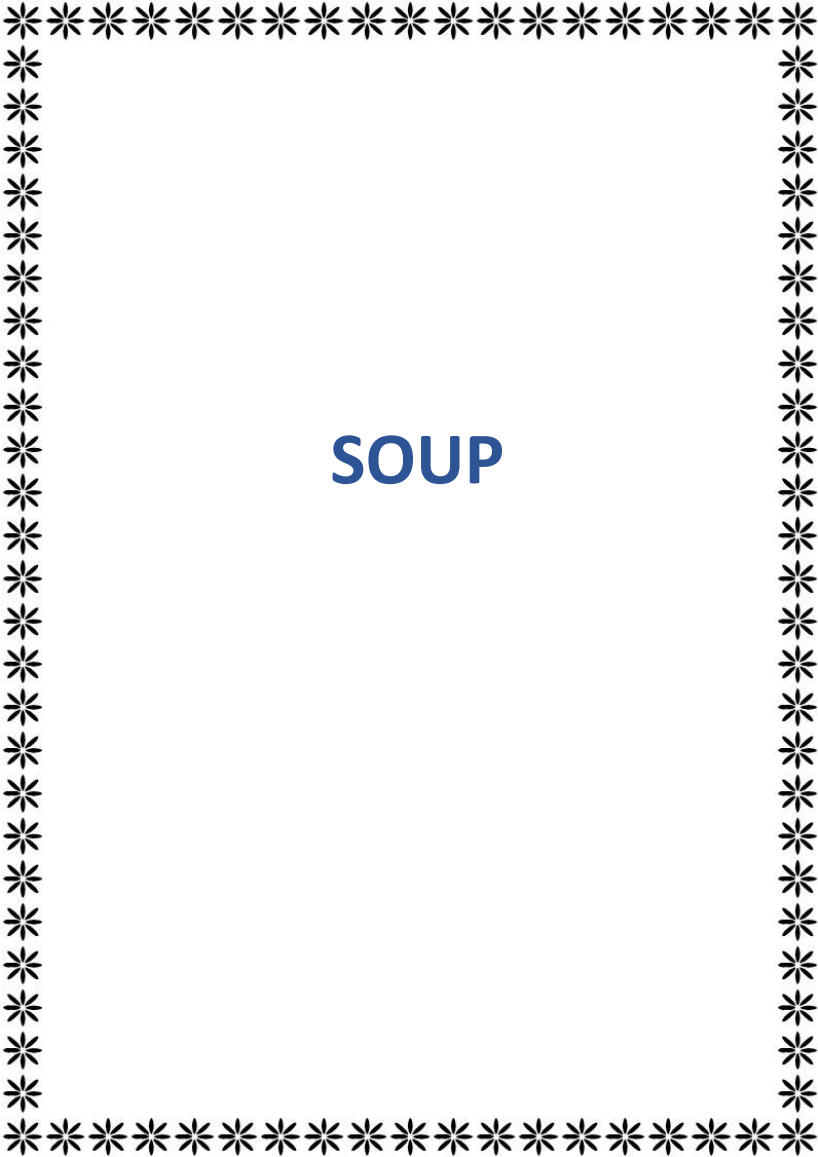
Contents

SOUP	1
Asparagus Soup	2
Dolcelatte and Leek Soup with Parmesan Crisps	3
Granny’s Mushroom Soup.....	4
Green Soup	5
Leek, Potato and Boursin Soup.....	6
Lentil and Chorizo Soup.....	7
Spicy Carrot and Coconut Soup	8
Spicy Lemony Lentil Green Soup	9
SAVOURY	10
Bread and Cheese Bake	11
Courgette and Cheese Muffins.....	12
Frittata	13
Ham and Spinach Tart.....	14
Muffuletta.....	15
Shallot Tarts	16
Spinach Pancakes.....	17
MAIN	18
Beef and Beetroot Casserole	18
Cauliflower Crisp.....	20
Chicken Jalfrezi	21
Chicken Jollof Traybake	22
Chicken, Chorizo, Butterbean and Spinach Casserole	23

Fruity Edam Curry	24
Leek and Sausage Risotto	25
Leeks Wrapped in Ham with Cauliflower Cheese.....	26
One-Pot Chicken Dinner	27
Pork and Parsnip Cobbler	28
Pumpkin and Chorizo Rigatoni	29
Pumpkin Risotto	30
Sausage Jambalaya	31
Slow Cooked Pork Chops	32
DESSERT	33
Apple Bread Pudding	34
Blackberry Pudding.....	35
Chocolate Sponge Pudding with Chocolate Sauce	36
Gooseberry and Elderflower Tart	37
Gooseberry and White Chocolate Fool	38
Individual Pecan Pies	39
Nadiya Hussain’s Carrot Cake Pakoras	40
Orange and Apricot Pasta.....	41
Philippa’s Little Sticky Toffee Puddings with Toffee Sauce	42
Quick and Easy Cheesecake.....	43
Redcurrant and Mango Cobbler	44
Rhubarb and Almond Tart	45
Rhubarb and Strawberry Crumble.....	46
Rhubarb Steamed Pudding.....	47
St Fillans’ Pudding.....	48
St George’s Day Pudding	49

Sticky Pear and Toffee Puddings	50
Sticky Toffee Pear and Ginger Upside Down Pudding.....	51
Strawberry Chocolate Tart	52
Strawberry Clafouti.....	53
White Currant Tart	54
SIDE DISHES & OTHERS.....	55
Beetroot and Broad Bean Salad.....	56
Brussels Gratin.....	57
Crispy Pumpkin Bake	58
Elderflower Cordial.....	59
Spicy Lime Courgette Salad	60
Wild Garlic Pesto	61
PRESERVES.....	62
Autumn Fruit Chutney.....	63
Chilli Plum Chutney.....	64
Green Tomato Marmalade.....	65
Rhubarb and Ginger Jam	66
Spiced Pickled Pears	67
CAKES & BISCUITS.....	68
Bakewell Cake.....	69
Banana Cake with Peanut Butter Frosting.....	70
Blackberry Crumble Bars	71
Blueberry and Lime Drizzle Ring.....	72
Carrot and Raisin Cupcakes	73
Chocolate and Carrot Brownies.....	74
Chocolate Biscuit Gateau.....	75

Chocolate Crackle Tops.....	76
Chocolate Mayo Brownies.....	77
Chocolate Yule Log	78
Courgette, Lemon and Pistachio Cake.....	79
Crunchy Ginger Biscuits.....	80
Ecclefechan Tarts.....	81
Elderflower Cordial Sandwich Cake.....	82
Ginger Cake.....	83
Gooseberry and Pistachio Cake	84
Mincemeat Biscotti.....	85
Mincemeat Crumble Squares	86
Moccachino Slices.....	87
Norfolk Scone	88
Nutella Cookies.....	89
Peanut Butter Biscuits	90
Peanut Butter Flapjack	91
Plum and Almond Cake.....	92
Poppy Seed and Honey Cake with Strawberry Icing.....	93
Pumpkin, Pecan and White Chocolate Blondies.....	94
Pumpkin, Poppy Seed and Lemon Loaf	95
Raspberry and Almond Cake	96
Rhubarb and Custard Muffins	97
Spiced Buttermilk Cakes	98
Strawberry Pancake Gateau	99
Westmorland Pepper Cake.....	100



Asparagus Soup

June 2017

Serves 4-6

Asparagus has a mild delicate flavour, and is one of the first fresh spring vegetables after all the root veg of the winter. I was given several bundles of asparagus, which has a very short season, so I made a batch of soup for the freezer, and a couple of asparagus quiches.

1 large onion

25g butter

500g asparagus

2 medium potatoes

2 pints chicken stock

2 tbsp double cream

Melt the butter in a saucepan, add finely chopped onion and cook gently over a low heat until softened but not brown. Cut off the woody ends of the asparagus and chop the long thin spears into chunks. Add to the pan and cook gently. Peel and dice the potatoes and add to asparagus. Pour in hot chicken stock (for vegetarians use vegetable stock) and simmer for 20 mins. Whizz with a stick blender until smooth. To serve stir in double cream.

Dolcelatte and Leek Soup with Parmesan Crisps

April 2017

Serves 4

This soup is Mary Berry's tasty variation on the traditional leek and potato. The parmesan crisps take it to a whole new level.

600ml milk

2 bay leaves

2 sprigs fresh thyme

¼ tsp fresh nutmeg

45g butter

1 large peeled potato (approx 300g cut into 1 in cubes)

2 leeks finely sliced

400ml veg stock

85g dolcelatte cheese (cut into small cubes)

50g parmesan, coarsely grated

Heat the milk, bay leaves, and nutmeg just to the boil. Set aside to infuse for 20 mins.

Make the parmesan crisps: heat the grill to highest setting. Line a baking sheet with parchment and make 8 circles of parmesan, shape in a round cutter. Grill for 4 mins until the cheese is melted and golden. Place on wire rack to cool.

Melt 25g butter, add potato cubes and cook for 5 mins over a very low heat, until starting to soften but do not allow to brown. Add rest of butter, increase heat, add leeks and cook for 4 mins, stirring often until almost tender. Pour in the stock and strained infused milk.

Bring to the boil and simmer for 10 mins until veg is cooked. Puree the soup, reheat and stir in the dolcelatte.

Serve with a drizzle of cream and Parmesan crisps.

Granny's Mushroom Soup

May 2020

Serves 4

Katy McWilliams

1 oz butter
1 small onion, chopped finely
8 oz mushrooms, chopped finely
1 level tbsp flour
1 pt chicken stock
¼ pt milk
Salt and Pepper to taste

Melt the butter and add the onion until soft.
Add the mushrooms and sauté for 5 mins or until cooked through.
Stir in the flour and cook for 2 mins.
Cool slightly then add the stock and milk gradually.
Stir and bring to the boil. Season to taste.
Cover and simmer gently for 20 mins.

Serve with chopped parsley and crusty bread.

Green Soup

February 2018

Serves 2

After all the indulgences of the festive season, this makes a nutritious and healthy change.

1 tbsp olive oil
1 chopped onion
1 chopped courgette
500ml veg stock
1 chopped avocado
85g spinach
juice of ½ lemon

Sauté the onion until soft, add courgette and stock. Simmer for 10 mins. Add avocado, spinach and lemon juice. Cook for a few mins to wilt the spinach. Blend until smooth. Season to taste. Add more stock if you prefer a thinner soup.

Leek, Potato and Boursin Soup

February 2012

Serves 2-4

After the excesses of Christmas, a good warming bowl of soup goes down a treat. We have about 100 leeks still in the garden so this is a recipe that is very useful. Bob gets bored with plain leek and potato soup, so the addition of Boursin cheese (or any other similar garlic flavoured cheese works as well) elevates it from a simple soup to a special one.

2 tbsp olive oil

3 large leeks

3 large potatoes

2 pints vegetable stock

1 pack Boursin (or Roule) cheese

Heat the oil over a moderate heat, add thinly sliced leeks and cook gently until softened but not brown. Cut peeled potatoes into small pieces and add to leeks. Pour in hot stock and simmer until potatoes are soft (approx 15 mins). Allow to cool slightly then liquidise until smooth. Return to heat, add cheese and simmer until it has all melted. Season to taste.

Serve with fresh warm crusty bread.

Lentil and Chorizo Soup

May 2013

Serves 4

It has been a long cold winter and we have had plenty of soup to keep us warm. This has been my favourite soup recipe this season – using up the last of our carrots and onions from the garden.

50g chopped chorizo
1 large chopped onion
3 finely chopped large carrots
125g red lentils
2¼ pints veg stock
1 tbsp pumpkin seeds

Heat a large saucepan and gently fry chorizo for 5 mins until it gives up some of the oil. Remove chorizo – set aside in a bowl. Gently cook onions and carrots for 10 mins in the chorizo oil. Add rinsed lentils and stock. Bring to boil and simmer until lentils are soft – about 20 mins. Liquidise until smooth. Reheat, stirring in the chorizo. Check seasoning.

Serve in warmed soup bowls, sprinkle pumpkin seeds on the top.

Spicy Carrot and Coconut Soup

February 2015

Serves 4

It has been a bumper year for carrots in our garden – the largest we have ever had, mainly due to the load of soil we bought from British Sugar! So, this quick and easy variation on carrot soup is worth a try, if you like something a bit different.

1 tbsp oil
700g carrots, peeled and chopped
1 onion, peeled and chopped
2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
1 tsp cumin seeds
1ltr veg stock
400ml can of light coconut milk
2 tbsp fresh coriander, chopped
1 tbsp desiccated coconut, toasted

Heat the oil in a pan, add veg and cumin seeds. Cook over moderate heat for 5 mins, stirring. Pour in stock, bring to boil, cover and simmer for 20 mins. Liquidise and add coconut milk. Heat through. Serve in warm bowls, with swirl of coconut milk and a sprinkling of coriander and toasted coconut.

Spicy Lemony Lentil Green Soup

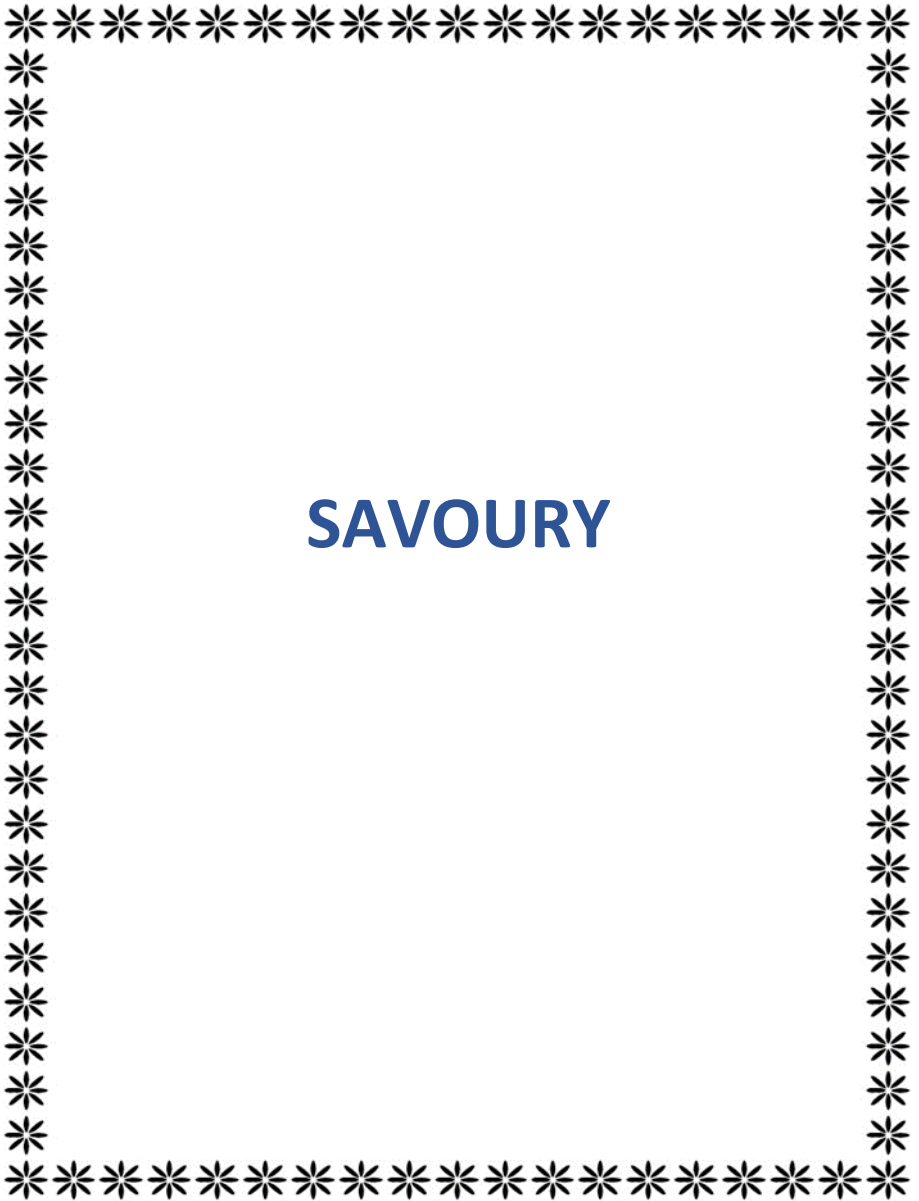
March 2020

Serves 4

This is my adaptation of a Waitrose recipe – a tasty winter warmer. The original recipe used cavolo nero but I put sprout tops in, though any leafy greens could be used.

250g red lentils
1 onion
1 tsp turmeric
1 tsp ground cumin
½ tsp chilli flakes
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 large potato
1 lemon
½ tsp salt
200g Brussel sprouts
2 tbsp olive oil
chopped coriander to serve

Put lentils and chopped onion in large pan with turmeric, ground cumin and half chilli flakes. Add 900ml cold water, bring to boil and simmer very gently for 15 mins. Stir in small cubes of potato, 2 strips of pared lemon rind and salt. Add another 500ml water and simmer gently for 20 mins. Stir in the greens and cook for 5 mins until wilted. Whizz with a soup blender to the consistency required – I prefer it slightly chunky. Season with pepper and the juice of ½ lemon. Heat the oil in a small pan, stir in the rest of the chilli flakes, cumin seeds and 2 strips of lemon zest. Sizzle gently for 2 mins until seeds are toasted and the oil a reddish colour. Drizzle over the soup and add chopped coriander and a squeeze of lemon juice.



SAVOURY

Bread and Cheese Bake

August 2018

Serves 2

This is a savoury variation of a bread and butter pudding. Quick and easy to make, so ideal for a quick lunch or supper.

4 slices multigrain bread, buttered

5oz mature cheddar, grated

4 spring onions finely chopped

¼ tsp mixed herbs

2 eggs

½ pint milk

Cayenne or paprika to sprinkle

Cut each slice of bread in half and arrange overlapping in a small shallow square baking dish. Sprinkle with cheese, onions and herbs. Mix eggs and milk together with a fork, and pour carefully over bread. Leave to stand for 20 mins. Heat oven to 190°C and bake for 20 mins until golden brown and set. Serve with a simple leaf salad and tomatoes.

Courgette and Cheese Muffins

October 2018

Makes 12

Despite the hot dry weather our courgettes have been very abundant. These savoury muffins are very tasty and quick to make.

2 tsp baking powder
1 tsp bicarb
1 tsp chilli powder
250g wholemeal flour
1 tbsp fresh snipped chives
300g grated courgettes
120g grated mature cheddar
2 eggs
150g natural yogurt
100ml milk
6 tbsp olive oil
10g sunflower seeds

Brush 12 paper muffin cases with a little melted butter, to make the muffins easier to remove. Mix flour, baking powder, bicarb, chilli powder and chives. Stir in 100g cheese, and courgettes. Whisk eggs, milk, yogurt and oil until combined. Stir into dry mix, until just blended. Do not over stir. Divide mixture into muffin cases and sprinkle with rest of cheese and sunflower seeds. Bake 180°C for 30 mins until golden. Cool in the tin for 5 mins then stand on a wire rack to cool.

Can be eaten warm or cold. Can be kept for 3 days in a tin but warm through in a low oven.

Frittata

October 2019

Serves 4

August and September saw an abundance of veg in our garden, so this is a good recipe to use them up; and makes a quick supper dish. It is a recipe to experiment with – all sorts of veg can be used and although this is a vegetarian recipe, there is an option to add cooked meat – ham, pepperami or sausage.

1 large onion

2 tbsp oil

8oz courgettes

8oz mange tout

8oz French beans

8oz small new potatoes, cooked, sliced or chopped

8oz cherry tomatoes, halved

6 eggs

4oz grated cheese

freshly ground black pepper

Fry sliced onion in oil, in a large frying pan, over a medium heat until softened. Blanch courgette, mange tout and beans for 2 mins. Drain and add to frying pan with potatoes. Cook for a few mins, then spread evenly over the base of the pan. Beat the eggs with a fork, then pour gently into the pan. Cook over a medium heat until the egg is just set. Scatter the tomatoes over the egg, then sprinkle over black pepper and grated cheese. Place under a hot grill until the cheese is melting and just starting to brown. Slide onto a serving plate and cut into quarters.

Ham and Spinach Tart

February 2013

Serves 4

This is a very tasty tart - a cross between a quiche and a pizza. The beauty is that it is incredibly quick and simple to make. I always keep a block of ready-made puff pastry in the freezer, so the tart can be produced in no time for unexpected guests. During the festive season it was a good way to use up leftover gammon.

½ block ready-made puff pastry (approx 200g)

200g baby spinach leaves

2 eggs

25g grated parmesan

75g grated mature cheddar

125g cooked ham

Roll the pastry into a rectangle approx 12 x 8-inch. Score a border 1 inch from the edge and prick with a fork inside the border. Bake for 15 mins at 200°C. Gently flatten the centre down so that it will take the filling. While the pastry is baking, put the spinach in a colander and pour over a kettle full of boiling water. Drain well. When cool, squeeze out water and chop the spinach. Mix spinach with beaten eggs, most of cheese, and seasoning. Spread over the base of the pastry inside the border, scatter over chopped ham and finish with remaining cheese. Bake for 15 mins until lightly brown and just set. Serve warm with a tomato salad.

This recipe is very adaptable – cooked chicken could be substituted; or for a vegetarian option omit the meat and add extra vegetables - sun dried tomatoes, sweet peppers, mushrooms etc.

Muffuletta

July 2018

Serves 4

This is a stuffed sandwich loaf – perfect for picnics. The meats and cheeses can be varied according to taste.

- 1 small round white crusty loaf
- 1 ball mozzarella, sliced
- 8 slices Italian salami
- 6 slices Emmental
- 8 slices cooked ham

Olive Salad

- 100g green olives stuffed with pimento, sliced
- 1 shallot, finely chopped
- ½ celery stick, finely diced 1tbsp capers, rinsed and drained
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar

Mix olive salad ingredients and leave to stand for ½ hour. Split the loaf in half horizontally, and hollow out some of the bread from top and bottom (save and freeze to use for bread crumbs). Spread ½ olive mixture in bottom and add alternate layers of meat and cheese, finishing with rest of the olive salad. Put the top half of the bread on and press down. Wrap tightly in foil and weigh down for 1 hour (can be kept in fridge overnight). Cut into quarters to serve.

Shallot Tarts

August 2015

Makes 4

2014 was a good year for onions – we grew some very large specimens and have only just finished eating them all. We also grew a lot of shallots and are still eating those. These tarts are very tasty and a good way to use up shallots.

2 tbsp olive oil
1 medium onion peeled and finely chopped
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
3 tbsp soft brown sugar
20-24 shallots peeled
500g pack frozen puff pastry
50g grated cheese

Gently fry chopped onion in oil for 4 mins until softened. Stir in balsamic vinegar and sugar. Cook for 2 mins until slightly gooey. Set aside to cool. Roll out pastry and cut into 4 x 5-inch rounds approx ¼cm thick, using a plain cutter. Lightly score a circle 1 inch in from the edge of each. Spread the inner circle of each round with chopped onion mixture. Top each one with 5-6 shallots (depending on size) then sprinkle with cheese. Bake for 20 mins at 200°C until pastry is golden brown. Serve with green salad and tomato.

Spinach Pancakes

March 2019

With Shrove Tuesday coming up, this savoury filling is a good variation on traditional sweet pancakes.

8 ready-made pancakes
200g baby spinach leaves, very finely chopped
25g butter
50g salted peanuts
½ tsp paprika
50g stilton cheese
4 tsp plain flour
150ml single cream

Heat butter in a small pan, add peanuts and paprika, fry gently for 1 min. Add spinach and most of crumbled stilton. Stir in flour and cream. Bring to boil and cook gently for 3 mins, stirring. Divide filling between warmed pancakes and sprinkled with remaining crumbled stilton.



MAIN

Beef and Beetroot Casserole

October 2012

Serves 4

Beetroot has been one of our more successful crops this year, so this is a good way of using it that makes a change from pickled beetroot, beetroot salad or chutney. It is a very hearty, wholesome casserole that can be served with jacket potatoes and a green vegetable.

1kg stewing beef
2 tbsp olive oil
20g butter
16 whole shallots, peeled
1 tbsp brown sugar
2 tbsp plain flour
8 small beetroots, peeled and halved
290ml red wine
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
290ml beef stock
2 tbsp crème fraiche
1 tbsp dry mustard
3 tbsp creamed horseradish

Heat oil and butter, brown beef over a high heat. Remove beef from pan. Reduce heat, add shallots and cook for 5-10 mins until golden. Stir in sugar and cook until the shallots are caramelised. Add flour and cook for 1 min. Add red wine and vinegar. Blend in stock. Return beef to pan and add beetroot. Cover and cook in oven at 160°C for 2 hours until beef is tender. Mix crème fraiche, mustard and horseradish. Stir into casserole before serving.

Cauliflower Crisp

June 2013

Serves 2-4, depending on size of cauliflower

For the past few weeks, we have had a glut of cauliflowers and every evening meal has included cauliflower in some form! Cauliflower and gorgonzola soup was good and cauliflower cheese is always popular. This vegetarian dish was tasty, even for us carnivores!

1 cauliflower, broken into florets
2 tomatoes, cut into quarters
1½oz butter
8oz sliced mushrooms
1oz plain flour
½ pint milk
6oz grated Cheddar cheese
2 tbsp fresh breadcrumbs
Salt and pepper

Steam cauliflower until just tender – approx 10 mins. Drain and place in shallow dish with tomatoes. Melt butter and gently fry mushrooms for 5 mins. Add flour and milk, bring to boil stirring continuously. Stir in most of cheese and seasoning. Pour over cauliflower. Sprinkle with breadcrumbs and rest of cheese. Bake in oven for 20 mins, 200°C. Serve with jacket potatoes.

Chicken Jalfrezi

November 2019

Serves 4

Bob planted about a dozen red pepper seeds from a packet labelled sweet peppers, but showing a picture of red chillies. They turned out to be all chilli peppers, except for one sweet pepper plant! So now I have to use up about a hundred very hot red chillies. It was suggested I could give out a red chilli with each mag!

3 tbsp oil
1 ½ tsp cumin seeds
2 ins piece of fresh ginger, chopped
1 onion, finely chopped
1 tsp ground turmeric
2 tbsp mild curry paste
4 chicken breasts, cubed
1 red chilli finely chopped (seeds and all!)
1 green pepper, chopped
1 red pepper, chopped
8oz cherry tomatoes, halved
6floz coconut milk
1 tbsp garam masala

Heat oil, stir fry cumin seeds for 1 min. Add onions, ginger and turmeric. Stir fry 1 min, add 2 tbsp water and mild curry paste, stir well. Add chicken pieces, stirring and coating well. Add chilli, and peppers, stir fry for 10 mins, gradually adding coconut milk. Stir in garam masala. Cook gently for 10 mins until chicken is cooked through. Serve with rice and poppadums.

Chicken Jollof Traybake

August 2019

Serves 4

This is a quick and easy recipe that I adapted from a Lidl magazine, based on a spicy West African recipe. With tomatoes and peppers from our greenhouse and courgettes in the garden, this is ideal for a last-min supper dish.

8 chicken thighs
1 tbsp oil
1 onion
1 red pepper
1 red chilli
1 tsp paprika
400ml tin chopped tomatoes
600ml chicken stock
1 courgette
200g mixed colour cherry tomatoes
300g basmati rice

Arrange chicken in a large roasting tray, bake at 200°C for 15 mins. Fry sliced onion and pepper in oil for 5 mins. Stir in chopped chilli and paprika, fry for 2 mins. Add chopped tomatoes and stock. Pour the pepper sauce around the thighs, add rice and stir well. Add sliced courgettes, and cherry tomatoes, ensuring chicken is uncovered. Roast for 40 mins until chicken is golden and the rice is cooked.

Chicken, Chorizo, Butterbean and Spinach Casserole

March 2016

Serves 4

This is a hearty dish which, although only having made it twice, is already a firm favourite in our home.

2 tbsp olive oil
500g boneless chicken thighs
1 onion, finely chopped
90g smoked bacon lardons
1 tsp smoked paprika
100g chorizo, chopped
100ml red wine
400g tin chopped tomatoes
1 tbsp tomato puree
250g tin butterbeans, drained
100g baby spinach leaves

Heat 1 tbsp oil in ovenproof casserole dish. Fry chicken until lightly browned. Remove from pan. Add rest of oil, fry onion and bacon for 3 mins, add chorizo and paprika and fry a further 2 mins. Add wine, butter beans, tomatoes and puree. Return chicken to pan. Add ½ pint water, cover and cook in oven at 160°C for 2 hours. Remove from oven and add spinach, giving casserole a good stir until spinach has wilted.

Serve with jacket potato, rice or crusty bread.

Fruity Edam Curry

June 2011

Serves 2

This is a quick and easy recipe I use a lot at home. To make it even easier and quicker you could use a ready-made curry sauce! It can also be made with gouda or even cheddar, but a lower fat cheese works best.

1 onion chopped
½oz butter or 2 tbsp of oil
1 tbsp of mild curry powder (or stronger if you prefer)
1 tbsp cornflour
½ pint vegetable stock
2 tbsp chutney
1oz sultanas
1 courgette
1 eating apple
200g edam cheese

Fry the onion gently in the oil for 5-10 mins until softened but not brown. Add the curry powder and cornflour, cook for 2 mins. Gradually add the stock, heat gently until thickened. Add the sultanas and chutney. Simmer gently for 10 mins. Add chopped courgette and chopped apple (skin can stay on) cook for 5 mins. When almost ready to serve, remove from heat and stir in cubed edam at the last min. Serve with boiled white rice.

Leek and Sausage Risotto

June 2014

Serves 2

We are down to our last 10 leeks and this tasty dish has featured on our menu most weeks in the past couple of months.

2 leeks

½ oz butter

4 sausages

1 tbsp chopped fresh sage

4oz arborio rice

1 pint hot vegetable stock

1 tbsp wholegrain mustard

2oz grated parmesan cheese

Grill the sausages until cooked. Meanwhile, melt butter gently in a large pan, add leeks and soften for 10 mins over a low heat. Add chopped sage and rice, stirring until rice becomes slightly translucent. Add stock, one ladleful at a time stirring frequently until it is absorbed, adding gradually, until all the stock is absorbed and the rice is cooked – this will take about 25 mins. Stir in the mustard, sliced sausages, most of the parmesan and season with ground black pepper. Sprinkle over remaining parmesan and fresh sage.

Leeks Wrapped in Ham with Cauliflower Cheese

May 2014

Serves 2

This is a quick supper dish that is almost a meal on its own. Our leeks have been abundant this year, so this is a variation we always enjoy. This is also the time of year when we get lots of cauliflowers all at once – 16 this spring! We have eaten cauliflower in some form every day for the past 2 weeks; cauliflower cheese being the most popular but also cauliflower and stilton soup, and cauliflower curry!

4 leeks
4 large slices of cooked ham
1 small cauliflower
1oz butter
1 tbsp plain flour
½ pint milk
4oz mature cheddar cheese
Coarsely ground black pepper
Paprika

Clean the trimmed leeks thoroughly under running water, to remove any grit. Cook them whole, for approx 3 mins in the microwave until lightly cooked (or steam them). Leave to cool. Blanch the cauliflower florets for approx 3 mins until just cooked. Make a cheese sauce: melt butter, stir in plain flour, over a medium heat, add milk gradually until smooth and bubbling. Add half the grated cheese and season well. Wrap the leeks in ham slices, place in a large shallow dish with cauliflower. Pour over the cheese sauce, sprinkle with the rest of the grated cheese and paprika. Bake at 200°C for approx 30 mins.

Good with crusty bread and a green salad.

One-Pot Chicken Dinner

March 2013

Serves 4

This is an incredibly simple dish, filling and substantial, using butternut squash which is cheap, very nutritious and abundant at this time of year. It should be adequate as a meal in itself but could be served with a green vegetable.

8 chicken drumsticks
200g shallots, peeled
750g small potatoes, cut into wedges
400g butternut squash, peeled, deseeded, cut into wedges
1 tbsp olive oil
30g pecan halves
Fresh thyme leaves
100g St Agur cheese (or any blue cheese)

Put chicken, potatoes and squash in a large baking dish. Drizzle with oil and toss to coat. Season with ground black pepper. Roast at 200°C for about 1 hour, turning halfway through. Stir in nuts and thyme leaves and cook for a further 10 –15 mins until chicken is cooked through and skin crispy. Crumble over cheese, and return to oven for a few mins until just melted.
Serve garnished with thyme sprigs.

Pork and Parsnip Cobbler

April 2018

Serves 4

With a few parsnips still in the garden, this recipe is ideal for a tasty dinner.

1 tbsp olive oil	Topping
600g diced pork	250g plain flour
1 chopped onion	1½ tsp baking powder
2 parsnips, cut into small chunks	75g cold butter, grated
2 tsp dried sage	100g cheddar, grated
1 tbsp tomato puree	1 tsp mustard powder
2 tbsp plain flour	1 tsp dried sage
1ltr stock	200ml milk

Fry onion in oil, add pork and cook until brown. Add parsnips, sage, and tomato puree. Cook for 2 mins. Add plain flour and give a good stir. Pour in stock, and simmer gently for 1½ hours with lid on – or in oven at 160°C for 1½ hrs.

To make topping: mix flour, baking powder, sage and mustard powder. Stir in butter and most of cheese. Mix in milk to make a sticky dough. With a tablespoon shape into 8 balls and place on top of casserole. Sprinkle over rest of cheese and bake uncovered for 30 mins at 200°C.

Serve with green veg.

Pumpkin and Chorizo Rigatoni

April 2014

Serves 2

This is a quick and easy supper dish – full of flavour. We had this several times after Christmas, to use up the last pumpkin.

300g pumpkin or butternut squash cut into small chunks

100g chorizo cut into chunks

Olive oil

Black pepper

1 tbsp dried rosemary

200g Rigatoni

Parmesan

Put the squash in a baking dish, sprinkle with rosemary, toss in olive oil and black pepper. Bake at 220°C for 15 mins, add chorizo and bake for further 5 mins. Meanwhile cook rigatoni for 10-15 mins according to taste. Drain, then stir in pumpkin, chorizo and juices. Add a little more virgin olive oil if necessary. Sprinkle with finely grated parmesan and serve.

Good with crusty bread and a sweet chilli sauce, or a green salad.

Pumpkin Risotto

December 2013

Serves 4

Pumpkins have grown well this year and we have about a dozen of varying sizes. There are many varieties of pumpkin soup – chilli and butterbean, tomato and red kidney bean, and I have recently made pumpkin and red pepper, as all the red peppers in the greenhouse have come at once! If you have a bread-making machine, try making pumpkin bread too! This is one of my favourite pumpkin recipes.

2½ pints chicken or veg stock

2 tbsp olive oil

1oz butter

1 small onion finely chopped

4 slices chopped smoked bacon (can be omitted for vegetarians)

1 tbsp chopped fresh sage

1lb chopped pumpkin (or butternut squash)

8oz risotto rice

2oz grated parmesan cheese

Heat oil and half butter in a large pan, add onion and bacon (if using) and cook over a medium heat for 5 mins until soft but not brown. Add pumpkin and sage and cook for 1 min. Add rice and stir well until all the grains are coated in butter. Add a ladleful of hot stock, stir until it has all been absorbed before adding another. Continue adding stock for about 20 mins until the rice is creamy and tender but still with a bit of bite. Stir in the rest of the butter, parmesan and seasoning. Spoon into warm deep plates and serve scattered with shredded sage leaves.

Sausage Jambalaya

March 2012

Serves 4

This is a one pot supper dish that I make regularly at home and at the Regional House. It can be prepared and left to simmer for 40 mins while you do something else, then the vegetables are added shortly before serving. It is important to use brown rice. The dish can be served on its own or, for very hungry people, with lots of crusty bread and a green salad.

8 Lincolnshire sausages
1 chopped onion
1 tbsp oil
1 tsp chilli powder
2 tsp ground turmeric
8oz brown rice
 $\frac{3}{4}$ pint stock
1 can chopped tomatoes
1 sliced courgette
1 red pepper, deseeded and chopped
4oz button mushrooms, quartered

Halve sausages and fry in oil over a medium heat for 10 mins until lightly browned. Add onion, chilli powder, turmeric and rice. Fry for 5 mins, until rice is opaque. Add stock and tomatoes, bring to boil and simmer for 40 mins, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking, adding more liquid if necessary. Add the pepper, courgette, and mushrooms. Cook for a further 10 mins.

(For vegetarians just omit sausages. Other veg can be used (mange tout, green beans) or omitted as required.)

Slow Cooked Pork Chops

December 2011

I am very partial to pork in any of its many forms – whether it be sausage, pork pie, belly pork, or spare ribs! I found this recipe in a booklet on the Mill Farm Shop stand at the Church “Celebrating our Community” event back in the summer. It is quick to prepare and can be just left in the oven to cook while you do something else! It is the most delicious pork recipe I have ever tasted - I think it is the chorizo that gives it the wow factor!

4 pork chops
2 tsp olive oil
50g chorizo sausage, thinly sliced
½ pint stock
1 can butter beans
1 can baked beans
3 tbsp tomato puree

Heat oil in an oven-proof casserole dish. Brown chops on both sides. Add chorizo and allow oil to coat chops. Add stock, beans and puree. Mix well. Cover and cook in oven at 180°C for 1¾ hours until meat is tender. Serve with green veg, jacket potato and/or crusty bread for dipping in the juices!

Heavenly!



DESSERT

Apple Bread Pudding

June 2012

Bread pudding is a very traditional recipe, a good way of using up stale bread. My Mum used to make it when I was a child – there was always a big dish of it to be eaten hot with custard or cold as cake. It is sold in every bakery and tea shop in the Lake District. It is a good hearty slice of energy for the back pack when walking and is often seen on the refreshments stalls at marathon or cycling races. My variation has sliced apple in the middle and on top.

10oz bread (8 slices)
3oz soft margarine
3oz soft dark brown sugar
1 egg
1 tsp cinnamon
6oz mixed dried fruit
2 large cooking apples
2oz granulated sugar
8 sugar cubes

Break bread in a basin and cover with water. Leave to soak for several hours. Cream margarine and sugar, beat in egg. In a sieve, squeeze out water from bread. Return to bowl and beat with wooden spoon, until broken down. Add bread to creamed mixture with cinnamon and fruit. Mix well. Spread half into a greased 2-pint dish. Place half of sliced apples over the bread mixture and sprinkle with half of granulated sugar. Spread with remaining bread, cover with rest of sliced apple, sprinkle over rest of granulated sugar, then crushed sugar cubes. Bake approx 1 hour, 190°C until brown and shrinking from sides of dish.

Blackberry Pudding

November 2012

Serves 4

Blackberrying is a wonderful pastime in the autumn; this pudding makes a change from blackberry crumble. Blackberries for this recipe can be used straight from the freezer

500g blackberries
1 tbsp caster sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
150g butter
150g caster sugar
150g plain flour
150ml milk
1 tsp vanilla extract
3 eggs

Heat blackberries gently in a pan with 1 tbsp of sugar until just soft. Add vanilla. Place in a buttered baking dish. Cream butter and 150g caster sugar until soft and pale. Add flour, milk, vanilla and 3 egg yolks. Mix well. Whisk 3 egg whites until stiff. Fold gently into mixture, and spoon over blackberries. Bake at 160°C for approx 1 hour until brown and slightly puffed. Serve with cream, crème fraiche or vanilla ice cream.

Chocolate Sponge Pudding with Chocolate Sauce

April 2012

Serves 4

This was always a very popular pudding when Dawn and Karen were young; now it proves popular at the Regional House too! It is a very simple basic chocolate sponge but the very rich sweet sauce makes it very special. Surprisingly, it has only a small amount of chocolate in it!

Sponge

4oz butter or marger

4oz caster sugar

2 eggs

3oz sr flour

1oz cocoa powder

1 tsp baking powder

Sauce

1oz plain chocolate (Bournville is best)

1/2oz butter

1 small tin evaporated milk (170 g)

2oz soft brown sugar

2 tbsp golden syrup

Mix all ingredients for sponge by hand or in an electric mixer until smooth and is a soft dropping consistency. Bake in a dish at 180°C for 35 mins until cooked through. Melt all the ingredients for the sauce in a pan over a low heat. Bring to the boil stirring all the time. Lower the heat and simmer for 10 mins until thickened and glossy. Allow to cool slightly. Pour into a warm jug, and serve with hot pudding.

Gooseberry and Elderflower Tart

August 2017

With lots of gooseberries in the freezer, and with the home-made elderflower cordial ([see page 59](#)), this recipe is perfect. Very tangy and refreshing!

50g butter, melted
200g ginger nut biscuits
1 egg white
4 tbsp gooseberry preserve
100ml elderflower cordial*
200ml crème fraiche
125g icing sugar
3 eggs
300g gooseberries
3 tbsp caster sugar
juice ½ lemon
1 tbsp cornflour

Crush the biscuits, stir in butter and egg white. Press into 20cm loose-bottomed tin or flan dish. Bake for 10 mins 180°C. Lightly press the base down with back of a spoon. Set aside. Mix gooseberry preserve with 1 tbsp cordial and spread over base. Whisk crème fraiche, icing sugar and eggs until smooth. Stir in remaining cordial, and carefully pour over preserve. Bake for approx 50 mins at 150°C until just set, with a slight wobble in the centre. Leave to cool, then chill until firm for about 1 hour. Gently cook gooseberries, caster sugar, lemon juice and 3 tbsp water, until soft but still retain some shape. Mix cornflour with 2 tbsp water, add to gooseberries and bubble for 1 min. Cool and chill. When ready to serve spoon the gooseberries onto the tart.

Gooseberry and White Chocolate Fool

May 2011

I found this recipe when searching for ideas to use up gooseberries from the freezer, before Bob pinched them all to make wine (they do actually make an excellent wine though!) With the gooseberry season coming up, the ripe pink ones are best, so leave them on the bush longer – don't use hard green ones.

12oz gooseberries
3 tbsp sugar
2 tbsp water
1 large tub natural yogurt
150g white chocolate

Poach the gooseberries, sugar and water gently. Remove four whole gooseberries for decoration before they turn to pulp. Leave to cool. Melt white chocolate gently until smooth – in a bowl over a pan of simmering water or for 1½ mins in microwave, stirring halfway, taking care not to let it burn. Put half the cooled gooseberries in the base of four individual dishes and stir the rest into the yogurt. Gradually stir the yogurt mixture into the chocolate and mix well. Spoon onto the gooseberries in the dishes then leave to set for about 1 hour in fridge. Decorate with reserved gooseberries.

I did try this recipe with raspberries, but it didn't work so well – too sweet!

Individual Pecan Pies

December 2012

Julia Thompson

Sweet shortcrust pastry
3 large eggs
4oz soft dark brown sugar
7oz golden syrup
1½oz melted butter
1 tbsp rum
6oz roughly chopped pecans
24 pecan nut halves for decoration

Line 8 x 4-inch individual tart tins or Yorkshire pudding tins with pastry. Distribute chopped pecans evenly into pastry cases. Break eggs into large mixing bowl and whisk until foamy. Stir in brown sugar, syrup, melted butter and rum and beat well. Spoon equally over the chopped nuts in the prepared cases and place 3 pecan halves on top of each to decorate. Bake at 190°C for 25-30 mins. Even better when served warm with pouring cream or crème fraîche

Brilliant for a special festive meal to wow your guests!

Nadiya Hussain's Carrot Cake Pakoras

May 2020

Serves 4

During the lockdown we have had loads of carrots in the garden – a bit past their best - but this recipe is a way of using them up in a very original and tasty way!

100g cream cheese
100g butter
4 tbsp icing sugar
2 tbsp maple syrup
1½ltr veg oil
300g grated carrots

50g chopped walnuts
5g sultanas
12g sr flour
½ tsp baking powder
1 tsp mixed spice
2 eggs

Make the dip:

Beat butter and cream cheese until smooth. Stir in icing sugar and maple syrup. Put in a serving bowl, swirl over a little maple syrup and a pinch of mixed spice and chill.

Mix flour, baking powder, sugar and mixed spice. Stir in carrots, walnuts and sultanas. Add the eggs and mix well to a thick batter.

Heat oil in a large pan, Test oil is hot enough by adding a tiny drop of mixture. If it sizzles and rises to the top the oil is hot enough -170°C.

Gently drop teaspoons of the mixture into the oil, swirling with a slotted spoon, until golden brown – about 4 mins. Make in batches, removing with a slotted spoon. Drain on kitchen paper.

Serve warm, dusted with icing sugar and dip.

Orange and Apricot Pasta

March 2018

Serves 4

Pasta for pudding? Why not! This is a delicious fruity pud, very quick and easy to make, and nutritious too.

12oz tagliatelle

2 x 1 oz tins of apricot halves in fruit juice

Juice and rind of 1 orange

2 tbsp sugar

2oz butter

2 tbsp flaked almonds

Cook pasta in boiling water until *al dente*. While pasta is cooking, heat chopped apricots with juice from one tin only, along with orange rind, orange juice and sugar until dissolved. Cook for 5 mins. Drain pasta, toss in melted butter. Spoon sauce over pasta and sprinkle with almonds.

Philippa's Little Sticky Toffee Puddings with Toffee Sauce

May 2012

Philippa Longstaff

This is a tried and tested Delia recipe with a few adjustments.

75g butter

150g caster sugar

2 eggs

175g sr flour

175g dates

175ml boiling water

½ tsp vanilla essence

2 tsp coffee essence

¾ tsp bicarb

Sauce

350g soft brown sugar

220g butter

2 tbsps double cream

Pour boiling water over chopped dates. Add vanilla, coffee and bicarb. Set aside. Cream butter and caster sugar until pale. Add beaten eggs and mix well. Fold in flour, and stir in date mixture. (The mixture will be very sloppy!) Divide between 8x3in ramekins, or 8 x 175ml metal pudding basins. Place on baking tray and bake at 180°C for 25 mins. Leave to cool for 5 mins before turning out on to a shallow Swiss roll-type tin. Make sauce by melting all the ingredients in a saucepan and heating gently until sugar has dissolved. Pre-heat grill to its highest setting. Pour the sauce evenly over puddings. Place tin under the grill so that the tops of puds are 5 inches from heat. Heat for about 8 mins until the tops become brown and slightly crunchy and sauce is hot and bubbling. Serve with chilled pouring cream.

Quick and Easy Cheesecake

July 2014

Serves 4-6

I have been making this recipe for many years. It originally came from Bob's aunt when we were first married - she heard it on the Jimmy Young Radio show ("What's the recipe today, Jim?") My recent variations are to use low fat biscuits, low fat cream cheese and Elmlea, so that we can have bigger slices! We are hoping to enjoy our first crop of strawberries very soon – we planted the strawberry plants three years ago and only had a handful last year. I often top the cheesecake with cooked blackcurrants (thickened with cornflour like a pie filling) which contrast well with the sweetness of the cheesecake filling.

50g butter

200g low-fat digestive biscuits

300g Philadelphia light cream cheese

2 tbsp icing sugar

½ pint Elmlea light double cream

1 tbsp milk

Strawberries

Melt butter and add to finely crushed digestive biscuits. Press into a flan dish and chill for 1 hour. Beat the cream cheese with icing sugar and spread over cooled biscuit base. Whip the Elmlea and milk (milk stops it from turning to cheese if over-whipped) to soft peaks. Spread over the cream cheese and chill. Decorate with whole or sliced strawberries, raspberries or any other seasonal fruit.

Redcurrant and Mango Cobbler

July 2011

Serves 4

The redcurrant bushes in our garden are looking very healthy, so soon we will be inundated with redcurrants. I use them a lot in summer puddings, topping for cheesecakes, compotes, or simply lightly stewed with a little sugar and stirred into Greek yogurt - very light and refreshing after a big Sunday lunch. Our favourite though is redcurrant and mango cobbler – a delicious mix of smooth sweet mango with tart redcurrants, divine! If redcurrants aren't available, or difficult to come by, raspberries can be substituted instead.

2 ripe mangoes
12oz redcurrants
1oz plain flour
4oz caster sugar

Cobbler Topping

4oz sr flour
1oz caster sugar
2oz butter
6 tbsp single cream

Peel and slice the mangoes. Place in a pie dish with redcurrants, sprinkle over plain flour, caster sugar and mix lightly. To make the cobbler topping - rub butter into flour and sugar. Add cream to make a light dough. Roll out, and cut into ½ inch thick rounds with a biscuit cutter. Overlap the rounds to cover around the edge of the dish – leaving the fruit in the middle uncovered. Bake for 30-40 mins until the scones are lightly brown. Sprinkle with caster sugar. Serve warm with vanilla ice cream or crème fraiche.

Rhubarb and Almond Tart

June 2016

The long rhubarb season is upon us, and this tart is a variation on a Bakewell which is very popular at the Regional House.

3 tbsp jam
4oz marga
4oz sugar
2 eggs
4oz ground almonds
1oz plain flour
1 orange
12oz young pink rhubarb
Redcurrant jelly to glaze

Make pastry and line a 9-inch flan dish. Prick base and smear with jam. Beat marga and sugar until pale and creamy, gradually add eggs. Stir in ground almonds, flour, grated orange zest and juice of half the orange. Mix well. Pour into pastry case. Cut rhubarb into 1-inch pieces and arrange in circles, like spokes of a wheel. Push slightly into the almond mixture, but do not submerge. Bake at 180°C for approx. 50 mins until firm and golden. Melt jelly and brush over tart to glaze. Serve warm or chilled with crème fraiche.

Rhubarb and Strawberry Crumble

June 2018

Serves 4-6

Rhubarb and strawberries are both in season and this makes a stunning combination for a crumble.

1½lb rhubarb
8oz strawberries
5oz sugar
3 tbsp plain flour
4oz plain flour
2oz brown sugar
2 tsp granulated sugar
½ tsp cinnamon
2oz butter
2oz walnuts, toasted and chopped

Slice the rhubarb into ½ inch chunks. Cut strawberries in half. Sprinkle with flour and sugar and toss to cover. Leave to stand in dish until slightly moistened. Mix flour, sugars and cinnamon. Rub in butter to form breadcrumb like texture. Stir in walnuts. Level the top of the rhubarb mixture. Cover with crumble topping. Bake 190°C for 40 mins until golden and juices bubble around the edges. Serve with custard, cream or ice cream.

Rhubarb Steamed Pudding

June 2020

Serves 8

Jo and Gene Plews

4oz butter

4oz light brown sugar

2 eggs

2oz sr flour

2oz wholemeal sr flour

½ tsp baking powder

2oz fresh breadcrumbs

6oz rhubarb

Grated orange zest

Cream butter and sugar until pale and creamy. Beat in eggs. Mix dry ingredients and fold in with breadcrumbs. Gently mix in chopped rhubarb and orange zest. Turn into a greased 1½ pint pudding basin. Cover with a double thickness of greased baking paper or foil. Fold under rim to secure. Place in top part of steamer and steam for 1 hour. Turn onto a warmed serving plate. Serve hot.

St Fillans' Pudding

February 2017

4 generous servings

If, like the Vicarage, you still have lots of cooking apples this is a very delicious pud; a Scottish recipe from one of Paul Hollywood's cook books.

650g cooking apples, peeled, cored and sliced

30g caster sugar

¼ tsp cinnamon

3 tbsp water

handful of raspberries

225g plain flour

1 tsp baking powder

1 tsp cream of tartar

110g caster sugar

80g butter

2 eggs

40-60ml milk

1 tbsp demerara sugar

Put apples, cinnamon, 30g sugar and water into saucepan, cover and cook gently, stirring occasionally, until apples are just soft. Stir in raspberries. Tip into a buttered 1ltr ovenproof dish. Rub butter into flour, sugar, baking powder and cream of tartar until it is like fine breadcrumbs. Stir in eggs and enough milk to make a thick batter. Spread the mixture carefully on top of fruit. Sprinkle with demerara sugar and bake for approx 40 mins 180°C until risen and golden brown.

Serve with custard or cream.

St George's Day Pudding

April 2019

Serves 6

Not quite sure what the connection with St George's day is but this is yet another very tasty variation on bread and butter pudding from the Dairy Diary.

10 slices white bread
chocolate hazelnut spread
75g dried cranberries
1 pint milk
3 tbsp caster sugar
4 eggs

Spread the bread with chocolate spread, make into sandwiches and cut into triangles. Arrange neatly in base of 2-pint ovenproof dish. Scatter with cranberries. Gently heat milk and sugar, until sugar dissolves. Pour milk onto beaten eggs in a steady stream, whisking well. Pour over bread and leave to stand for 30 mins. Bake at 180°C for 40 mins until golden and lightly set. Serve warm, with cream if liked (gilding the lily springs to mind!)

Sticky Pear and Toffee Puddings

November 2016

Serves 4

Pears make delicious puds and this one is very tasty and quick to make in the microwave.

100g butter, softened
120g soft brown sugar
2 pears, peeled, cored and chopped
1 egg
60g sr flour
2 tsp icing sugar to dust
1 tsp ground cinnamon to dust

Mix 40g butter and 60g brown sugar. Divide in base of 4 x 200-250ml ramekin dishes. Top with chopped pears. Whisk remaining butter and brown sugar until pale and fluffy. Add egg and stir. Add flour and mix to a smooth batter. Spoon into the ramekins. Cook two at a time in microwave (660W or 700W) for about 2½ mins until risen and cooked through. Leave to stand for 1 min. Dust with icing sugar and cinnamon.

Serve with clotted cream, crème fraiche or ice cream.

Sticky Toffee Pear and Ginger Upside Down Pudding

November 2014

Topping

50g butter

100g light brown sugar

4 firm fresh pears, peeled, cored and quartered

4 pieces of stem ginger, finely chopped

Sponge

50g butter

125g brown sugar

90g black treacle

125ml soured milk (or add a few drops of lemon juice to fresh milk)

1 egg

125g plain flour

½ tsp bicarb

1 tsp ground ginger

1 tsp ground cinnamon

½ tsp ground nutmeg

Topping: melt butter and brown sugar in microwave for 1 min. Stir well until thick and smooth. Spread in base of 20cm cake tin or deep dish. Arrange pears and scatter with chopped ginger.

Sponge: melt butter, sugar and black treacle in microwave for 1 min until melted and smooth. Stir in milk. Add flour, bicarb and spices.

Beat in egg and mix well. Pour over pears and bake at 180°C for about 50 mins, until skewer inserted comes out clean. Run a knife around the edge of the dish to loosen. Leave to cool for about 10mins. Invert the pudding onto a plate and serve warm with creme fraiche, ice cream or pouring cream.

Strawberry Chocolate Tart

June 2015

Serves 6

The best of British strawberries are now in season. This is one of my favourite strawberry recipes - quick and easy to assemble; especially if you buy a ready-made pastry case! An even simpler variation could be to spread the base of the pastry case with Nutella for an instant dessert!

1 blind - baked 9-in pastry case
180g Bournville plain chocolate
180g low fat crème fraiche
Strawberries to decorate

Gently melt the chocolate on a low setting in the microwave or in a bowl over a pan of gently simmering water. Stir well then mix in crème fraiche, stirring until smooth. Spoon into pastry case. Chill in fridge until ready to serve. Decorate with fresh strawberries.

Any other soft fruit can be substituted – raspberries are particularly good.

Strawberry Clafouti

August 2020

Serves 3 to 4

We have been inundated with strawberries this year; but last year the yield was so poor we almost dug them up! So, I have been trying out numerous strawberry recipes, and this was our favourite. I have made clafouti (a French recipe) many times with various fruit, though never with strawberries before.

250g strawberries

2 eggs

4 tbsps caster sugar

3 ½ tbsps plain flour

125ml natural yogurt

75ml milk

1 tsp vanilla extract

Grease a 6-inch diameter ceramic dish (at least 2-inch deep). Beat eggs and sugar, stir in flour, add milk, yogurt and vanilla. Blend well. Pour into dish. Place halved strawberries on top. Bake 45 mins 180°C until set. Cool to room temperature. Sprinkle with icing sugar.

White Currant Tart

August 2011

Serves 6-8

A couple of years ago we bought a small white currant bush and this is the first year it has produced enough to make anything with. This is the best recipe I could find and makes a delicious cheesecake. I used a mixture of red and white currants to give it colour but you could use raspberries or strawberries just the same. The recipe also suggested you could use ginger biscuits or orange biscuits; in which case you might use the rind of an orange instead.

500g fromage frais
450g plain yogurt
3 tbsp icing sugar
Grated zest of a small lemon
450g white currants
75g butter
300g lemon biscuits
Icing sugar for dusting

Mix the fromage frais and yogurt. Line a colander or sieve with muslin or a new J-cloth. Pour the mixture into the sieve, place the whole thing on a shallow dish and put it in the fridge. Leave overnight. Melt the butter. Crush the biscuits, then mix them with the melted butter. Tip them into the tart tin and press down firmly. Chill for 20 mins. To make the filling, discard the liquid, tip the strained cream cheese mixture out of the muslin into a bowl. Stir in the sugar and zest. Smooth the filling into the chilled tart crust. Pull the currants from their stalks and pile them on top of the tart filling. Dust generously with icing sugar and leave for a few mins before slicing.



SIDE DISHES & OTHERS

Beetroot and Broad Bean Salad

August 2013

Serves 6

With the warm weather here at last, and our first crop of beetroot due any day, it is time for salad! This is a very refreshing alternative to plain beetroot in vinegar.

500g cooked beetroot
300g baby broad beans
6 spring onions
15g fresh tarragon
1 tbsp red wine vinegar
4 tbsp olive oil
¼ tsp caster sugar

Cook the broad beans for approx. 3 mins until just tender. Drain and refresh under cold water. Remove the skin from the biggest ones (any that are larger than a thumbnail). Mix vinegar, oil and sugar for the dressing. Cut the beetroot into wedges. Pour over the dressing, stir in broad beans, onion and tarragon. Put in serving dish. Good with cold meats or pork pie.

Brussels Gratin

February 2014

Serves 4

As in most years, we have plenty of sprouts in the garden this winter, and with a huge joint of cooked ham to eat over Christmas, this proved a very popular dish.

500g Brussel sprouts

4 slices of pancetta, smoked streaky bacon, or chopped cooked ham

150ml double cream

50g gruyere cheese

1 tsp Dijon mustard

50g breadcrumbs

2 tbsp grated parmesan

Cook the sprouts until just tender. Drain really well. Fry the bacon until golden, stir in cream, grated gruyere and mustard. Add sprouts and stir well. Put in a shallow baking dish. Sprinkle over the breadcrumbs and parmesan. Bake at 200°C approx 20 mins until golden and bubbling.

Can be served as a supper dish on its own, but good with sausages and jacket potatoes. For vegetarians, omit the bacon.

Crispy Pumpkin Bake

December 2019

Serves 4

We have loads of pumpkins this year – not huge, just big enough for one meal, so this is a perfect veg accompaniment to a meat dish – perhaps even your Christmas dinner! Chilli can be left out if preferred.

1kg pumpkin
5 tbsp olive oil
12 shallots
1 red chilli
1 tbsp rosemary
2 tbsp parsley
1 orange zest
120g fresh breadcrumbs

Put shallots in ovenproof dish, toss in 1 tbsp oil. Bake in oven for 15 mins at 200°C. Chop pumpkin into 2-inch chunks. Add to onions and mix well, cook for further 15 mins. Heat rest of oil in frying pan, add chopped chilli, rosemary, parsley and orange zest, stirring constantly. Add breadcrumbs and seasoning, mixing well. Cook for 1 min. Reduce oven to 180°C. Tip breadcrumbs over pumpkin and onions. Bake for 30 mins until golden and pumpkin has softened.

Elderflower Cordial

July 2016

This is so simple and cheap to make, but as the flowers are only available for a very short season, it is imperative to be ready to make it quickly. I made it for the very first time last year and should have made it many years ago! It is so much nicer than the stuff you buy in the shops.

Citric acid can be bought from the chemist and Campden tablets are used in beer and winemaking to kill off any yeast, so very important to use if you wish to keep the cordial for any length of time.

25 elderflower heads
2 whole sliced lemons
1½kg caster sugar
1½ltr water
50g citric acid
2 Campden tablets

Pick flower heads that are just open with no brown bits. Dissolve sugar in water and cool slightly. Put flowers and lemons in a container, pour over sugar syrup. Add citric acid and Campden tablets. Stir, cover, and leave in a cool place for 24 hours. Strain through a muslin cloth. Pour into sterilised bottles. Keeps for about 8 weeks. Dilute to taste. Once opened store in the fridge.

Spicy Lime Courgette Salad

October 2016

Our courgette plants have been very productive this year. This is a tasty accompaniment for cold meats.

- 1 lime – grated zest and juice
- 1 tbsp caster sugar
- 2 tbsp chopped coriander
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 red chilli – finely chopped
- 4 grated courgettes

Mix lime zest, juice, sugar, coriander, olive oil and chilli. Toss dressing through courgettes and leave for 10 mins for flavours to develop. Will keep for 48 hours in airtight box in fridge.

Wild Garlic Pesto

May 2020

Frances Plummer

(Riverford recipe)

This is delicious thrown through pasta, swirled through soups and stews or served as a condiment to baked potatoes or a perfectly roast chicken. Try using it as a salad dressing or popping a few dabs into your favourite sandwich. Will keep for at least a week in the fridge. Feel free to replace the hazelnuts with any nut of your choosing, likewise any salty hard cheese can work too. Makes 1 large jar.

100g wild garlic

50g Parmesan grated

50g hazelnuts, skinned and toasted

olive oil

lemon juice, to taste

salt and pepper

Prep time: 10 min

Thoroughly wash your wild garlic and place in a food processor, blitz until fairly well broken up.

Next add your Parmesan and process further, this will help to break down the garlic leaves.

Finally add your hazelnuts. When the nuts are added you will want to have your olive oil to hand; turn the machine back on, and add olive oil to your desired consistency.

Add salt, pepper and lemon juice to taste.



PRESERVES

Autumn Fruit Chutney

October 2011

I am not fond of chutney (I don't like a strong vinegar flavour), but I often make it when I have a glut of fruit or veg as Bob loves it. However, this recipe is one of my favourites, as it is quite sweet and fruity. The recipe originally came from my Dairy Diary and I first made it last year when I was given a bag of plums and pears. Chutney isn't difficult to make, just very time consuming, chopping all the fruit and veg, and having the patience to cook it for long enough. Chutney must be fairly thick – not runny!

500g Bramley apples - peeled, cored and chopped
6 large conference pears – peeled, cored and chopped
8 large plums – stoned and quartered
600g blackberries
50g fresh ginger – finely chopped
Red and green chilli 1cm piece of each - deseeded and finely chopped
600g onions – peeled and roughly chopped
750g granulated sugar
450ml distilled white vinegar

Put all the ingredients in a large stainless-steel preserving pan. Heat gently, stirring often, until it comes to the boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 3-4 hours, stirring occasionally to prevent it sticking to the bottom of the pan, until thick and reduced. Spoon into clean jars, warmed in the oven on a low temperature. Store in a cool dark place for a minimum of 1 month to allow the flavour to develop, before using.

Serve with bread, cheese and cherry tomatoes.

Chilli Plum Chutney

October 2015

Plums are in abundance at the moment and this is a good recipe to use up a surplus. This is my favourite chutney – sweet and tangy with a hint of chilli.

1.35kg plums, halved and stoned
500ml white wine vinegar
175g dried apricots, chopped
600g granulated sugar
1 whole lemon, finely chopped
4 red chillies finely chopped (including seeds)
1 tsp cayenne pepper
1 tsp ground coriander
1 tsp salt
1 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp ground ginger
10 black peppercorns

Cook the plums and vinegar in a preserving pan until soft and pulped – about 20 mins. Add all the spices, lemon and chillies. Simmer gently for 20 mins. Add sugar and stir until fully dissolved. Cook over a medium heat - stir occasionally to prevent sticking, for approx 1 hour until the chutney has thickened, and most of the liquid has evaporated. Pour into hot sterilised jars. (Like most chutneys, the flavour improves with keeping)

Green Tomato Marmalade

October 2017

If you have a lot of green tomatoes this is an ideal use for them. I made it last year and the result was delicious! It can be used as a chutney, as it is very tangy.

5 lemons

400ml water

900g green tomatoes

1.5kg granulated sugar

Squeeze the lemons. Place the flesh, membranes and pips in a square of muslin. Remove the pith from the inside of the peel with a sharp knife, and cut the peel into fine strips. Put the peel in a pan, add water and simmer, covered for 20 mins. Chop the tomatoes into small pieces and put into a preserving pan, with lemon juice, made up to 1.7ltr with water. Add the softened lemon peel and the muslin square tied up with string. Bring to the boil, reduce to a simmer and cook for 40 mins until soft. Remove muslin bag and squeeze any liquid back into pan. Add sugar, heat gently stirring until dissolved. Turn up heat and boil rapidly until setting point is reached, stirring occasionally. Test for set by placing a small spoonful on a chilled saucer and leave to cool. Push gently with your finger and if it wrinkles the preserve is setting. Remove from heat, ladle into hot jars and put lid on immediately.

Rhubarb and Ginger Jam

August 2012

Makes approx 5 pounds of jam

Rhubarb is very much in season now. I have made rhubarb fool, rhubarb crumble, rhubarb cake and rhubarb chutney. This recipe comes from a British Sugar book which I got in 1977 that started my foray into preserves. I always consult it when I have a glut of produce, to see what I can make. This recipe I used for the first time this year and it is absolutely delicious on a slice of fresh home-made bread.

2lb 8oz rhubarb

2lb 8oz sugar

5 tbsp lemon juice

4oz stem ginger

1 tsp ground ginger

Cut rhubarb into small pieces, place in a large bowl in alternate layers with sugar. Add lemon juice and leave overnight. Place in preserving pan and bring to boil, then boil rapidly for 15 mins. Add stem ginger and ground ginger. Boil rapidly for approx 10 mins until setting point is reached - test by cooling a tsp of jam on a cold saucer in fridge for 5 mins. Push the jam and if it wrinkles, setting point has been reached. Give the jam a good stir, then pot in small jars and seal with screw tops immediately, while still hot.

Spiced Pickled Pears

November 2015

Pears are in season and this is a very popular preserve at the Regional House. Delicious served with cold meats and cheese.

500ml distilled vinegar

500g granulated sugar

1 tsp cloves

2 cinnamon sticks

1 lemon, rind and juice

1.3kg firm pears, peeled, quartered and cored

Put all the ingredients, except the pears in a preserving pan. Heat gently until the sugar has dissolved. Boil for 5 mins. Add the pears and poach gently until just tender – approx. 20 mins depending on ripeness. Remove with slotted spoon, and put in hot sterilised jars (warmed in the oven about 120°C while the pears are cooking). Boil the vinegar to reduce by a third. Pour over the pears. Cover the top of the pears with waxed paper to keep them submerged, and seal with vinegar proof lids. Store in a cool dark place for 1 month before eating.



CAKES & BISCUITS

Bakewell Cake

October 2013

With lots of raspberries in the freezer and plenty of home-made raspberry jam, this recipe came in very useful. I will also try it with fresh blackberries and blackberry jelly instead of raspberries.

150g soft butter
150g caster sugar
150g sr flour
150g ground almonds
2 large eggs
1 tsp vanilla
6 tbsp raspberry jam
150g raspberries
50g flaked almonds

Mix butter, sugar, flour, eggs and vanilla together. Place half mixture in 8 to 9-inch greased and lined cake tin. Level the top. Dot the jam, and scatter raspberries over. Drop tbsp of remaining mixture over the top, do not cover - leave gaps so the jam and raspberries poke through. Sprinkle with almonds and bake at 180°C for 45-50 mins. Can be served warm with custard or cream; or cold as cake.

Banana Cake with Peanut Butter Frosting

December 2017

I have been making banana cake for many years, from my Kenwood Chefette recipe book that we received as a wedding present in 1973! The hand whisk is still going strong, though the stand, bowl and liquidiser are long gone! I found this peanut butter frosting recipe earlier this year, and it certainly makes a simple cake into something much more special. Salted peanuts can be sprinkled on top to decorate, but they do tend to go soft within 24 hours.

4oz soft butter

2 very ripe bananas

2 eggs

10oz soft brown sugar

1 tsp vanilla essence

10oz sr flour

¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda

Frosting:

25g soft butter

125g icing sugar

60g cream cheese

50g crunchy peanut butter

In a liquidiser or processor, whizz the butter, bananas, eggs sugar and vanilla until smooth. Stir in the flour and bicarb, mixing well. Pour into a greased and lined 2lb loaf tin. Bake at 180°C for approx. 1 hour until golden and a skewer inserted in the middle of the cake comes out clean. Cool in the tin for 10 mins, and then turn out onto a cooling rack. Make the frosting by beating the butter and icing sugar until pale, light and fluffy. Beat in cream cheese and peanut butter. When the cake is completely cold, spread the frosting on the loaf with a palette knife. Immediately before serving, sprinkle over salted peanuts to decorate if you wish.

Blackberry Crumble Bars

May 2017

If you still have blackberries in the freezer these are an alternative to blackberry and apple crumble! These tasty little bars are ideal with coffee or in a lunch box.

350g blackberries
1 orange, zest and juice
225g plain flour
125g semolina
125g golden caster sugar
225g butter
2 tsp cornflour
50g walnuts, finely chopped
2 tbs demerara sugar

Mix flour, semolina and 100g caster sugar. Rub in butter, until just starting to stick together. Stir in orange zest. Press half the mixture into a lined 20cm square cake tin, making an even layer with the back of a spoon. Mix remaining 25g caster sugar, cornflour and orange juice. Add blackberries and toss to combine. Spread blackberries over pastry base. Stir nuts into remaining crumble. Spread over the berries, sprinkle with demerara sugar and bake 180°C for 45 mins. Leave to cool in the tin, cut into bars.

Blueberry and Lime Drizzle Ring

March 2017

This is another Mary Berry recipe, a variation on the classic lemon drizzle cake.

225g butter
225g caster sugar
275g sr flour
1 tsp baking powder
4 large eggs
2 tbsp milk
Finely grated rind of 3 limes
100g blueberries

For the glaze

6 tbsp lime juice (3 limes)
175g granulated sugar

Grease and line with strips 3-pint ring mould. Cream butter and sugar until pale and creamy. Beat in eggs, milk and lime rind. Stir in flour and baking powder. Spoon half mixture into ring mould. Scatter over the blueberries and top with remaining mixture, smoothing evenly to cover fruit. Bake at 180°C for approx. 35-40 mins until well risen. While the cake is baking make the glaze, mix lime juice and granulated sugar. Leave the cake to cool in the tin for a few mins, then loosen the sides carefully with a palette knife. Turn it out onto a wire cooling rack, set over a baking tray. Peel off paper strips. While the cake is still warm, prick all over with a fine skewer. Stir the glaze, then spoon slowly over warm cake. Leave to cool completely.

Carrot and Raisin Cupcakes

April 2013

Makes 12

Frances Plummer

Frances baked these for a recent village event and they are quite delicious. A good way of persuading children to eat their veg!

225g carrots

130g raisins

2 large eggs

130g caster sugar

120ml corn oil

½ tsp vanilla extract

Grated zest of 1 orange

120g plain flour

1 tsp bicarb

Pinch salt

1 tsp cinnamon

Preheat oven to 160°C and line muffin tins with cake cases. Finely grate carrots and combine with raisins. In a large bowl beat eggs and sugar for several mins and then add oil, vanilla and orange zest and beat well. Sift flour, bicarb, salt and cinnamon then gradually add these to the egg and sugar mixture, beating well. Pour mixture into the bowl containing the carrots and raisins and blend well. Spoon mixture into the cupcake cases to about 2/3 full. Bake for about 25 mins – the cupcakes will be quite dark brown in colour and feel spongy to the touch. Remove from oven and leave in tins for about 10 mins before putting them on wire rack.

Chocolate and Carrot Brownies

March 2015

Still on a carrot theme, these brownies are very rich, so do cut them into very small pieces!

150g Bournville dark chocolate

120ml sunflower oil

175g sugar

1 egg

1 tsp vanilla extract

50g cocoa

125g sr flour

4 tbsp milk

150g grated carrots

50g white chocolate

Melt dark chocolate. Leave to cool. Whisk oil, sugar, egg and vanilla. Stir in cocoa, flour, milk, grated carrot and cooled dark chocolate. Mix well. Spoon into a greased 24cm square tin and bake 180°C for 25 mins. Leave to cool in tin. Drizzle melted white chocolate over the top of the cake.

Leave until quite cold – preferably overnight so that the cake firms up. Cut into small squares. If cut too soon, the cake will be very crumbly.

Chocolate Biscuit Gateau

April 2020

Serves 8-10

With Easter almost upon us, time for a chocolate recipe! Beware, this cake uses raw eggs. It is the most delicious thing ever, but extremely rich – you only need a very small slice!

8oz plain chocolate (Bournville is best)

8oz butter

2 eggs

1oz caster sugar

8oz digestive biscuits

whipped cream, glace cherries and nuts to decorate

Melt butter and chocolate. Allow to cool. Beat eggs and sugar. Pour into chocolate mixture, beating continuously. Fold in chopped digestives. Turn into loose bottomed shallow 8-inch tin, base lined with greaseproof paper. Level the top of the mixture. Chill in fridge overnight. Turn on to serving dish. Pipe whipped cream on top, decorate with glace cherries and nuts of your choice.

Chocolate Crackle Tops

April 2016

Makes about 40 biscuits

If you haven't had your ration of chocolate over Easter, try these tasty little biscuits. They are quick and easy to make – however, you do have to prepare the mixture several hours before hand, or leave overnight. They are fudgy biscuits with the texture of a brownie. Once baked, the biscuit top cracks and the icing sugar contrasts with the chocolate inside. The children will enjoy making these – rolling the biscuits is very messy!

200g plain chocolate

90g butter

150g caster sugar

3 eggs

1 tbsp vanilla essence

175g plain flour

25g cocoa powder

½ tsp baking powder

Icing sugar for coating

Melt chocolate and butter gently in microwave, stirring frequently until just melted. Stir in sugar and mix 2-3 mins until dissolved. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well. Stir in vanilla. Mix in flour, cocoa and baking powder until just blended. Cover with cling film and put in fridge 2-3 hours or overnight, until mixture is cold and holds its shape. Using a tsp, scoop mixture out and roll into small balls – about size of a walnut. Drop balls one at a time into icing sugar and roll until heavily coated. Remove ball with a slotted spoon and tap against side of bowl to remove excess sugar. Place well-spaced apart on greased baking sheets and bake for 10-12 mins at 170°C. Do not overbake or the biscuits will be dry. Leave on tray for 3 mins until just set. Using a palette knife transfer to wire rack to cool completely.

Chocolate Mayo Brownies

November 2013

This is a favourite with my family – a good Bonfire night treat!

140g plain chocolate (I find Bournville is best)

3 eggs

225g caster sugar

1 tsp vanilla

40g plain flour

2 g cocoa powder

1 tsp baking powder

110g Hellman's real mayonnaise

55g pecan nuts (or walnuts)

Gently melt the chocolate in microwave. Whisk eggs, sugar and vanilla until slightly thickened. Whisk in chocolate. Fold in flour, cocoa and baking powder. Stir in mayo and chopped nuts. Pour into well-greased 8 x 11-inch tray bake tin. Bake at 160°C for approx 30-35 mins. The cake will be soft and crusty on top. Leave to cool in tin, cut into squares when cold.

Using mayo instead of butter makes them 55% lower in saturated fat. So these brownies are good for you! Very moreish!

Chocolate Yule Log

December 2016

Cake:

4 eggs
4oz caster sugar
3oz sr flour
1oz cocoa powder

Filling:

¼ pint milk
2 egg yolks
6oz Bournville choc
4oz butter
2oz icing sugar

Grease and line 12 x 9-inch Swiss roll tin. Whisk 4 eggs and caster sugar until thick, pale and creamy. Gently fold in sifted flour and cocoa cutting through the mixture in a figure of 8 movement, lifting it from the base of the bowl and shaking the cocoa and flour back into the egg mixture. Pour the mixture into the tin. DO NOT smooth the surface, just tip the tin so that the mixture flows into the corners. Bake at 200°C for 12-15 mins until the cake springs back when pressed lightly. While still hot, turn out onto greaseproof paper dredged in caster sugar. Carefully peel off the paper, trim off any crisp edges and cut a line, 1 inch in from one of the short edges but don't slice all the way through. Fold the indented end over and roll up keeping the paper inside. Leave to cool. Heat the milk until just warm. Blend egg yolks in a heatproof basin and beat in milk. Put the basin over a pan of gently simmering water and cook, stirring frequently, until the mixture coats the back of the spoon. Add chocolate and stir until melted. Cover the basin with cling film and leave to cool, stirring occasionally. DO NOT refrigerate. Cream butter and icing sugar, then gradually stir in cooled chocolate custard. Unroll the cake and spread with 1/3 chocolate mix. Re-roll carefully so as not to cause cracks, but don't worry too much as they can be covered. Transfer to serving dish. Spread the remaining chocolate mix onto the cake, covering the ends too. Make lines with a fork – as for the bark of a tree. Chill for approx. 1 hour until set. Decorate as you wish.

Courgette, Lemon and Pistachio Cake

November 2017

Courgettes have been abundant this year, and cake recipes are common too but this is a delicious variation. It is very important to squeeze out the liquid to prevent the cake being too soggy.

325g grated courgettes
120g butter
180g caster sugar
Juice and zest of 2 lemons
50g pistachio nuts
½ tsp vanilla extract
3 eggs
280g sr flour
½ tsp baking powder
60g icing sugar

Place the grated courgettes in a tea towel and wring out as much moisture as you can over the sink. This may take a few mins. Melt the butter with sugar, stir in courgettes, lemon zest, chopped pistachios and vanilla. Beat in eggs. Add flour and baking powder, stir in gently – do not overmix. Tip into a greased and lined 2lb loaf tin. Bake at 180°C approximately 1 hour until skewer inserted in the centre of the cake comes out clean. Mix lemon juice and icing sugar. Using a fork, gently prick the top of the cake and pour over the lemon drizzle, so that some soaks in and the rest forms a light glaze on top. Cool in the tin.

Crunchy Ginger Biscuits

April 2015

Makes approx 30

These biscuits are very quick and easy to make. They keep well for a long time in an airtight tin – if you don't eat them all, as they are very moreish!

3oz butter

3oz soft brown sugar

3oz clear honey

2oz black treacle

8oz sr flour

1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

1 tsp ground ginger

1 tsp ground cinnamon

2oz crystallised stem ginger

Melt butter, sugar, honey and treacle in a large bowl in microwave for approx 1 min. Stir well until mixed and smooth. Stir in flour, bicarb, ginger and cinnamon. Add chopped ginger and mix well. Leave to cool and firm up for approx 10 mins. Roll a tsp of the mixture into a smooth ball. Place on a greased baking tray, spaced well apart. Bake for 12-15 mins 180°C. Leave to cool on tray for 5 mins before transferring to wire rack to cool.

Ecclefechan Tarts

December 2015

Makes 12

I first tasted these delicious little tarts when I saw them in Sainsbury's a couple of months ago. This recipe came from Paul Hollywood's latest book *British Baking*, which I couldn't resist buying when I saw the recipe for Ecclefechan tarts. At the time of writing I haven't actually tried out this recipe but I am sure it will be fine! They are the Scottish variation of mince pies.

Pastry

200g plain flour
2 tbsp icing sugar
100g butter
1 egg
1 tsp lemon juice
2-3 tsp cold water

Filling

150g dark soft brown sugar
2 eggs
100g butter
1 tbsp sherry vinegar
200g mixed dried fruit
2 g chopped walnuts
25g chopped pecans

Make the pastry: rub fat into flour and icing sugar. Add egg, lemon juice and water. Knead gently into a smooth ball. Wrap in cling film and chill for 30 mins. Roll out and using 10 cm cutter, cut into 12 circles and place in muffin tins.

For filling: beat sugar and eggs, then add melted butter, vinegar and dried fruit. Mix well. Divide between pastry cases. Mix walnuts and pecans, sprinkle over tarts. Bake 20 mins 200°C, until pastry is golden and filling has slight wobble. Place the tray on a wire rack to cool. It is easiest to remove the tarts when they are still slightly warm.

Elderflower Cordial Sandwich Cake

August 2016

If you made elderflower cordial ([see page 59](#)) this summer this is a delicious cake using some of it. I have modified it slightly from Lynn Hill's Clandestine Cake Club Cook Book.

200g white chocolate	200ml double cream
4 large eggs, separated	230g caster sugar
2 tbsp elderflower cordial	130g sr flour
150g butter	150g icing sugar
3 tbsp elderflower cordial	

Make the chocolate ganache first. Heat the cream in small saucepan until just bubbling around the edge. Pour over the chocolate and mix until melted. Cover with cling film and leave to cool for 4-6 hours in the fridge until a firm spreading consistency. Beat egg yolks and 190g caster sugar using an electric mixer until pale, light, fluffy and doubled in volume (approx 10 mins). Mix in 2 tbsp elderflower cordial. In a clean bowl, whisk egg whites until soft peaks form and add remaining 40g caster sugar until well combined. Fold half the egg whites into egg yolk mix, then fold in half flour. Repeat with remaining egg whites and flour. Divide the mixture between 2 greased and lined 20cm round tins. Bake 190°C for approx. 25 mins. Leave to cool in tins for 5 mins before turning onto wire rack to cool. Beat butter and icing sugar until light and fluffy. Stir in 3 tbsp elderflower cordial. Use buttercream to sandwich the cakes together and spread chocolate ganache over the top of cake. Decorate cake as you like with raspberries, strawberries or chocolate buttons.

Ginger Cake

May 2018

A quick and easy to make cake which stores well in a tin, or can be frozen as a standby.

12oz sr flour

1 tsp bicarb

3 tsp ground ginger

7oz caster sugar

4oz soft margarine

2 eggs

2 tbsp golden syrup

8 fl oz boiling milk

Mix all the ingredients together by hand or electric mixer, until smooth. Pour into a greased and lined 7-inch round deep tin. Bake at 140°C for 60-80 mins until cake is shrinking slightly from the sides and a skewer comes out clean. Turn onto a wire rack to cool. This cake can be eaten straight away but can be left for a few days to allow the flavour to develop. It can be jazzed up with icing, butter cream or decorated as you wish.

Gooseberry and Pistachio Cake

October 2020

I made this the first time with fresh gooseberries, and the second time with thawed ones from the freezer. Both worked well. I have adapted the recipe from a Waitrose card. I didn't have enough ground almonds, so I topped it up with plain flour. The second time I used 200g of ground almonds (omitting the flour) but it sank in the middle, though was perfectly fine. Flour helps to produce a firmer cake but if you need a gluten-free cake just use ground almonds.

5 eggs, separated
220g golden caster sugar
100g natural yogurt
60ml olive oil
140g ground almonds
60g plain flour
¼ tsp baking powder
½ tsp bicarb
100g pistachios, chopped
125g gooseberries (small pink ones)

Whisk egg whites to form soft peaks. Gradually whisk in 110g sugar, until stiff and shiny. In separate bowl, whisk egg yolks and 110g sugar until thick and pale. With a large metal spoon, gently fold yogurt and oil into yolk mixture. Add almonds, bicarb, baking powder, 75g nuts and gooseberries. Carefully fold in egg white and spoon mixture into 23cm greased and lined spring form tin. Smooth the top. Bake for about 1 hour at 180°C, covering the top halfway through with foil. When cooked should be well risen and coming away from the side. Cool in tin. Serve dusted with caster sugar and 25g chopped pistachios.

Mincemeat Biscotti

February 2019

If you have mincemeat left over from Christmas try these crisp tasty biscuits – a variation on the traditional Italian almond variety.

75g butter
150g caster sugar
1 egg
250g luxury mincemeat
1 tbsp brandy
280g plain flour
1½ tsp baking powder
50g toasted walnuts

Cream butter and sugar, until light and fluffy. Stir in beaten egg, then mincemeat and brandy. Add flour, baking powder and chopped walnuts, stir well. On a floured board, shape into 2 x 12-inch long logs – similar to a flat baguette. Bake on greased baking trays 160°C for 25 mins. Allow to cool, then cut each log into 18 diagonal thin slices. Bake for a further 12 mins. Cool on wire rack.

Will keep in an airtight tin for about a week. If they go a bit soft, crisp them up in a medium oven for 5 mins.

Mincemeat Crumble Squares

December 2018

265g plain flour
125g soft brown sugar
100g ground almonds
225g cold butter
700g quality mincemeat
75g pecan halves
icing sugar to dust

Rub butter into flour, sugar and almonds until coarse crumbs. Put 2/3 mixture in 8-inch square tin - base and sides lined with baking parchment. Press lightly to flatten slightly. Put mincemeat on top, then scatter with remaining crumb mixture but do not pat down. Sprinkle pecans over the top. Bake approx. 45 mins at 180°C until golden. Leave to cool for 10mins before carefully removing from tin. Cut into squares and serve cold, dusted with icing sugar as cake with a cup of coffee, or serve warm as desert with cream, ice cream or crème fraiche.

Moccachino Slices

May 2019

Another quick and easy traybake, that goes perfectly with a cup of tea or coffee.

100g butter

225g soft brown sugar

2 eggs

1 tbsp instant coffee, mixed with 3 tbsp boiling water

2 tsp baking powder

125g plain flour

Topping

150ml sour cream, yogurt or crème fraiche

280g white choc

cocoa powder to dust

Melt butter in microwave, stir in sugar. Cool slightly, stir in coffee and eggs. Add baking powder and flour, mix well. Pour into greased and lined 12 x 9-inch tin. Bake 180°C for 20 mins. Cool in tin. Melt white chocolate and stir in sour cream. Leave to cool for 15 mins. Spread over top of cake. Dust lightly with cocoa and leave to set. Cut into squares.

Norfolk Scone

November 2011

On the Parish Pilgrimage to Walsingham last month, I enjoyed a very large slice of Norfolk shortcake in the café at the shrine. It reminded me of a teatime recipe that I have used many times in the past. The Norfolk shortcake was rather like a tray bake slice – soft rather than crisp, packed with currants and nutmeg. This recipe is similar, in that it uses nutmeg and currants, but is more like a giant scone sandwich!

1lb sr flour
6oz butter
2 eggs
3oz soft brown sugar
6 fl oz milk
4oz currants
½ tsp nutmeg
2 tbs Demerara sugar

Rub 4oz butter into flour. Mix to a soft dough with eggs and milk. Knead lightly. Divide dough in half and roll each piece into an 8-inch round. Place one on a lightly greased baking tray. Spread remaining butter on dough. Mix brown sugar, currants and nutmeg. Spread evenly over buttered dough. Lay the second round on top and press down firmly. Cut into 8 wedges, through the top layer of dough only. Brush top with milk and sprinkle with Demerara sugar. Bake at 200°C for 35 mins.

Serve warm with butter.

Nutella Cookies

May 2015

If you still haven't had your quota of chocolate for Easter, try these – delicious; and very simple to make.

1 egg
250g Nutella
250g sr flour
125g caster sugar
50g chopped hazel nuts

Blend all the ingredients, except the nuts, in a food processor until smooth. Add the nuts. If the mixture is too crumbly add 1-2 tbsp water. Form into 1-inch balls. Place on a baking tray, spaced apart, and press each one down lightly with a fork. Bake for approx 10 mins at 180°C. Leave to cool for 5 mins, before transferring to a wire rack to cool. Store in an air-tight tin. (These cookies will be soft set)

Peanut Butter Biscuits

June 2020

4oz block margarine
4oz peanut butter (smooth or crunchy)
4oz caster sugar
4oz light brown sugar
1 egg
8oz plain flour
1 tsp ground ginger
1 tsp baking powder

Cream marger, peanut butter and sugars until smooth. Beat in egg. Mix dry ingredients and stir in. Mix well to a stiff dough. Roll into walnut sized balls, and place on greased baking trays, spaced well apart. Flatten lightly with a fork. Bake 190°C for approx 15 mins until golden. Cool on tray for 5 mins, to allow them to crisp up, then transfer to a cooling rack. When cold store in an airtight tin.

Peanut Butter Flapjack

March 2014

6oz crunchy peanut butter
4oz soft margarine
8oz Demerara sugar
6 tbsp golden syrup
10oz rolled oats
2oz salted peanuts
2 tsp lemon juice

Melt the peanut butter, margarine, syrup and sugar together (in saucepan or microwave). Stir in oats, peanuts and lemon juice. Press into greased 11 x 7-inch shallow tin. Bake at 160°C for approx 35 mins until golden. Mark into squares and cool in tin. Cut into squares when cold. Store in an airtight tin. Keeps well for up to 2 weeks (assuming you don't eat them!)

Very moreish! Good for packed lunches.

Plum and Almond Cake

November 2018

A delicious cake using up a glut of plums at the Regional House.

175g butter
300g halved plums
150g caster sugar
3 eggs
125g sr flour
100g ground almonds
2 tbsp toasted flaked almonds
2 tbsp plum jam

Line the base of a 20cm baking tin with parchment. Chop 200g plums into small dice. Cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs, one at a time. Fold in flour and ground almonds, until just combined. Spoon some of the mixture into the tin to just cover the base. Fold the diced plums into the remaining mixture and spoon into cake tin. Cut the rest of the plums into wedges and arrange on top of mixture. Bake for 50-60 mins at 170°C, until skewer inserted comes out clean. Cool in tin for 10mins then turn onto wire rack to cool completely. When ready to serve, warm the jam with 1 tbsp water, brush over cake to glaze and sprinkle with flaked almonds.

Poppy Seed and Honey Cake with Strawberry Icing

July 2020

100g caster sugar
175g butter
85g honey
3 eggs
140g sr flour
25g cornflour
2 tbsp poppy seeds
100g icing sugar
2 tbsp strawberry puree

Butter a large ring tin (approx 8-inch) dust with a spoonful of flour and caster sugar. Tap out excess. Cream butter, honey and sugar until pale and fluffy. Beat in eggs. Add dry ingredients and fold in. Spoon into tin and level the surface. Bake 160°C for approx 35 mins until risen and firm. Cool in tin for 10 mins then ease sides with a palette knife and turn onto wire rack to cool. Make the puree by crushing a handful of strawberries and pushing through a sieve to remove pips. Mix icing sugar and puree to make a stiff icing – use more icing sugar if necessary. Put a plate under the cooling rack to catch the drips. Drizzle the icing over the cooled cake, and decorate with fresh strawberries. Can be served with cream, crème fraiche or even ice cream!

Pumpkin, Pecan and White Chocolate Blondies

February 2020

We are still eating pumpkins! These little squares are delicious – adapted from a Lidl recipe.

275g pumpkin (or butternut squash)
175g soft butter
1 tsp vanilla extract
200g light brown sugar
1 egg
225g plain flour
125g white choc
100g pecans

Chop pumpkin into chunks and cook in microwave until soft (approx 15 mins). Mash and leave to cool. Beat butter, vanilla and sugar until pale smooth and creamy. Add egg, beating well. Stir in pumpkin, flour, chopped chocolate and pecans. Spoon mixture into greased and lined 8 x 12-inch baking tin. Bake 180°C for 40mins. Cool in tin for 10 mins. Cool on a wire rack. Cut into squares. Can be served cold as cake, or warm with cream or ice cream.

Pumpkin, Poppy Seed and Lemon Loaf

December 2013

8oz diced pumpkin
3 tbsp milk
1 egg
6oz sr flour
½ tsp baking powder
¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda
1½ tsp mixed spice
½ tsp nutmeg
2oz butter
5oz caster sugar
2 tbsp poppy seeds
Finely grated zest of 1 lemon

Cook pumpkin in microwave until tender. Drain and puree until smooth. Mix flour, baking powder, bicarb, spice, nutmeg and sugar. Rub in the butter until like fine bread crumbs. Stir in poppy seeds, egg, milk and pumpkin puree. Spoon into a greased and lined 2lb loaf tin. Bake at 180°C for about 50 mins until risen and golden. Cool on a wire rack. Remove paper and serve cut into thin slices.

This cake keeps very well.

Raspberry and Almond Cake

July 2019

With the soft summer fruit season fast approaching, what better than a raspberry cake?

6oz sr flour

6oz caster sugar

6oz soft margarine

6oz ground almonds

2 tsp ground cinnamon

1 tsp baking powder

4 eggs

10oz raspberries (fresh or frozen)

Mix all ingredients, except raspberries, to a smooth batter - a soft dropping consistency (can be done in a food processor). Pour half the mix into an 8in deep round lined or loose bottomed tin. Sprinkle half the raspberries over the mix, and cover with the rest of the batter. Lightly press the remaining raspberries into the top of the cake and bake for approx 80 mins at 165°C until firm, and skewer comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tin for 10 mins. Turn onto wire rack to cool. Dust with icing sugar and cinnamon mix. Can be served warm or cold with raspberry sauce, cream or crème fraîche.

Rhubarb and Custard Muffins

June 2019

Makes 12

Have you got lots of rhubarb in the garden and are fed up with rhubarb crumble? Try these for a change!

300g rhubarb

50g caster sugar

140g soft light brown sugar

75ml sunflower oil

1 egg

Zest of 1 orange

284ml carton soured cream

300g sr flour

8 tbs thick Devon custard (from a carton) chilled

Cut rhubarb into 1in lengths, toss in caster sugar, put in roasting tin, cover in foil and roast 200°C for 15 mins until tender. Cool and drain. Beat oil, brown sugar, egg, zest and sour cream until combined. Mix in flour, and fold in rhubarb. Divide $\frac{3}{4}$ mixture into 12 muffin cases, make a dip in the centre, fill each with a small blob of custard. Cover with the rest of the muffin mix. Bake at 180°C for 25 mins until risen and golden. Sprinkle with caster sugar. Best eaten same day.

Spiced Buttermilk Cakes

May 2020

Frances Plummer

(original Guardian recipe)

A good use for milk which had gone sour!

300g white flour

2 tsp baking powder

2 tsp mixed spice

Pinch salt

125g butter

90g white sugar

150g mix of dried apricots, cranberries and currants

1 egg

125ml buttermilk or half yoghurt/half milk (I used milk which had gone sour).

Heat the oven to 180°C and line 2 baking sheets with baking parchment.

Sieve the flour, baking powder, salt and spices into a large bowl.

Cut the butter into small chunks and rub into the flour until it resembles breadcrumbs.

Stir in the sugar and dried fruit.

Beat the egg with the buttermilk/milk and then add to the dry ingredients.

Mix quickly till it comes together and then put tbsps of mixture onto the baking sheets, leaving some room for them to spread.

Bake for 15-20 mins until golden brown. Cool on a rack.

Strawberry Pancake Gateau

July 2017

Serves 6-8

8oz wholemeal flour	4 tbsp clear honey
2 tbsp caster sugar	1 small orange
1 tsp nutmeg	12oz cream cheese
2 tsp baking powder	2 tbsp milk
2 eggs	3 tbsp caster sugar
2 tbsp veg oil	½ pint milk
8oz strawberries	

Mix flour, sugar, nutmeg and baking powder. Stir in eggs, oil and ¼ pint milk, beat until smooth. Add remaining milk. Heat 6-inch frying pan over moderate heat, lightly wipe pan with oil on kitchen paper. Turn heat to low, pour 1/3 of batter into pan. Cook for 2-3 mins until bubbles appear on surface, turn pancake, press down lightly at edge and cook 1 min. Place on cooling rack and make 2 more. Spread each pancake with 1 tbsp honey while still warm. Cut 4 slices from centre of orange and set aside to decorate. Beat together cream cheese, milk, caster sugar, and grated rind from ends of orange. Halve the strawberries – save 3 for top decoration. Place one pancake on serving dish. Save 2 tbsp of cheese mixture for top decoration. Spread ¼ mixture on pancake, top with ½ the strawberries. Spread cheese on both sides of 2nd pancake, place on top of 1st pancake. Spread remaining cheese on 3rd pancake, and place cheese side down on top of 2nd. Spread remaining honey on top. Place ½ reserved cheese on top in centre. Cut orange slices from rind to centre, overlap to form cones and put a little cheese in the centre of the cone. Arrange around cheese on top of pancake. Place the remaining strawberry halves between the orange slices.

Westmorland Pepper Cake

May 2016

An unusual cake recipe from my Dairy Diary – that even Bob eats despite not liking dried fruit! The pepper and cloves give it a warming spicy flavour.

75g butter
75g raisins
75g currants
110g caster sugar
225g sr flour
½ tsp ground ginger
½ tsp ground cloves
½ tsp finely ground black pepper
4 tbsp milk
1 egg

Put butter fruit and sugar in a saucepan with ¼ pint water, melt gently, stirring. Bring to boil and simmer gently for 10 mins. Leave to cool. Stir in flour, spices and pepper. Beat in milk and egg. Pour into greased and lined 7-inch round cake tin at 180°C for 45 mins, until firm and golden. Cool on a wire rack.
Can be served with Lancashire cheese.

