

Chef

express



hearty winter food



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hearty winter food

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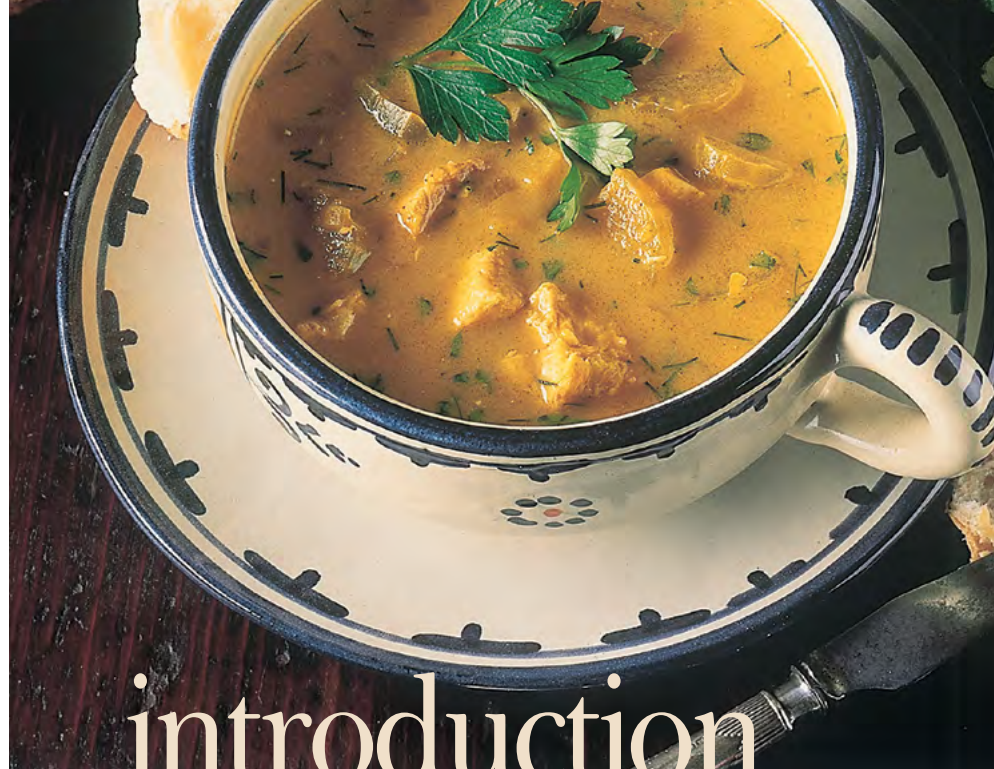
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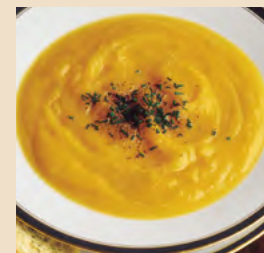
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introduction

When winter comes around, nothing tastes as good as a comforting stew or a heart-warming soup. Celebrate wintertime with this collection of delicious comfort foods. From hotpots and casseroles to cheesecakes and custards, this winter season you'll have a recipe for every occasion.



hearty winter food



The best way to ensure that everyone in your family is warm during the winter is including heat-boosting ingredients and opting for cooked dishes over raw ones. Follow these tips to stay warm naturally during cold weather.

Tips & Tricks

- Consume dried fruits. Figs, dates, almonds, raisins, walnuts, prunes, peanuts and other dried fruits can help you stay warm during cold months. These are also rich in minerals and unsaturated fats and make an excellent source of extra energy.
- Utilize a slow cooker or a crockpot. Winter is the best time to take advantage of a slow cooker. It is easy to use and it brings out a lot of flavor, resulting in mouth-watering dishes. You can start cooking your ingredients during the morning, and they'll be ready for dinner.
- Incorporate ghee. This type of clarified butter has immune-boosting properties making it a winter essential. It is also rich in unsaturated fat, which has a warming effect on the body. You can use it to sauté vegetables, on toasts and as a replacement



for cooking oil.

- Include root vegetables. Carrots, squash, potatoes, radish, onions and garlic have warming effects on the body because they digest slowly, generating more heat. Many of these veggies are in season during the winter months, so it's easier to find them fresh at the supermarket.
- Add more honey. Replace sugar with honey as a sweetener for beverages. Honey has antibacterial and antifungal properties that make it a great ally against winter colds and flus. You can also include honey in salad dressings, sauces for meat or poultry and as a topping for granola or porridge.
- Take advantage of spices. These will add flavor and warmth to your dishes. You can incorporate spices like turmeric, cumin, coriander, black pepper, cardamom, cayenne, cloves, ginger, cinnamon and anise to soups, teas, curries, casseroles, stews, cakes and any other wintery meal.

Difficulty scale

■ □ □ | Easy to do

■ ■ □ | Requires attention

■ ■ ■ | Requires experience

vegetable bean soup

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 45 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

ingredients

- > 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- > 3 onions, diced
- > 3 carrots, diced
- > 3 potatoes, diced
- > 3 cups/750 ml/1¼ pt vegetable stock
- > 315 g/10 oz canned cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- > ½ cup/125 ml/4 fl oz milk
- > 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
- > 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- > freshly ground black pepper

method

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat, add onions and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until onions are lightly browned.
2. Add carrots, potatoes and stock and bring to the boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender.
3. Stir in beans, milk, dill, parsley and black pepper to taste and cook, stirring frequently, for 3-4 minutes or until heated through.

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Serves 4



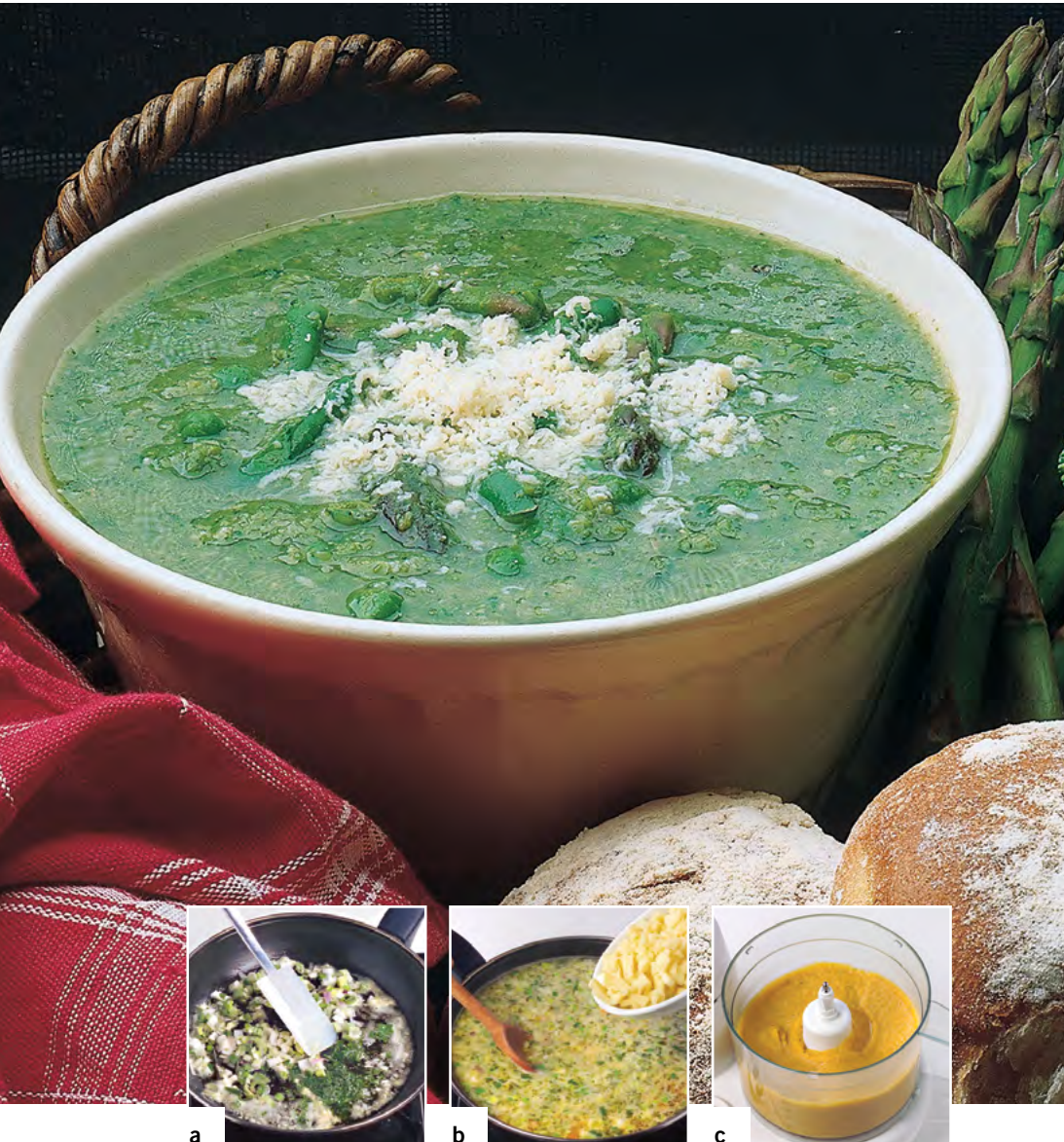
tip from the chef

It can be served with croûtons (bread cubes, toasted or fried in oil or butter).



carrot soup

with coriander



■ □ □ | Cooking time: 30 minutes - Preparation time: 10 minutes

method

1. Melt butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add spring onions and coriander and cook for 2 minutes (a).
2. Add stock, pepper, carrots and potato (b) and bring to the boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes or until vegetables are tender.
3. Purée vegetables and stock in a blender or food processor until smooth (c). Return soup to saucepan and heat through.
4. Ladle soup into warmed bowls, top with a spoonful of cream and sprinkle with chopped parsley.

ingredients

- > 50 g/1¾ oz butter
- > ½ cup spring onions, chopped
- > ½ cup chopped fresh coriander
- > 4 cups chicken stock
- > 1 teaspoon cracked black peppercorns
- > 500 g/1 lb carrots, chopped
- > 1 large potato, chopped
- > ¼ cup thickened cream
- > ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley

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Serves 4

tip from the chef

The intense aroma of the coriander gives a refreshing and different touch to this simple soup.



eggplant cheese and tomato casserole

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 40 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

ingredients

- > ¼ cup olive oil
- > 2 eggplant, cut into ½ cm/¼ in rounds
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 1½ cups canned tomatoes
- > 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- > 2 tablespoons dry white wine
- > 200 g/6½ oz mozzarella cheese, chopped
- > ½ cup chopped prosciutto
- > 60 g/2 oz Parmesan cheese, grated
- > 2 tablespoons dry breadcrumbs
- > 1 tablespoon melted butter

method

1. Heat oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Add eggplant and cook for 1 minute on each side, remove from pan and set aside.
2. Add garlic, tomatoes, tomato paste and wine to pan, bring to the boil and simmer for 5 minutes.
3. Spoon half the tomato mixture into the bottom of a 3 cm/1¼ in deep baking dish. Arrange half the eggplant slices on top, sprinkle with half the mozzarella cheese. Repeat layers.
4. Sprinkle prosciutto on top, then sprinkle combined Parmesan cheese, breadcrumbs and butter. Bake in moderate oven for 30 minutes.

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Serves 6

tip from the chef

Parmesan cheese is one of the most imitated cheeses of the world. A kilo of this cheese comes out from a good of 16 liters of the most valuable milk of the typical zone.





spaghetti

basil soup

■□□ | Cooking time: 27 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

method

1. Cook spaghetti in boiling water in a large saucepan following packet directions. Drain and set aside.
2. Heat oil in a large saucepan and cook onion, garlic and almonds, stirring over a medium heat for 6-7 minutes or until onions are transparent.
3. Add stock and basil to pan and bring to the boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in spaghetti and season to taste with black pepper. Spoon soup into bowls and serve immediately.

ingredients

- > 155 g/5 oz spaghetti, broken into pieces
- > 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- > 1 onion, chopped
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 60 g/2 oz slivered almonds
- > 4 cups/1 liter/1¾ pt chicken stock
- > 30 g/1 oz fresh basil leaves, shredded
- > freshly ground black pepper

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Serves 4

tip from the chef

This soup can be frozen because it does not contain eggs or cream. Basil should not be added before freezing the soup, but only on reheating, so that it maintains its properties.



spicy pumpkin soup

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 25 minutes – Preparation time: 15 minutes

ingredients

- > 1.5 kg/3 lb pumpkin flesh, chopped
- > 6 cups/1.5 liters/2½ pt chicken stock
- > 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- > 1 teaspoon chili powder
- > 1½ cups/375 ml/12 fl oz cream
- > 4 tablespoons snipped fresh chives
- > ¼ cup/60 ml/2 fl oz brandy
- > 1 teaspoon grated nutmeg
- > freshly ground black pepper

method

1. Place pumpkin and stock in a large saucepan, bring to simmering over a medium heat and cook for 20 minutes or until pumpkin is tender. Remove pan from heat and set aside to cool slightly.
2. Place pumpkin and stock in batches in a food processor or blender and process until smooth.
3. Return mixture to a clean pan. Stir in cumin, chili powder and cream and bring to simmering over a medium heat, stirring occasionally. Simmer for 3-5 minutes. Stir in chives, brandy and nutmeg and season to taste with black pepper. Serve with warm herb damper, if desired.

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Serves 10



tip from the chef

This soup can be made the day before and reheated when required. You may prefer to make this recipe using carrots instead of pumpkin. Simply replace the pumpkin with the same quantity of prepared carrots.



pumpkin gnocchi



a



b



c

■ ■ ■ | Cooking time: 20 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

method

1. To make gnocchi, melt butter in a saucepan over a medium heat, add onion and garlic and cook for 4-5 minutes. Transfer mixture to a bowl, add pumpkin, cheeses, flour, nutmeg, egg yolk and black pepper to taste and mix to combine (a).
2. Form small spoonfuls of mixture into egg shapes (b). Toss in flour, shake off excess and refrigerate until firm. Cook gnocchi in boiling water in a large saucepan until they rise to the surface (c). Using a slotted spoon, remove from pan and keep warm.
3. To make sauce, heat oil in a saucepan over a medium heat, add zucchini and spring onions and cook for 4-5 minutes or until soft. Set aside to cool. Transfer to a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Place mixture in a clean saucepan, stir in cream and black pepper to taste and cook over a low heat until almost boiling.
4. Spoon sauce into serving dish, top with gnocchi, pour over melted butter, sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and dust with nutmeg.

ingredients

- > 60 g/2 oz butter, melted
- > 60 g/2 oz grated Parmesan cheese
- > ground nutmeg

pumpkin gnocchi

- > 30 g/1 oz butter
- > 1 onion, finely chopped
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 625 g/1¼ lb pumpkin, finely grated
- > 250 g/8 oz ricotta cheese, drained
- > 60 g/2 oz grated Parmesan cheese
- > 2 tablespoons flour
- > ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- > 1 egg yolk, lightly beaten
- > freshly ground black pepper

zucchini sauce

- > 2 tablespoons olive oil
- > 3 large zucchini, sliced
- > 5 spring onions, chopped
- > ¾ cup/185 ml/6 fl oz double cream

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Serves 6

tip from the chef

Thursday is gnocchi day in Rome when good cooks use their old potatoes to make gnocchi. This one made with pumpkin is a variation of the traditional Roman gnocchi.



tomato chicken curry

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 1 hour – Preparation time: 20 minutes

ingredients

- > 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- > 1 kg/2 lb chicken pieces
- > 1 onion, chopped
- > 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 2 tablespoons finely grated fresh ginger
- > 3 small fresh green chilies, chopped
- > 4 fresh or dried curry leaves
- > 2 tablespoons ground coriander
- > 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- > 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- > 1 tablespoon black mustard seeds
- > 440 g/14 oz canned tomatoes, undrained and mashed
- > 1½ cups/375 ml/ 12 fl oz coconut milk

method

1. Heat oil in a saucepan over a medium heat, add chicken and cook, turning frequently, for 10 minutes or until brown on all sides. Remove chicken from pan and set aside.
2. Add onion and garlic to pan and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until onion is soft. Stir in ginger, chilies, curry leaves, coriander, cumin, turmeric and mustard seeds and cook for 2 minutes longer or until fragrant.
3. Stir in tomatoes and coconut milk and return chicken to pan. Bring to simmering and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 45 minutes or until chicken is tender.

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Serves 6



tip from the chef

Curry leaves are available fresh or dried from Oriental and Indian food shops.



veal goulash



■ □ □ | Cooking time: 30 minutes – Preparation time: 16 minutes

method

1. Trim meat of all visible fat and cut into 2.5 cm/1 in cubes (a). Place paprika, flour and pepper to taste in a plastic bag; add meat and shake (b) to coat evenly. Shake off excess flour mixture.
2. Heat oil in a large saucepan, cook onion and garlic for 2-3 minutes or until soft.
3. Combine tomato paste, wine and stock, pour into pan. Add meat (c). Bring to the boil, then reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 20-25 minutes or until meat is tender.
4. Remove from heat and stir in yogurt. Serve sprinkled with parsley.

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Serves 4

ingredients

- > 4 x 125 g/4 oz lean veal steaks
- > 1½ tablespoons paprika
- > 2 tablespoons flour
- > freshly ground black pepper
- > 2 teaspoons olive oil
- > 2 onions, chopped
- > 1 clove garlic, crushed
- > 1 tablespoon tomato paste (purée)
- > 3 tablespoons dry red wine
- > ½ cup degreased beef stock
- > 3 tablespoons low fat natural yogurt
- > 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh parsley

tip from the chef

Try adding low fat natural yogurt to meat recipes which list sour cream at the end, but remember not to boil after adding or it will curdle.



marinated

rabbit hotpot

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 95 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

ingredients

- > 3 x 1 kg/2 lb rabbits, each cut into 4 portions
- > 4 tablespoons olive oil
- > 12 baby onions
- > 6 rashers bacon, chopped
- > ¼ cup/30 g/1 oz flour
- > 3 cups/750 ml/1½ pt chicken stock
- > 2 tablespoons French mustard
- > 3 tablespoons tomato paste (purée)
- > 440 g/14 oz canned butter beans, rinsed and drained
- > 250 g/8 oz button mushrooms
- > freshly ground black pepper

red wine marinade

- > 1 onion, 1 carrot and 2 stalks celery, sliced
- > 3 bay leaves
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 1 tablespoon each chopped fresh tarragon and parsley
- > 4 whole cloves
- > ½ cup/125 ml/4 fl oz olive oil
- > red wine

method

1. To make marinade, place all ingredients except wine in a glass bowl. Add rabbit, then pour over enough red wine to cover. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator overnight. Remove rabbit, strain marinade into a clean bowl and reserve. Discard solids.
2. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a flameproof baking dish. Add rabbit and bake at 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 for 20-25 minutes or until lightly brown. Remove rabbit from dish and keep warm. Place dish with pan juices over a high heat, add onions and bacon and cook for 4-5 minutes or until golden. Set aside.
3. Melt remaining oil in dish over a medium heat, stir in flour and stir until dark brown. Gradually stir in 3 cups/750 ml/1½ pt of the reserved marinade and stock. Stir constantly until sauce boils and thickens.
4. Whisk in mustard and tomato paste. Return rabbit and onion mixture to dish, cover and bake 30 minutes. Stir in remaining ingredients, cover and bake for 30 minutes longer.

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Serves 6



tip from the chef

Rabbit is very lean, making this robust winter dish a good idea for those who need to reduce cholesterol in their diets.



frankfurt

casserole

■□□ | Cooking time: 50 minutes – Preparation time: 10 minutes

method

1. Melt butter in a large frying pan over moderate heat. Add onion, mushrooms and bacon, cook for 3 minutes, stirring constantly.
2. Add barley, stock, wine, cumin and coriander and simmer until stock is absorbed, about 30 minutes.
3. Stir in cream and frankfurters, cook for a further 10 minutes and serve.

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Serves 4

ingredients

- > 3 tablespoons butter
- > 1 onion, chopped
- > 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- > ¼ cup chopped bacon, rind removed
- > 1 cup barley, soaked for 2 hours, drained
- > 3 cups chicken stock
- > ¾ cup dry white wine
- > 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- > ½ teaspoon ground coriander
- > ½ cup cream
- > 500 g/1 lb thin frankfurters, cut into 2 cm/¾ in lengths

tip from the chef

Recent studies have shown that barley can lower cholesterol. Beta-glucan, a type of fiber which blends with cholesterol and helps with its removal from the body, is thought to be the ingredient responsible for this.



noodles

with coconut sauce

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 20 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

ingredients

> 500 g/1 lb fresh egg noodles

coconut curry sauce

- > 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- > 2 onions, diced
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh coriander root (optional)
- > 2 small fresh red chillies, seeded and finely chopped
- > 2 teaspoons curry powder
- > ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- > ¼ teaspoon ground cardamom
- > 1½ cups/375 ml/12 fl oz coconut milk
- > 2 tablespoons coarsely chopped fresh coriander

method

1. Cook noodles in boiling water in a large saucepan following packet directions. Drain, rinse under hot water and place in a large serving bowl.
2. To make sauce, heat oil in a saucepan over a medium heat, add onions and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until onions are tender. Add garlic, coriander root, if using, chillies, curry powder, cinnamon and cardamom and cook, stirring, for 1 minute or until fragrant.
3. Stir in coconut milk, bring to simmering and simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes. Remove pan from heat, pour sauce over hot noodles and toss to combine. Sprinkle with fresh coriander and serve immediately.

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Serves 4

tip from the chef

If you grow your own coriander you will have no trouble obtaining fresh coriander root and fortunately fresh coriander is usually sold with it roots still on. The heat of this dish can be adjusted by using more or less chillies.



broccoli

and macaroni casserole



■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 45 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

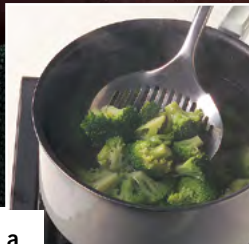
method

1. Cook pasta in boiling water in a large saucepan following packet directions. Drain, set aside and keep warm.
2. Boil, steam or microwave broccoli (a) until just tender. Drain and refresh under cold running water. Drain again and set aside.
3. Heat oil in a saucepan over a medium heat, add onion and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until onion is soft. Add garlic and basil (b) and cook for 3 minutes longer.
4. Place 90 g/3 oz tasty cheese (mature Cheddar), Parmesan cheese, cottage cheese and milk in a bowl and mix well. Add onion mixture, broccoli (c), pasta and black pepper to taste and mix to combine.
5. Transfer mixture to a lightly greased ovenproof dish, sprinkle with remaining tasty cheese (d) and bake at 240°C/475°F/ Gas 9 for 15 minutes.
6. Place under a preheated hot grill and cook for 2-3 minutes or until top is golden.

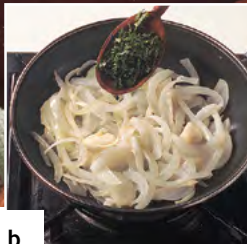
ingredients

- > 250 g/8 oz macaroni
- > 500 g/1 lb broccoli, cut into florets
- > 2 tablespoons olive oil
- > 1 onion, finely diced
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh basil or 1 teaspoon dried basil
- > 155 g/5 oz tasty cheese (mature Cheddar), grated
- > 60 g/2 oz grated Parmesan cheese
- > 250 g/8 oz cottage cheese, drained
- > 2 tablespoons milk
- > freshly ground black pepper

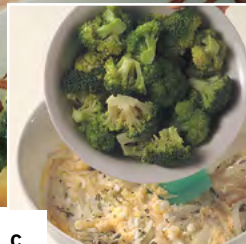
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Serves 4



a



b



c



d

tip from the chef

Other vegetables can be added to give color and texture – carrots, pumpkin, zucchini and mushrooms are all popular choices.



sweet chicken

drumsticks with polenta crust

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 20 minutes - Preparation time: 10 minutes

ingredients

- > 8 chicken drumsticks
- > ¼ cup/60 g/2 oz apricot jam (jelly)
- > 1 cup/120 g/4 oz plain flour
- > 2 eggs, beaten
- > ½ cup/60 g/2 oz flour, extra
- > 1 tablespoon salt
- > ¾ cup/90 g/3 oz polenta
- > oil for deep-frying

method

1. Brush each drumstick with the jam, then roll in the flour. Coat with the beaten eggs, then roll in the combined extra flour, salt and polenta, and coat well.
2. Deep-fry drumsticks until golden and cooked through (about 20 minutes).

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Serves 4

tip from the chef

Polenta is used more and more in Latin fusion dishes. In this case, it's the perfect coating for this sweet chicken.





curried chicken soup

■□□ | Cooking time: 25 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

method

1. Melt butter in a saucepan over a low heat, add onions, parsnips, celery and garlic and cook for 5-6 minutes or until vegetables are soft. Stir in flour and curry powder and cook for 1 minute.
2. Remove pan from heat and stir in stock. Return pan to a medium heat and cook, stirring constantly, until mixture boils and thickens. Reduce heat, stir in chicken and peas and cook for 10 minutes.
3. Remove pan from heat, whisk in sour cream, then stir in parsley, dill and black pepper to taste. Return to a low heat and cook, stirring frequently without boiling, for 3-4 minutes or until soup is heated.

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Serves 6

ingredients

- > 60 g/2 oz butter
- > 2 onions, chopped
- > 2 large parsnips, chopped
- > 4 stalks celery, chopped
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > ¼ cup/30 g/1 oz flour
- > 1 tablespoon curry powder
- > 6 cups/1.5 litres/2½ pt chicken stock
- > 500 g/1 lb chopped, cooked chicken
- > 185 g/6 oz fresh or frozen green peas
- > 1 cup/250 g/8 oz sour cream
- > 3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- > 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
- > freshly ground black pepper

tip from the chef

You can change this family dish to a dinner party fish chowder simply by substituting prepared fish stock for the chicken stock, and replacing the cooked chicken with 375 g/12 oz cubed boneless white fish-fillets or a combination of fish, uncooked scallops and peeled and deveined prawns. Simmer for 5 minutes or until seafood is just tender, then proceed with step 3.



baked

ratatouille and penne

■ ■ ■ | Cooking time: 20 minutes - Preparation time: 25 minutes

ingredients

- > 3 cups cooked penne or other short pasta of your choice
- > 1 medium eggplant, cut into 3 cm/1¼ in cubes
- > 2 large zucchini, cut into 3 cm/1¼ in cubes
- > 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- > 1 onion, chopped
- > 1 red pepper, cut into 3 cm/1¼ in cubes
- > 1 green pepper, cut into 3 cm/1¼ in cubes
- > 5 plum tomatoes, diced, or 12 cherry tomatoes, halved
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme or ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- > ½ cup reduced-fat ricotta cheese
- > 2 tablespoons finely chopped basil

method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C/360°F/Gas 4. Lightly spray or brush a deep casserole dish with unsaturated oil. Place penne in the base of dish.
2. Place eggplant and zucchini in a colander over a bowl. Sprinkle with salt. Stand for 15-20 minutes. Rinse under cold running water. Drain. Pat dry with absorbent kitchen paper.
3. Heat oil in a large nonstick frying pan over a medium heat. Add onion and red and green peppers. Cook, stirring, for 2-3 minutes or until vegetables start to soften. Add eggplant and zucchini. Cook for 2-3 minutes. Remove vegetable mixture from pan. Set aside.
4. Add tomatoes, garlic and thyme to pan. Cook until tomatoes start to collapse. Return vegetable mixture to pan. Mix to combine. Spoon vegetable mixture over penne in casserole dish, pushing the first few spoonfuls into the pasta. Top vegetable mixture with spoonfuls of ricotta cheese. Scatter with basil. Bake for 5-10 minutes or until cheese starts to brown.

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Serves 6

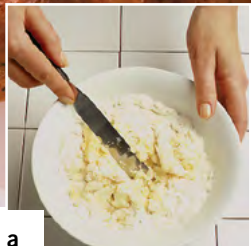
tip from the chef

Use whole cereals and pasta every time you can, as they contribute with more fiber, minerals and vitamins. These will keep the sugar level in blood low and stable.



crusty

chicken goulash



a



b



c

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 60 minutes - Preparation time: 10 minutes

method

1. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large frying pan and cook onions, stirring, over a medium heat for 5-6 minutes or until golden. Remove onions from pan and set aside. Combine paprika and flour in a plastic food bag, add chicken, shake to coat with flour mixture, then shake off excess flour mixture.
2. Heat remaining oil in frying pan and cook chicken, stirring, over a medium heat for 2-3 minutes. Return onions to pan, stir in tomato paste (purée), wine and stock. Bring to the boil, stirring constantly, then reduce heat, cover and simmer for 6-7 minutes. Remove from heat, stir in yogurt and cool.
3. To make crust, place butter, sour cream and egg in a bowl. Stir in flour and parsley and mix well to combine (a).
4. To assemble, place crust mixture in an 8 cup/2 liter/3½ pt lightly greased casserole dish and work mixture to cover sides and base of dish (b).
5. Spoon filling into crust (c), cover with lid of dish and bake at 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 for 35 minutes. Remove lid and bake for 10 minutes longer.

ingredients

- > 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- > 2 large onions, chopped
- > 1½ tablespoons paprika
- > 2 tablespoons seasoned flour
- > 500 g/1 lb boneless chicken breast fillets, cut into strips
- > 1 tablespoon tomato paste (purée)
- > ½ cup/125 ml/4 fl oz red wine
- > ½ cup/125 ml/4 fl oz chicken stock
- > 3 tablespoons natural yogurt

sour cream crust

- > 125 g/4 oz butter, softened
- > 300 g/9½ oz sour cream
- > 1 egg
- > 1 cup/125 g/4 oz self-raising flour, sifted
- > 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley

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Serves 4



creamy tomato tortellini

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 15 minutes - Preparation time: 5 minutes

ingredients

> 500 g/1 lb tortellini

creamy tomato sauce

- > 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- > 1 clove garlic, crushed
- > 4 spring onions, chopped
- > 4 rashers bacon, chopped
- > 440 g/14 oz canned tomatoes, chopped
- > 1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary or ½ teaspoon dried rosemary
- > 1 cup/250 ml/8 fl oz light cream

method

1. Cook pasta in boiling water in a large saucepan following packet directions. Drain, set aside and keep warm.
2. To make sauce, heat oil in a frying pan over a medium heat, add garlic, spring onions and bacon and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until bacon is crispy.
3. Stir in tomatoes, rosemary and cream, bring to simmering and simmer for 3 minutes or until heated through. Add hot pasta and toss to combine.

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Serves 4

tip from the chef

If you have a good supply of garlic, chop a large quantity in the food processor when you have time to spare. To store, place chopped garlic in a screwtop jar, pour over enough olive oil to cover, seal and store in the refrigerator. The garlic will keep for about a month.



sweet

potato and leek soup



■ □ □ | Cooking time: 50 minutes – Preparation time: 20 minutes

method

1. Place sweet potatoes, onions and leeks in a well-greased baking dish and bake at 200°C/400°F/Gas 6 for 45 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Remove from oven and set aside to cool slightly.
2. Place baked vegetables, stock, water, cumin and black pepper to taste, in batches, in a food processor or blender and process until smooth.
3. Place soup into a large saucepan, bring to simmering over a medium heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 3-4 minutes or until soup is hot.
4. To serve, ladle soup into bowls, and garnish with a spoonful of sour cream and fresh mint. Serve immediately.

ingredients

- > 1 kg/2 lb orange sweet potatoes, cut into large pieces
- > 2 onions, halved
- > 2 leeks, halved
- > 4 cups/1 liter/1¾ pt chicken stock
- > 2 cups/500 ml/16 fl oz water
- > 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- > freshly ground black pepper
- > sour cream to garnish
- > fresh mint to garnish

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Serves 4

tip from the chef

This soup can be made the day before and reheated when required.



english vegetable casserole

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 45 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

ingredients

- > 1 tablespoon oil
- > 1 onion, chopped
- > 2 tablespoons plain flour
- > 2 cups canned tomatoes
- > 1 cup tomato purée
- > 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
- > ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- > 1 leek, sliced, white part only
- > 4 spring onions, chopped
- > 4 carrots, cut into thin strips
- > 1 cup button mushrooms, sliced
- > 3 stalks celery, sliced into thin strips

method

1. Heat oil in a large frying pan over a moderate heat and cook onion for 3 minutes. Sprinkle flour over onion and cook, stirring constantly for 2 minutes.
2. Add tomatoes, purée, thyme and pepper, cook for a further 5 minutes.
3. Add leeks, spring onions, carrots, mushrooms and celery, transfer casserole to an ovenproof dish, cover and cook in a moderate oven for 35 minutes. Garnish with fresh thyme sprigs if desired.

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Serves 4



tip from the chef

This is an ideal main meal for vegetarians, but it can also be served as a side dish for all kinds of meat.





lean roast

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 110 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

method

1. To cook vegetables, place potatoes, pumpkin and sweet potato on a nonstick baking tray and bake at 190°C/375°F/Gas 5, turning once, for 1 hour or until vegetables are tender and golden.
2. Rub beef with garlic and black peppercorns and place on a wire rack set in a baking dish. Pour enough water into baking dish to come within 1 cm/½ in of the rack and bake for 40-45 minutes or until beef is cooked to your liking.
3. To make gravy, place instant gravy powder, water, wine and Worcestershire sauce in a small saucepan and cook over a medium heat, stirring constantly, until gravy thickens.
4. Slice meat and serve with roast vegetables and gravy.

ingredients

- > 750 g/1½ lb beef fillet
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 2 teaspoons crushed black peppercorns

roast vegetables

- > 18 large potatoes, halved
- > 6 slices pumpkin
- > 6 pieces sweet potato

gravy

- > 2 tablespoons instant gravy powder
- > ½ cup/125 ml/4 fl oz water
- > ½ cup/125 ml/4 fl oz red wine
- > 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce

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Serves 6

tip from the chef

Add steamed green vegetables to this meal, if desired. Serve fresh fruit for dessert.



pumpkin

agnolotti with rocket pesto

■ ■ ■ | Cooking time: 15 minutes - Preparation time: 35 minutes

ingredients

- > 2 cups grated pumpkin, steamed or microwaved
- > ½ cup reduced-fat ricotta cheese
- > 1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese
- > 1 teaspoon each chopped fresh oregano, ground cumin and grated fresh ginger
- > freshly ground black pepper
- > 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- > 30 round wonton wrappers

rocket pesto

- > 1 bunch rocket, leaves chopped (about 2 cups)
- > 4 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
- > ¼ cup roasted unsalted almonds
- > 1 tablespoon reduced-fat ricotta cheese
- > 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- > 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar

method

1. To make agnolotti, mix pumpkin, cheeses, spices and egg white in a bowl. Place a few wrappers on a clean, dry surface, cover the rest with a clean damp teatowel. Place 1 tablespoon of pumpkin mixture in the center of each wrapper, leaving a 1 cm/½ in border. Moisten edges of wrapper. Fold in half. Pinch edges to seal. Repeat with remaining wrappers and filling. Place agnolotti in an airtight container lined with greaseproof paper. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
2. To make pesto, process all ingredients in a food processor or blender to make a coarse paste. Set aside, covered, until ready to serve.
3. Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil. Cook agnolotti, 5-6 at a time, for 3 minutes or until they float to the surface. Using a slotted spoon, remove agnolotti and place in shallow bowls. Top with a spoonful of pesto.

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Serves 4

tip from the chef

Cumin, oregano, ginger and mint offer exquisite aromas and flavors, as well as granting their antiseptic properties to the meal, stimulating the gastric juices and facilitating digestion.



veal with sun-dried tomatoes

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 15 minutes – Preparation time: 15 minutes

method

1. Heat reserved sun-dried tomato oil in a wok over moderate heat. Add veal, cook for 1 minute, remove with a slotted spoon and set aside.
2. Add olive oil to wok, heat, then add onion, garlic, tomato, squash, rosemary and tomato paste, cook for 2 minutes.
3. Combine stock, wine and flour and add to wok, cook until reduced by half, about 10 minutes.
4. Stir in veal, sun-dried tomatoes and parsley. Serve immediately.

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Serves 4

ingredients

- > ½ cup marinated sundried tomatoes, reserve 4 tablespoons of oil
- > 500 g/1 lb veal fillets, cut into strips
- > 2 tablespoons olive oil
- > 1 red onion, chopped
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 1 tomato, finely chopped
- > 200 g/6½ oz baby squash, quartered
- > 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh rosemary
- > 2 tablespoons tomato paste (purée)
- > ½ cup chicken stock
- > ¼ cup dry white wine
- > 1 teaspoon plain flour
- > 1 tablespoon finely chopped parsley

tip from the chef

For variation, baby eggplant can be used in place of baby squash.



spaghetti

carbonara

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 10 minutes - Preparation time: 10 minutes

ingredients

- > 500 g/1 lb spaghetti
- > ¾ cup ham, finely sliced
- > 1 tablespoon olive oil
- > 4 eggs
- > 4 tablespoons cream
- > ¾ cup freshly grated pecorino cheese

method

1. Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil, add spaghetti and cook until just tender.
2. Meanwhile heat ham gently in oil. In a large mixing bowl, beat eggs with cream and cheese.
3. Drain cooked spaghetti and toss with egg and cheese mixture so the heat of the pasta "cooks" the sauce.
4. Add ham and toss again, serve immediately.

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Serves 4

tip from the chef

It is ideal to offer an Italian dry white wine with this plate. The acidity of this wine will enhance the flavor of the pecorino cheese.



fruit pies

■□□ | Cooking time: 1 hour – Preparation time: 20 minutes

method

1. To make pastry, place flour in a bowl and rub in butter with fingertips until mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Using a metal spatula or round-ended knife mix in egg yolk and enough chilled water to form a soft dough. Turn onto a lightly floured surface and knead gently until smooth. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
2. To make fillings, combine all ingredients for each one.
3. Roll out two-thirds of pastry to 3 mm/1/8 in thick and line a greased 23 cm/9 in pie dish. Spoon the filling of your choice into pastry case. Roll out remaining pastry and cut out a round from the center, or cut pastry in strips. Place pastry over filling, or arrange strips in a lattice pattern. Trim edges and pinch to seal.
4. Bake pie at 220°C/425°F/Gas 7 for 20 minutes, reduce oven temperature to 160°C/325°F/Gas 3 and cook for 30-40 minutes longer or until golden.

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 Makes one 23 cm/9 in pie

ingredients

rich shortcrust pastry

- > 2 cups/250 g/8 oz flour, sifted
- > 185 g/6 oz butter, cut into small cubes
- > 1 egg yolk, lightly beaten

apricot filling

- > 3 x 440 g/14 oz canned apricot halves, drained and sliced
- > ¼ cup/45 g/1½ oz brown sugar
- > ½ teaspoon each ground nutmeg and cinnamon

cherry filling

- > 3 x 440 g/14 oz canned pitted black cherries
- > 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- > 4 teaspoons flour
- > 1 teaspoon ground mixed spice

tip from the chef

It is important not to work the pastry excessively, as it will become more elastic and less crunchy. In order to prepare it quickly and without touching it too much, the best way is to make it in the food processor.



apple and rhubarb crumble

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 40 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

ingredients

- > 8 stalks rhubarb, cut into 5 cm/2 in pieces
- > 4 cooking apples, cored, peeled and sliced
- > ½ cup/100 g/3½ oz caster sugar
- > ½ cup/125 ml/4 fl oz water
- > ¼ cup/60 ml/2 fl oz orange juice

hazelnut crumble

- > ½ cup/100 g/3½ oz ground hazelnuts
- > ½ cup/45 g/1½ oz rolled oats
- > ⅓ cup/45 g/1½ oz flour
- > ¼ cup/45 g/1½ oz brown sugar
- > 3 tablespoons desiccated coconut
- > ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- > 90 g/3 oz butter, chopped into small pieces

method

1. Place rhubarb, apples, caster sugar, water and orange juice in a saucepan and cook over a medium heat, stirring constantly, until sugar dissolves. Bring to the boil, then reduce heat, cover and simmer for 10 minutes or until fruit is tender. Spoon fruit mixture into a 3 cup/750 ml/1¼ pt capacity ovenproof dish.
2. To make crumble, place hazelnuts, oats, flour, brown sugar, coconut and cinnamon in a bowl and mix to combine. Using fingertips, rub in butter until mixture resembles coarse breadcrumbs. Sprinkle crumble over fruit mixture and bake at 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 for 20-25 minutes.

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Serves 4

tip from the chef

For a dinner party, this crumble can be baked in individual baking cups or soufflé dishes. Reduce the baking time to 15-20 minutes. To serve, place each crumble in its dish on a small flat plate, add a spoonful of pure cream, a few fresh ripe berries and sprinkle with sifted icing sugar.





crème caramel

■□□ | Cooking time: 25 minutes – Preparation time: 10 minutes

method

1. To make toffee, place water and sugar in a small, heavy-based saucepan and cook over a low heat, stirring constantly until sugar dissolves. Bring to the boil and boil, without stirring, until light golden brown. Pour into 6 lightly greased ½ cup/ 125 ml/4 fl oz capacity ramekins.
2. Place eggs, vanilla essence, sugar and milk powder in a mixing bowl and beat until sugar dissolves. Whisk in milk, then pour into ramekins.
3. Place ramekins in a baking dish with enough boiling water to come halfway up sides of ramekins and bake at 180°C/350°F/ Gas 4 for 20 minutes, or until a knife inserted into the center of custard comes out clean.
4. Remove ramekins from baking dish and set aside to cool. Chill before serving. To serve, invert chilled custards onto serving plates.

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Serves 6

ingredients

- > 4 eggs, lightly beaten
- > 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- > ¼ cup/60 g/2 oz caster sugar
- > ½ cup/60 g/2 oz milk powder, sifted
- > 2 cups/500 ml/16 fl oz milk, scalded

toffee

- > ½ cup/125 ml/4 fl oz water
- > ½ cup/125 g/4 oz sugar

tip from the chef

To scald milk or cream, rinse a small heavybased saucepan with cold water, add the milk or cream and bring almost to the boil over a low heat, stirring occasionally. Scalding will help prevent curdling during cooking.



wafer

stacks with pecan sauce

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 25 minutes – Preparation time: 20 minutes

ingredients

- > 1 egg white
- > 3 tablespoons caster sugar
- > ½ teaspoon vanilla essence
- > 30 g/1 oz butter, melted
- > 30 g/1 oz ground hazelnuts
- > 3 tablespoons flour, sifted
- > icing sugar to dust

apple filling

- > 2 large green apples, cored, peeled and sliced thinly
- > 2 tablespoons honey
- > 4 tablespoons water
- > 2 tablespoons sultanas
- > 1 teaspoon grated

lemon rind

- pecan sauce
- > 100 g/3½ oz caster sugar
- > 3 tablespoons water
- > 125 ml/4 fl oz cream
- > 45 g/1½ oz margarine
- > 3 tablespoons chopped pecans

method

1. Beat egg white until soft peaks form. Gradually add sugar, beating well after each addition. Fold in vanilla essence, butter, hazelnuts and flour.
2. Place heaped teaspoons of mixture, 10 cm/4 in apart, on lightly greased baking trays. Spread mixture out to 5 cm/2 in diameter. Bake at 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 for 5 minutes or until edges are golden. Cool for 2-3 minutes before lifting on to wire racks to cool completely.
3. To make filling, place apples, honey and water in a saucepan. Bring to the boil, then cover and simmer 10-15 minutes or until apples are soft. Stir in sultanas and rind.
4. To make sauce, cook sugar and water until toffee is light golden. Remove from heat and carefully stir in cream. Stir over a medium heat until smooth. Stir in margarine and pecans.
5. Place one wafer on 4 plates, spread each with filling. Repeat with more wafers and filling to make a stack, finish with a wafer. Dust with icing sugar and spoon over sauce.

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Serves 4



tip from the chef

Granny Smith are the right apples to be used in this recipe.



pistachio

cheesecake



■ □ □ | Cooking time: 45 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

method

1. Place walnuts, 90 g/3 oz pistachios and brown sugar in a bowl and mix to combine. Set aside.
2. Cut ten 20 cm/8 in circles from filo pastry. Place one circle of pastry in a greased and lined 20 cm/8 in round sandwich tin, brush with butter and sprinkle with nut mixture. Repeat layers to use half the pastry and half the nut mixture. In a second greased and lined 20 cm/8 in round sandwich tin layer the remaining pastry and nut mixture in the same way. Bake pastry stacks at 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 for 30 minutes or until golden.
3. To make syrup, place sugar and water in a saucepan and heat, stirring constantly, over a medium heat until sugar dissolves. Bring to simmering and simmer for 10 minutes or until syrup thickens. Pour hot syrup over hot pastry in tin. Cool in tin.
4. Place ricotta cheese and rosewater in a bowl and beat to combine. Spread half the mixture over one pastry stack. Top with other pastry stack, spread with remaining ricotta mixture and sprinkle with remaining pistachios.

ingredients

- > 90 g/3 oz chopped walnuts
- > 185 g/6 oz chopped pistachios
- > 1 cup/170 g/5½ oz brown sugar
- > 375 g/12 oz filo pastry
- > 125 g/4 oz butter, melted
- > 250 g/8 oz ricotta cheese
- > 1 teaspoon rosewater

syrup

- > 2 cups/440 g/14 oz caster sugar
- > 1 cup/250 ml/8 fl oz water

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Serves 8



puffed prune whip

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 15 minutes – Preparation time: 10 minutes

ingredients

- > ½ cup/100 g/3½ oz pitted prunes
- > 1 tablespoon icing sugar
- > 1 tablespoon Cointreau or orange juice
- > 1 teaspoon grated orange rind
- > ¼ cup/30 g/1 oz chopped walnuts
- > 15 g/½ oz cake crumbs, finely processed
- > 1 egg white
- > 15 g/½ oz superfine sugar
- > extra icing sugar for dusting

method

1. Place prunes, icing sugar, Cointreau or orange juice and orange rind in a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Transfer to a bowl and stir in walnuts and cake crumbs (a).
2. Beat egg white until soft peaks form, then gradually add sugar, beating well after each addition. Continue beating until meringue is thick and glossy.
3. Fold meringue into prune mixture (b). Spoon into a greased individual soufflé dish (c) and bake at 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 for 15 minutes or until golden. Dust with icing sugar and serve immediately.

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Serves 1



tip from the chef

Crushed sweet biscuits are a practical alternative to cake crumbs.



chocolate

mousse cake



■ □ □ | Cooking time: 5 minutes – Preparation time: 20 minutes

method

1. To make filling, place chocolate and butter in a heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water and heat, stirring constantly, until mixture is smooth. Remove bowl from pan and set aside to cool slightly. Beat egg yolks into chocolate mixture and fold in cream.
2. Using a serrated edged knife, cut cake into three even layers. Brush each layer with brandy. Place one layer of cake in the base of a 23 cm/9 in lined springform tin. Spoon one-third of the filling over cake in tin. Top with a second layer of cake and half the remaining mousse. Repeat layers. Refrigerate for 4 hours or until firm. Unmold and decorate with chocolate caraques.

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 Makes a 23 cm/9 in round cake

ingredients

- > 1 x 23 cm/9 in chocolate sponge or butter cake
- > 2 tablespoons brandy
- > chocolate caraques or chocolate sticks, for decoration

mousse filling

- > 500 g/1 lb dark chocolate, chopped
- > 125 g/4 oz butter
- > 2 egg yolks
- > 1½ cups/375 ml/ 12 fl oz double cream, whipped

tip from the chef

Line the springform tin base and sides with greaseproof paper for easier unmolding. *



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hearty winter food

