



reception

# introduction

Did you know 1/3 of all the food we purchase is wasted? This is costing the average household between €700 - €1,000 per year.

To stop this waste we need to “re-think” our food habits:

- Make a list of the food you throw out for a week....you'll be shocked at what you waste.
- Plan ahead – plan your meals – use what you already have in your cupboards, fridge & freezer
- Make a shopping list – and stick to it!
- Beware of special offers – it's only a bargain if you use it all!
- Make the most of what you bought – store it in the right place
- Know your dates – Best Before is a guideline, Use By is a deadline
- An overloaded plate leads to an overloaded bin – know your portions
- Get creative with leftovers – see **stopfoodwaste.ie** for more recipe ideas

These recipes are a collection of other peoples recipes, tried and tested and sure to please the taste buds.

We hope you enjoy them and that you have many a “mouth-watering delight” along the way!

*Bain sult as do bhéile! Enjoy! Bon appétit!*

*The Environment Team,  
Westmeath County Council*



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# chicken curry

Peel and chop 1 large cooking apple and 1 large onion and put in a pot with some oil, until they are soft . . . mix in a Tablespoon of curry powder, and about 2 Tablespoons of plain flour, until you get a paste . . then slowly start adding water with a chicken stock cube (or 2) dissolved in it . . until you have a sauce. . . . you can then add your chicken (either a cooked chicken chopped up, or a couple of chicken breasts chopped and fried). Then add a handful of raisons, and leave to simmer. Serve with rice (and chips if you like)

# quick chicken dish

- 2-3 chicken fillets
- Mushrooms
- 1 Bell peper
- 1 Onion
- 1 Knorr chicken stock cube

Dice chicken, mushrooms, pepper, onion

Fry chicken and onion until tender, then add Mushroom and Pepper.

When cooked, crumble the Knorr stock cube over same and then add cream.

Serve with potatoe, rice or chips.

# eton mess

the "healthy option" no cook, quick dessert

Roughly chop the strawberries and place half of them in a blender and puree until smooth. Transfer to a bowl with the yogurt and mix well.

Place the remaining chopped strawberries in a bowl, add the fromage frais and sweetener and stir to combine.

Add to the puree mixture and swirl through to give a marbled effect. Fold in the crushed meringue and spoon this mixture into 4 chilled dessert glasses.

- 400g/14oz strawberries
- 2 x 200g pots of mullerlight strawberry yogurt
- 400g/14oz low fat natural fromage frais
- 1 tbsp sweetener
- 4 meringue nests, roughly crushed
- Whole strawberries

Serve immediately, garnished with a few whole strawberries.

# quick linguine with prawns, clams, garlic & chilli

- 350g/12oz dried linguine or spaghetti pasta (regular or wholewheat)
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
- 2 large banana shallots, finely diced
- 3 garlic cloves, very finely chopped
- 2 red chillies, seeds removed (if you like less heat) and finely chopped
- 400g/14oz raw, peeled tiger prawns, deveined (about 600g/1lb 5oz frozen weight)
- 400g/14oz clams in their shells, washed thoroughly (ideally soaked them in cold water for an hour), discard any that remain open when tapped
- 1 glass white wine (about 150-200ml/5-7fl oz)
- 1 small bunch parsley, roughly chopped (about 3 tbsp chopped)
- flaked sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 70g/2½oz rocket
- 1 small lemon, cut into 4 wedges

1. Cook the pasta in a large saucepan of boiling water according to the packet instructions, adding salt to flavour and some oil to stop the pasta sticking if desired.
2. Meanwhile, put the oil in a large saucepan (that has a tight-fitting lid) over a medium heat. Add the shallots and gently fry for 8-10 minutes until softened, stirring from time to time. Add the garlic and chillies and cook for a couple of minutes.
3. Add the prawns and cook for one minute, stirring. Add the clams and white wine, bring to the boil and then cover with a lid. Allow to cook for 4-5 minutes, or until the clam shells have all opened (discard any that don't) and the prawns have turned from grey to pink.
4. Once the pasta is cooked, drain well, tip it in on top of the shellfish and mix together well. Stir the chopped parsley through and season to taste with sea salt and black pepper.  
Pile into serving bowls, drizzle with an extra bit of olive oil, scatter the rocket over, top with a good grinding of black pepper and serve each bowl with a wedge of lemon.

# per \*short\* drinking glass/ tumbler

- Crushed gingernut biscuits
- Whipped cream
- Pineapple pieces
- Grated chocolate

Layer up each glass with a tablespoon (approx) of biscuits, followed by tablespoon (approx) of cream, then pineapple pieces and start again until you have two layers of each in a glass.

Sprinkle top with grated chocolate.

most important part - gobble down!!

# brown soup dinner

(I usually cook this the night before as it does take time (about 2 and a half hours)... Good thing about it it usually lasts for 2 days dinners and the second day it tastes better.

Put the round steak and onion in a saucepan with a small drop of oil and brown off the meat. Then add a pint to a pint and a half of water and simmer for about 2 to 3 hours (keeping the water topped up). At the last half hour dice up the carrots and celery and add to the meat and onions. When meat is nice and soft and starting to fall apart, add 2 to 3 packets of oxtail soup and stir in until it comes to the boil. Simmer for another 10 minutes and your dinner is ready.

Boil a pot of spuds to go with it (you could boil enough for 2 days) and if you want you can peel them and add them into the soup.

I have all boys and they love this dinner especially in the winter months.

- 1lb of round steak pieces
- 1 onion diced
- 2-3 carrots
- 2-3 sticks of celery
- 2-3 packs of oxtail soup

# quinoa & butternut squash salad

- 1 small butternut squash, weighing about 500g, deseeded and cut into roughly 3cm chunks
- 10 sprigs thyme
- 50 ml olive oil
- 50 g almonds, with their skins on
- 250 ml vegetable or chicken stock

1. Preheat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Place the butternut squash in a roasting tin and add the thyme sprigs and olive oil. Mix together, season with salt and pepper, then place in the oven and roast for 30–40 minutes or until tender and slightly caramelised around the edges. Remove from the oven and set aside.
2. While the squash is cooking, scatter the almonds on a baking tray and place in the oven to roast for 5 minutes, tossing halfway through. Remove the nuts from the oven and chop very roughly with a knife.
3. Meanwhile, pour the water or stock into a saucepan on a medium heat and bring to the boil. Add the quinoa and some salt and pepper, then reduce the heat to low, cover with a lid and cook for 10–12 minutes or until all the liquid has been absorbed and the quinoa is just tender.
4. When the quinoa and squash are cooked, place them both in a large bowl with the chopped nuts, feta and parsley. Mix everything together, taste for seasoning, adding more salt and pepper if necessary. Serve warm or at room temperature.

# chicken & cous cous tagine

- 110 g shelled whole almonds, chopped
- 100 ml olive oil
- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts, cut into 2cm chunks
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, finely sliced
- 1 x 5 cm cinnamon sticks

1. Place the almonds in a large casserole dish or saucepan with a lid on a high heat and cook, tossing frequently, for 2–3 minutes or until they are lightly browned (taking care not to let them burn), then transfer to a bowl and set aside.
2. Pour 2 tablespoons of olive oil into the dish or pan, still on a high heat, then season the chicken with salt and pepper and place in the hot oil. Fry, stirring frequently, for 3 minutes or until browned all over.
3. Reduce the heat to medium–low and add the remaining olive oil, followed by the onions, garlic and cinnamon stick. Cover with a lid and cook, stirring, for 6–8 minutes or until the onions are soft and lightly browned.
4. Add the saffron to the dish or pan, along with the stock, and stir in the honey. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat, cover with a lid and simmer for 20–25 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Stir in the couscous, cover again and cook for a further 3 minutes or just until the couscous is soft, then stir in the toasted almonds, taste for seasoning and serve in warmed bowls.



# pork chops and juniper berries

- Thickly cut Loin Pork Chops – one per person.
- Juniper berries – about five per pork chop. You'll buy these, dried, in a jar in any supermarket.
- Onion – finely chopped
- Mushrooms – depends on how many for dinner.
- Cream (or if you're dieting crème fraîche- or half and half)

1. Cut a slice in the pork chop so as to form a deep pocket.
  2. Squash the juniper berries (I use the back of a wooden spoon) and put them into the pocket in the pork chop; spread them out in the pork chop.
  3. Fry the chops on each side until brown (keep any juices as you'll use them later).
  4. Put into a roasting tin and cover with tin foil. Roast them until cooked – the time depends on how thickly cut the chops are so you'll be checking this from time to time
  5. When they're nearly cooked, fry finely chopped onion and the mushrooms in the pan where you originally fried the pork chops.
  6. Add the crème fraîche /cream and then add the pork chops along with all the juices from the roasting tin.
- Serve with rice.

# biscuit cake

- 275g / 10oz Butter
- 150ml / 1/4 pt Golden Syrup
- 225g / 8oz Good Quality Chocolate
- 1/2 x 400g Packet of Digestive Biscuits (roughly crushed)
- 1/2 x 400g Packet of Rich Tea Biscuits (roughly crushed)
- 125g/4oz Shamrock Nuts (walnuts, brazils, almonds) optional
- 1 packet of Maltesers

Line a 15cms/6" round cake tin or a 2lb loaf tin with a double layer of greaseproof paper.

Melt the butter, syrup and chocolate in a pan over a low heat. Stir to make sure all the ingredients are well mixed together.

Add the biscuits, maltesers and nuts, if used. Stir well.

Transfer to prepared tin. Level it on top and press down well to avoid "air gaps".

Allow to get cold and hard. Wrap completely in greaseproof paper and store in a fridge

# mini omelettes

Mix omelette ingredients in a bowl – eggs (obviously!) and whatever else you fancy, e.g., mushrooms, onions, ham, peppers, chives, etc..... bit of salt and pepper. Lightly oil a muffin or queen cake baking tin and pour mixture into the bun spaces. Bake in the oven until eggs are cooked. Kids love them.

# cheesecake

Crush biscuits, brown sugar and butter together. Place in cheesecake tin and leave in fridge while making the topping. You might need more butter (you will know yourself)

Whisk cream, add rind of two lemons, add condensed milk, and then add the juice of 5 lemons slowly (depends on how lemony you want it)

- Ingredients
- 1 pkt Digestive Biscuits
- 50g butter
- 1tbl brown sugar
- 1 pint Cream
- 1Can Condensed Milk
- 4/5 Lemons

# chicken & broccoli bake

- 3-4 Chicken Breast Fillets
- Head of Broccoli
- Curry Powder
- 125g Grated Cheese
- 125g Breadcrumbs
- 50g Butter
- 1-2 tins of chicken soup
- 1 tablesp Mayonnaise

Preheat oven to 180.

Add chicken Fillets to a saucepan of cold water, bring to boil and simmer for 15-20 mins. Leave to cool in the water. When cooled, cut into bit size chunks.

Add Broccoli to boiling water and par boil for about 5 mins. Leave to cool and then cut into florets.

Add chicken and broccoli to an ovenproof dish. Mix together the soup, mayo and a good pinch of curry power and pour over the chicken and broccoli.

Mix together the breadcrumbs, grated cheese and 50g of melted butter and spread this mix over chicken/broccoli mix.

Bake in oven for approx 25 mins.

# spicy salmon

- 4 Salmon portions
- cajun seasoning
- a little oil

Rinse salmon & pat dry with kitchen paper.

Heat oil in pan & add cajun seasoning to oil - do not overheat.

Cook salmon on all sides for about half minute

Reduce heat and continue to cook in pan for 8 minutes or cook in preheated oven for 8 minutes. Gas mark 5, 200 degree C (400F)

Serve with baked/boiled potatoes, vegetables or salad.

# tuna & rice

- 3 - 4 tins tuna in spring water
- 1 onion sliced
- 1 clove of garlic chopped or crushed
- A little season all
- Ketchup
- Light soya sauce
- Fresh thyme

Drain tuna, fry onion in a little oil add chopped garlic, add the tuna and stir through. Add seasoning about three tea spoons of soya sauce and a good tea spoon of ketchup and stir in. Add a little water approx two small table spoons and through in some fresh time. Leave to simmer for the time the rice cooks stirring occasionally.

# tuna and corn fish cakes

serves 4

1. Peel and chop the potatoes. Boil for about 10mins or until tender.
2. Drain and mash until smooth.
3. Place the mashed potatoes in a large mixing bowl and stir in the tuna fish, corn and chopped fresh parsley. Season to taste with salt and black pepper and combine thoroughly.

- 350g/12oz potatoes
- 200g/7oz can of drained tuna fish
- 115g/4oz canned or frozen corn
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
- salt and ground black pepper
- 50g/2oz fresh breadcrumbs
- 30ml vegetable oil

4. Divide the mixture into eight and form into patty shapes.
5. Spread out the breadcrumbs, press the fish cakes into the breadcrumbs and coat evenly on both sides.
6. Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the cakes and cook for 2 minutes on each side, until golden brown.

# honey mustard chicken

- 8 Chicken thighs
- 60ml/4tbsp wholegrain mustard
- 60ml/4tbsp clear honey
- salt and ground black pepper
- 15ml/1tbsp olive oil

1. Preheat the oven to 190C/375F/Gas 5
2. Put the chicken thighs in a single layer in a roasting pan.
3. Mix together the mustard and honey in a small glass bowl with a spoon.
4. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
5. Brush mixture over thighs and cook for 25 - 30 minutes brushing the chicken with the pan juices occasionally until cooked through.

# lemon surprise pudding

- 50g/2oz butter
- 2 grated rind and juice of two lemons
- 115g/4oz caster sugar
- 2 separated eggs
- 50g/2oz self-raising flour
- 300ml/1/2 pint milk
- icing sugar, for dusting

1. Preheat oven to 190C/375F/Gas 5
2. Lightly grease a 1.2 litre/2 pint ovenproof dish
3. Using a wooden spoon or an electric whisk, beat the remaining butter, lemon rind and sugar in a bowl until creamy and pale. Add the egg yolks and flour and beat together.
4. Gradually beat in the lemon juice and milk in several batches.
5. In a separate bowl whisk the egg whites until they form stiff peaks. Fold the egg whites gently into the lemon mixture, then pour into the prepared dish.
6. Place a large piece of double-folded foil in a large roasting tin and position the dish on top. Pour in hot water from the kettle to come halfay up the sides of the dish.
7. Cook for 45 minutes until golden brown.

# beef goulash

- 1 1/2lb stewing beef
- 1 dessertspoon of cooking oil
- 3 onions peeled and sliced
- salt and pepper
- 2 tomatoes, skinned and chopped
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1/2 dessertspoon paprika pepper
- 1 dessertspoon tomato puree
- 1/4 pt water
- 6 - 8 potatoes peeled and sliced

1. Remove the fat from the meat and cut into one-inch cubes.
2. Heat the oil in a large frying, add the cubes of beef a few at a time and fry them until they are brown on all sides.
3. Transfer the browned meat into a saucepan.
4. Fry the onions in the pan until they are golden brown.
5. Stir in the tomatoes, garlic, paprika, pepper, tomato puree, salt and pepper.
6. Add this to the browned meat. Then add the water. Bring to the boil, stirring all the time.
7. Cover with a lid and cook slowly for 1 hour.
8. Add the sliced potatoes and simmer for another 30 minutes approximately.

# lamb cutlet casserole

1. Pre-heat the oven to 160C/325F/Gas Mark 3
2. Partially cook the potatoes in boiling salted water for 5 minutes then slice thinly.
3. Cook cutlets in a frying pan over a low heat for 5 - 10 minutes until browned.
4. Drain off all but 1 tablespoon of juice from the pan.
5. Scatter the flour in the pan and cook for 1 minute stirring constantly.
6. Add the stock, worcestershire sauce and mixed herbs. Cook until thickened. Add salt and pepper to taste.
7. Lightly grease a casserole dish. Lay half the potatoes on the base, then top with lamb cutlets. Pour over the thickened stock and onions. Lay the rest of the potatoes on top.
8. Cook in the oven for 45 minutes until cutlets are tender and the potatoes on the surface are golden.

- 1 dessertspoon oil
- 8 lamb cutlets
- 2 large onions peeled and sliced thickly into rings
- 5 potatoes peeled and thinly sliced
- 1/4 pint stock
- 1 dessertspoon plain flour
- 2 dessertspoons worcestershire sauce
- 1 dessertspoon dried mixt herbs (optional)
- salt and pepper

# liver hot-pot

- 1lb liver
- 1oz flour
- salt and pepper
- 1/4 pint milk
- 1 dessertspoon cooking oil
- 2 onions
- 6 mushrooms
- 1/4 pt stock
- 2 dessertspoons tomato sauce
- 3 cooked potatoes

1. Pre-heat the oven to 190C/350F/Gas Mark 5
2. Wash the liver, dry with kitchen paper. Cut liver into small pieces.
3. Peel and chop onions, wash and slice mushrooms.
4. Season flour with salt and pepper. Coat liver on all sides with seasoned flour.
5. Heat the oil in a pan and fry onions until tender. Add mushrooms and fry for a few minutes. Add liver and brown.
6. Gradually add in stock, milk and tomato ketchup. Bring to the boil stirring continuously. Season well.
7. Pour into casserole dish. Cover with the sliced potato.
8. Bake in the pre-heated oven for approx. 30 minutes.

# pork casserole

1. Pre-heat the oven to 160C/325F/Gas Mark 3
2. Remove stalks and seeds from the pepper and chop it up.
3. Heat the oil and fry the onion, pepper and mushrooms for 3 minutes. Transfer to casserole dish.
4. Add the curry powder, salt and pepper to the flour, and coat the pork in this mixture.
5. Fry the coated pork for 5 minutes and then put into the casserole dish with the vegetables, tomatoes and herbs.
6. Cover tightly and cook in the pre-heated oven for 1 ½ hours.

- 1 1/2 lbs diced pork.
- 1 small green pepper
- 1 dessertspoon oil
- 1 onion peeled and chopped
- 6 mushrooms
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1oz flour
- 1 tin tomatoes
- pinch mixed herbs

# chicken, mustard & bacon casserole

- 8 chicken portions skinned
- 8 back rashers trimmed
- salt and pepper
- 1 dessertspoon of mustard powder
- 3 dessertspoons plain flour
- 2 dessertspoons lemon juice
- 2 chicken stock cubes (dissolve in 1pt of boiling water)

1. Pre-heat the oven to 190C/375F/Gas Mark 5
2. Wrap the chicken pieces in the bacon rashers and secure each one with a cocktail stick.
3. Cook until brown on all sides in a dry pan.
4. Remove from the pan with a spoon and put to one side.
5. Add the mustard powder and flour into the pan and cook, stirring for 1 minute.
6. Add the stock and lemon juice and bring to the boil stirring continuously.
7. Place the chicken pieces in a casserole dish, add the stock from the frying pan and cover.  
Cook in pre-heated oven for 1 - 1 1/2 hours.

# pasta carbonara

Chop up rashers and mushrooms. Slow Fry on a pan in Garlic Butter. Add Paprika (about ½ spoon) some black pepper and a good spoon of parsley.

## **Make a roux sauce:**

Knob of garlic butter, flour, and some milk (about ½ cup) . . when at a creamy consistency, add a carton of Cream (approx 500ml) Add some salt and leave to simmer.

Cook the pasta, when done, drain, and mix in 1 raw egg (the heat of the pasta will cook it) Add the mushrooms and rasher mix (with the juices and oil in the pan) and mix.

Then you can either add in the sauce and mix, or serve as is, and pour the sauce over each portion.



# lemon cake serves 8

- 240 g (nearly 9ozs) unsalted butter (soft)
- 400g (14ozs) sugar
- Grated zest and juice of 1 large lemon
- 4 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 360g (12ozs) plain white flour
- 250ml (9 f ozs) buttermilk

Preheat oven 180C / 350 F / Gas 4

Grease cake tin or loaf tin

Cream butter, sugar and lemon zest in bowl until fluffy and creamy.

Stop an odd time, scrape sides of bowl with knife or spatula to make sure mixture is fully mixed.

Break the eggs in a small bowl. Stir gently together.

Slowly add to butter and sugar mixture, add tablespoon of flour, but continue mixing egg mixture a little at a time until fully mixed. This addition of flour will prevent curdling of mixture (if this happens don't panic just add a little extra flour at this stage).

Sift flour and baking powder. Fold in by hand (if using a mixture to beat butter and sugar).

One 1/3 at a time, then add some buttermilk, alternate until all mixed. Lastly add by folding in lemon juice.

Pour mixture into tin. Bake in centre of oven from 1¼ hour to 1½ hour until cake is done, this will depend on cake tin. Remove from oven and cool for 10 minutes in tin.

## make lemon syrup:

- 6 tablespoons of fresh lemon juice
- 175g (6 ozs) icing sugar

Briefly boil the lemon juice and icing sugar until sugar dissolved. Do not allow it to boil as it will thicken too much.

When the cake is slightly cooled remove it from tin.

Poke holes in the top with skewer or thin knitting needle.

Gently spoon the glaze over the top a little at a time.

Do it slowly then the glaze won't run over off the sides.

This cake improves with time so make it a day in advance.

# spaghetti alla carbonara

serves 4

- 375g (12oz) dried spaghetti or 450g (15oz) fresh spaghetti

*For the sauce:*

- 200g (8oz) streaky bacon or ham
- 1 large onion
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 tablespoon of cooking oil
- 3 eggs
- 3 tablespoons of single cream
- Ground black pepper
- 40g (1 ½ oz) grated Parmesan cheese
- 40g (1 ½ oz) butter
- 1 level tablespoon of chopped parsley

1. Peel and chop the onion. Snip the rind off the bacon and cut the rashers in strips 1cm ( ½ in) wide. Peel and crush the garlic.
2. Read the instructions on the packet of spaghetti to find out how long it will take to cook. Weigh it and start to cook it.
3. Heat the oil gently in a frying pan. Add the onion and garlic, and cook them for about five minutes until they are soft.
4. Add the bacon or ham. If you are using the bacon, cook it until it is brown and crispy. If you are using ham, cook it until it is hot.
5. Use a fork to beat the eggs, cream, a pinch of black pepper and most of the cheese to make a creamy mixture.
6. When the spaghetti is cooked, drain it then put it back into the pan. Add the butter and toss the spaghetti until it is coated.
7. Add the bacon, onion and garlic then stir in the cheesy mixture. Use a fork to toss the spaghetti quickly, until it is coated.
8. Put the spaghetti onto four plates or bowls. Sprinkle on the parsley and the rest of the cheese. Serve immediately.

# spicy sausage pasta

serves 4

- 400g (14oz) dried conchiglie (pasta shells)
- Or 500g (1lb) fresh conchiglie (pasta shells)
- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- 1 onion
- 1 clove of garlic
- 400g (14oz) tins of chopped tomatoes
- 4 chorizo sausages
- 1 tablespoon of chopped parsley

1. Peel the onion and slice it finely. Peel and crush the clove of garlic. Put the oil in a large pan and heat it gently.
2. Add the onion and garlic. Cook them for five minutes or until the onion is soft. Stir the mixture as it is cooking.
3. Add the tomatoes to the pan and bring it to boil. Turn the heat down and let the sauce bubble gently for 20 minutes.
4. While the sauce is cooking, put a pan of water on to boil. Cook the pasta following the instructions on its packet.
5. Cut the ends off the sausages. Peel the papery skin off the sausages. Slice each sausage and add the slices to the sauce.
6. Drain the pasta and divide it between four bowls or plates. Spoon the sauce on top and sprinkle with parsley.



# chicken and bacon pasta

- 400g (14oz) dried tagliatelle or 500g (1lb) fresh tagliatelle
- 50g (2oz) margarine or butter
- 450g (14 oz) chicken, without any bones
- 4 rashers or bacon
- 100g (4oz) mushrooms
- 4 spring onions
- 1 teaspoon of chopped parsley
- 2 level tablespoons of flour
- 250ml ( ½ pint) milk
- 4 heaped tablespoons of crème fraiche
- Salt and ground black pepper

1. Cut the roots off each spring onion. Trim the top and peel off the outer layer. Cut them into 2cm (1inch) pieces.
2. Slice the mushrooms finely. Snip any rind off the bacon then cut the rashers into pieces. Put a pan of water on to boil.
3. Chop the chicken into small chunks. Melt the margarine or butter in another saucepan and stir in the chopped chicken.
4. Cook the chicken for five minutes until it loses its pinkness. Cut one piece in half to check that it's cooked right through.
5. Add the bacon to the chicken and cook for three minutes more. Then add the mushrooms and onions to the pan.
6. Cook the mixture for two minutes then stir in the flour. Cook it for a minute then take the pan off the heat.
7. Gradually add the milk, stirring it all the time. Put the pan back on the heat and let it bubble gently until the sauce thickens.
8. Add the crème fraiche and parsley. Put a pinch of salt and pepper. Turn the heat as low as it will go while you cook the pasta.
9. Cook the pasta, following the time on its packet. Drain it and put it back into its pan. Stir in the sauce.

# meatballs in tomato sauce

makes 16 meatballs, serves 4

- 250g (8oz) dried, or 350g (12oz) fresh egg noodles

## *For the meatballs:*

- 500g (1lb) minced lean beef or lamb
- 2 level teaspoons of dried herbs
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon of flour
- Cooking oil, preferably olive oil

## *For the tomato sauce:*

- 1 onion
- 1 clove of garlic
- 400g (14oz) tin of chopped tomatoes
- 1 tablespoon of fresh chopped basil
- 1 tablespoon of tomato puree
- Salt and ground black pepper

1. Put the meat into a bowl and break it up with a fork. Crack the egg into a cup then add it, along with the mixed herbs and flour.
2. Wash your hands. Pick up some of the mixture and shape it into a ball, about the size of a table tennis ball. Make 15 more.
3. Heat three tablespoons of oil in a frying pan and add eight meatballs. Turn them often, until they are brown all over.
4. Put a paper towel onto a plate and lit the browned meatballs onto it. Brown the other eight meatballs and put them on the plate.
5. Chop the onion and peel and crush the garlic. Heat a tablespoon of oil in a saucepan and fry them until they are soft.
6. Add the tomatoes, basil, puree and salt and pepper. Let it boil, then turn down the heat and bubble it gently for ten minutes.
7. Add the meatballs. Put a lid onto the pan and leave the sauce to bubble gently for 20 minutes stirring occasionally.
8. While the meatballs are cooking, half-fill a pan with water and bring it to the boil. Add a tablespoon of oil to the water.
9. Add the noodles, let the water boil again, then simmer for the time it says on their packet. Drain and serve with the meatballs.

# making a pizza base!!

- traditional pizza base

- 350g (12oz) strong plain flour
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 15g ( ½ oz) fresh yeast, or 1 teaspoon of easy blend yeast
- 200ml (7fl oz) of warm water
- 1 tablespoon of olive oil
- Margarine for greasing
- A baking sheet or tray, about 35 x 25cm (14 x 10in)

This traditional pizza dough will make a round pizza 25cm (10inch) across, or a rectangular one 35 x 25cm (14 x 10 inches).

1. If you are using fresh yeast, mix it with a little of the warm water. Leave it in a warm place until it goes frothy.
2. If you are using easy blend yeast, open the packet, but don't add any warm water to it now. Add all the water at step 2.
3. Use a sieve to sift the flour and salt. Add the oil, yeast mixture and the rest of the warm water. Stir them well.
4. Carry on stirring the mixture until you get a soft dough which doesn't stick to the sides of the bowl. Wash your hands.
5. Sprinkle flour onto a clean, dry work surface and knead the dough well until it is smooth and stretchy.
6. Cover the bowl with plastic foodwrap. Put it in a warm place for about 45 minutes, or until it has risen to twice its size.
7. Turn your oven on to 200°C, 425°F, Gas Mark 7. Grease a baking tray or sheet with margarine. Rub it all over.
8. When the dough has risen, knead it again so that you burst all the large air bubbles in it. It won't take very long.
9. Put the dough onto your baking tray. Press it into the shape you want. Pinch up the edges. It's now ready for its topping.

# quick margherita pizza

**Heat your oven to 200°C, 400°F, Gas Mark 6**

1. To make the topping, peel the onions and chop them finely. Gently heat the oil and cook the onions until they are soft.
2. While the onions are cooking, open the tin of tomatoes and drain them in a sieve. Chop them into small pieces.

3. Add the tomatoes and herbs to the onion. Add a pinch of salt and pepper and cook the mixture for ten minutes.
4. Use a spoon to spread the topping over the base. Cut the cheese in thin slices then lay them all over the topping.
5. Bake your pizza in the oven for 25-30 minutes. The base will rise as it cooks and the cheese will go golden.

- One Traditional Pizza Base

*For the Topping:*

- 1 Tablespoon of cooking oil
- 2 onions
- 400g (14 oz) tin of plum tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon of mixed dried herbs
- Salt and ground black pepper
- 225g (8oz) Mozzarella cheese



# calzones folded pizzas

- One Traditional Pizza Base

*For the Filling:*

- 250g (8oz) ricotta cheese
- 75g (3oz) smoked ham
- 100g (4oz) Mozzarella cheese
- 3 large tomatoes
- Salt and ground black pepper
- Olive oil

**Heat your oven to 220°C, 450°F, Gas mark 7**

1. Cut the ham into small pieces. Cut the tomatoes and Mozzarella into small chunks. Turn on your oven.
2. Put both types of cheese, the tomatoes, ham and a pinch of salt and pepper into a bowl. Mix them together well.
3. When the dough has risen and you have kneaded it a second time, cut it into eight pieces. Roll the pieces into balls.
4. Sprinkle flour onto a work surface and roll out one of the balls to make a circle about 18cm (7in) across.
5. Put a heaped tablespoon of the mixture onto one half of the circle. Brush a little water around the edge.
6. Fold the dough over the mixture and pinch along the edges to seal the two halves. Make seven more like this.
7. Grease a baking tray with margarine. Lift the calzones onto the tray. Brush them with olive oil and put them in the oven.
8. Bake the calzones for about 20-30 minutes until they have puffed up and have become golden brown.



# cheesy beef burgers

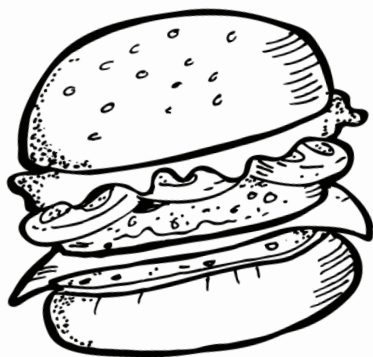
serves 4

- 500g (1lb 2oz) lean minced beef
- 2 tablespoons light soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon dried mixed herbs
- Ground black pepper
- 40g (1 ½ oz) Cheddar Cheese
- Sunflower oil

1. Put the mince into a bowl and break it up with a fork. Add the soy sauce, herbs and two 'twists' of black pepper.
2. Mix the ingredients well and divide it into four. Squeeze each lump of mixture into a round, flat shape.

**Tip:** Dip your hands in clean, cold water to stop the mixture from sticking to your hands when you shape it.

3. Cut the cheese into four cubes. Press a cube into each burger. Push the mixture over to cover the cheese.
4. Fold a paper towel several times and pour a little oil onto it. Wipe it across the rack of your grill pan.
5. Cook the burgers for seven minutes on medium heat.
6. After seven minutes turn the burgers and cook for a further seven minutes.



# creamy fish pie serves 4

- 500g (1lb 2oz) of boneless, skinless white fish fillet (e.g. cod, haddock or coley)
- 400ml (14fl oz) milk
- Salt and black pepper
- 750g (1lb 9oz) of potatoes
- 2 tomatoes
- 4 spring onions
- 2 tablespoons of soft butter or margarine
- 2 tablespoons of flour
- 100g (3 ½ oz) frozen peas, defrosted

1. Put the fish into a saucepan, pour in the milk along with a little salt and pepper.
2. Bring the milk to the boil, then turn the heat down low so that it is bubbling very gently. Cook for five minutes.
3. Take the pan off the heat, lift out the fish but don't throw away the milk. Leave the fish to cool.
4. Peel the potatoes and cut into chunks. Place in cold water, add half a teaspoon of salt and cook the potatoes for 10 – 15 minutes until they are soft.
5. Use a fork to break the fish into flakes
6. Cut the tomatoes into small chunks.
7. Cut the roots and the green tops off the spring onions and chop the onions finely.
8. When the potatoes are cooked, drain then mash them. Add two tablespoons of milk from the fish pan and a tablespoon of butter to the potato and mix well.
9. Mix the flour with a little milk. Stir it into the milk remaining from the cooked fish, add a tablespoon of butter. Boil it and let it bubble gently for one minute.
10. Add the fish, onion, peas and tomatoes. Pour the mixture into an ovenproof dish. Turn on your grill to medium.
11. Spoon the potato on top. Put the dish under the grill and cook it until the potato becomes golden.

# honey and lemon cream

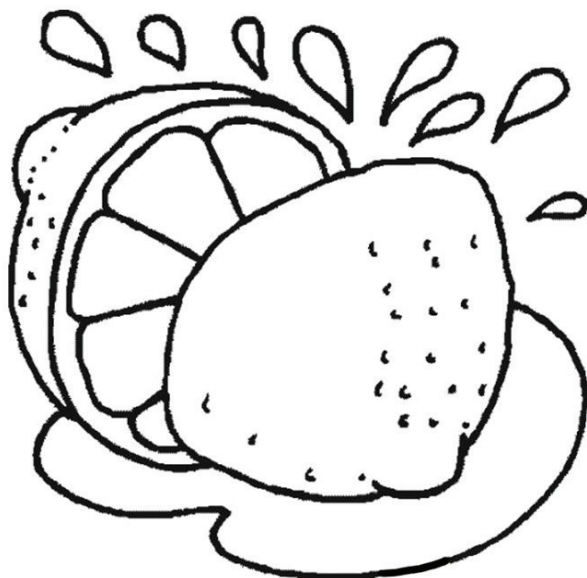
serves 4 - 6

- ½ cup carrageen, tightly packed
- 2 heaped teaspoons of honey
- Juice and finely grated rind of 1 lemon
- 1 egg white, stiffly beaten
- 150ml (1/4 pint) double cream – whipped

The seaweed carrageen, with its useful jelling properties is what makes this pudding work. Some cooks include the carrageen itself in this but I prefer to cook it and use only the liquid – the setting quality is just as good and risk of any marine taste is avoided.

Soak the carrageen in hot water to cover for about 15 minutes, then drain, discarding the soaking liquid. Put into 600ml (1 pint) fresh water with the honey, lemon juice and rind. Bring to the boil and simmer for 25 – 30 minutes. Strain and discard the carrageen and let the liquid cool slightly.

Meanwhile, combine the beaten egg white and the whipped cream, then gently fold the mixture into the carrageen liquid. Pour into a wetted mould and chill.



# christmas pudding

This rich Christmas pudding is comparatively recent in the Irish cuisine. Formerly a simple boiled fruit pudding was sometimes served, but since the beginning of this century the Christmas pudding has become traditional. An old lady of my acquaintance remembers young domestic science teachers going round to the country districts and teaching country women how to make them. Previously they had already become popular among owners of large houses, who had travelled. This recipe makes three 1-kilo (2-pound) puddings or one very large one. They should be made not later than the first week in November, to give them time to mature, but they can be made earlier: they will keep for a year.

- 450g (1lb) Demerara sugar
- 1 medium-sized carrot, grated
- 450g (1lb) fresh breadcrumbs
- juice and grated rind of 1 lemon
- 75g (3oz) ground almonds
- juice and grated rind of 1 orange
- 175g (6oz) chopped candied peel
- 7 eggs
- 75g (3oz) glace cherries
- 300ml (1/2 pint) Guinness
- 450g (1lb) currants
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 275g (10oz) raisins
- 150ml (1/4 pint) whiskey, brandy or rum
- 275g (10oz) sultanas

Mix the sugar, breadcrumbs and almonds in a large bowl. Add the candied peel, cherries, currants, raisins, sultanas and grated carrot. Mix well. Make a well in the middle and add the grated lemon and orange rinds and the juice, the mixed spices and mix again. Beat the eggs with the Guinness and add them gradually, alternatively adding a little flour each time. Stir very well, and finally add the spirits and mix again.

At this point it is traditional to get all the family to stir and to make a wish. Also a small coin is usually wrapped up and added to the mixture for luck.

Butter the bowl (or bowls) well, and fill with the mixture to within 2cm (1 inch) of the top. Cover with greaseproof paper, then either a lid or foil, or a cloth, and tie down. Steam over boiling water for 7 hours or a little longer. Lift out and uncover the puddings and let the steam out. Leave them to cool.

Cover again, when cool and store in a cool dark place until December 25th. On Christmas Day, steam the pudding for a further 1 ½ hours before serving, decorated with a piece of berried holly. At the table, pour a warm ladleful of Irish whiskey over and set it alight. If possible it should be eaten at once – it is considered good luck to eat it while the blue flame is still burning. Serve with brandy sauce or brandy butter.

# baked custard

This simple pudding is delicious with cooked fruit. It liked vanilla can be added or a few drops of almond essence or rum.

- 750ml (1 ½ pints) milk
- ½ teaspoon butter
- 3 eggs
- pinch of grated nutmeg
- 2 rounded tablespoons sugar

Beat the eggs with sugar, warm the milk gently and gradually add the eggs and sugar to the milk, stirring all the time. Butter 4 custard dishes and pour the custard into them and grate some nutmeg over the top. Stand the dishes in a baking pan and add hot water to come half-way up the sides of the dishes. Bake in a slow 180°C, 350°F, Mark 4 oven for about 50 minutes. Serves 4. For caramel cream, line dish with caramel

# vegetable soup serves 4 - 6

- 1 Large Onion
- 4 Large Carrots
- 2 Large Potatoes
- 2 Pints Vegetable Stock
- Bouquet Garni
- Salt & Pepper

Heat a tablespoon of butter in a large pan and fry the chopped onion gently for about 10 minutes, to soften but not brown. Add vegetable stock and bouquet garni, bring to a slow boil while grating the potatoes and carrots into the soup, add salt and pepper to season and allow to simmer for 20 to 30 mins, stirring occasionally.

Take pan off the heat, remove bouquet garni and blend with a hand blender for a smooth consistency.

This is a simple vegetable soup that is delicious with just 3 vegetables, you can add some celery or parsnips if you really want to up your veggie intake! By blending until it's smooth, it's a great way of getting children to eat vegetables.

For handy stand by lunches, make a batch and refrigerate when it's cold. It will last 3 days in the fridge. Simply heat up a serving in the microwave, make sure it is piping hot, 2 to 3 mins on reheat should do it.

## Hints and tips

While sautéing vegetables for soups and meals use butter, olive oil or coconut oil, while butter and coconut oil are saturated fats, they are resistant to high heats and there is evidence to suggest that coconut oil can lower cholesterol. Olive oil is mostly monosaturated fat and also tolerates high heat well, meaning it won't become carcinogenic and is heart safe.

# pasta bake serves 4

- 8 ozs Penne or Fusille wholewheat pasta
- 2 onions
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 4 ozs mushrooms
- 1/2 tsp oregano
- 1 tsp sage
- 1/2 tsp thyme
- 400g tin tomatoes
- 2 tbsp red pesto
- 1 red pepper
- 1 green pepper
- mozzarella cheese

Heat oven to 220°C/190°C Fan/Gas 7

Cook pasta in boiling water for 10 to 15 minutes. Drain, rinse and stir in a little olive oil.

Chop onions, mushrooms and peppers into a fine dice. Crush garlic.

Saute onions and garlic in olive oil, add peppers and saute for 5 minutes, add mushrooms, herbs and tomatoes and simmer for 20 minutes.

Season well with salt and pepper and add a tsp of sugar.

Add pasta to sauce and pour into an ovenproof dish, sprinkle with cheese and bake for 25 minutes.

## Hints and tips

Use wholewheat pasta whenever possible, it's a better health alternative than white pasta, releasing energy more slowly and keeping you fuller for longer, it's higher in fibre and lower in sugar. This dish is full of coloured vegetables which are all great antioxidants. Garlic is a powerful antibiotic, antiseptic and antifungal, it also helps to lower cholesterol and blood pressure. Mozzarella cheese is lower in fat than cheddar but also a good source of protein and calcium.

Tomatoes can be quite acidic so by adding a tsp of sugar it helps counteract this.

Chopping vegetables finely releases more flavour and speeds up cooking time, using salt in cooking also helps to bring out the natural flavours and sweetness, and dampens any bitterness.





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