

PAULA'S KITCHEN



.....and other Saxby favourites

We Saxby's love food. It has been a large part of our lives in many different ways. Mum was the inspiration behind this, whipping up a table laden with delicious dishes at a moment's notice. She had to be able to do this, because our Father was so good at last minute invitations.

"Never knowingly under catered" is the family motto, and one that I like to think we three offspring have carried forward. Our doors are open to all of you, so whether you are passing through Walton on the Wolds, La Garde Freinet or Arrowtown, you will find a good meal and a friendly welcome.

Infact if you sit down at a table with more than one Saxby present, the chances are that the conversation will quickly turn to, not just the next meal, but probably two meals ahead. God forbid there be a gap in the constant pursuit of good food!

A good example of our need to talk about food, is that when Jo, in NZ, got up the morning that we finished writing this book, there were 26 comments on our extended family Whatsapp group, that had been written while she slept. 17 of them were in regards to what constitutes the perfect cucumber sandwich, which obviously turned to 18 once she got to have her say.

Many of these recipes are things that Mum cooked over and over again for family and friends, due to their continued popularity. Others are dishes that have been added to the family repertoire more recently, but are no less loved for it.

We hope that you will try a few of them, or more if you like, and remember the times that you spent with our parents.

Rebecca, Joanna & Oliver

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Jo's Hot Olives

A wonderful little nibble with drinks (Becca)

I don't remember Mother ever making my hot olives, but clearly Becca thinks you all need this recipe, and I can't disagree. Ma and Pa were big fans of olives though. Olives and oysters are the things I remember, as children, Ma forcing us to try every year, in the hope that we'd learn to like them. It worked! The olives in the French markets were first on the list of supplies, along with saucisson, each and every time they arrived at La Vanade.

Make more than you think you'll need because they are fabulous cold too.
(JoJo)

Ingredients

Olive oil – enough to cover the bottom of an oven proof frying pan
Garlic, at least 6 cloves, sliced
Chilli flakes to taste (at least 1 tsp)
1 tsp fennel seeds
6 sprigs fresh thyme
2 cups kalamata olives
Zest of 1 lemon and 1 orange, removed in strips with a veg peeler, and the juice of the lemon
Salt

Method

Preheat oven to 180°C.

Sizzle the garlic in the frying pan. When fragrant add the chilli flakes, fennel seeds and fresh thyme. Sizzle a bit. Add the olives and the zest and stir until the olives are coated. (Add more chilli and fennel at this point if it looks like you need more.)

Bake in the oven for 30 minutes – less if you want them juicier, more if you want them dryer. Turn the olives over a couple of times during cooking. Once cooked, add the lemon juice and some salt and serve hot.

Becca wrote the recipe above, but as they are called Jo's hot Olives, perhaps you would like my recipe. This is a good example of how recipes change over time with different people creating. I noticed when I had the cafe, you could

give 5 people a biscuit recipe, and you'd end up with 5 different biscuits. A recipe is in the eye of the beholder.

I put all the ingredients together in a heavy based frying pan. Leave it for a few hours, or don't, if you don't have time. Fry on the hob until sizzling and then put the pan in the oven for another 10 to 15 mins stirring occasionally. Done! I don't add lemon juice or salt (why would you add salt to olives?) although I concur it is in the original recipe.



I marinate them for a few hours before cooking, but you don't have to.



Honey & Mustard Sausages

Probably the most popular canapé on earth, unless you are veggie (sorry Jo). Ideally made with bite sized sausages, but you can just chop large chipolatas into bite sized pieces.

They look fab served in a hollowed-out loaf of bread (and greedy people like to eat the bread afterwards), but a bowl with some cocktail sticks will do the job just as well.

Ingredients

Lots of cocktail sausages

2 heaped tbsp honey

2 heaped tbsp grainy mustard

Round loaf of bread, for serving

Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Place the sausages in a roasting tin and spoon in the honey and mustard. Rather than trying to stir it to cover the sausages, just pop it in the oven for 2 minutes to let the honey and mustard melt, then give it a good stir. Return the tray to the oven and cook for about 45 minutes to an hour. Initially the sausages will release lots of juices and fat, but be patient, stir from time to time so they brown evenly, and the juiciness will soon become stickiness. When the sausages are cooked and nicely browned, with a lovely sticky glaze, pour them into your hollowed-out loaf or bowl and serve hot.

Delia's Roast Peppers

Inspired by Delia Smith's Piedmont Roast Peppers in her Summer Collection, we eat these all the time. She credits Elizabeth David, Franco Taruschio and Simon Hopkinson. As my mother would say 'there is no such thing as an original thought'.

We all make them. They always come out on the table in England, France and New Zealand.

These days I leave out the anchovy, but I sprinkle them with dried oregano or basil or Herbes de Provence or whatever is to hand, before putting them in the oven, so a great starter if you have vegetarians/vegans to feed.

I usually serve them hot, but Ma would serve them at room temperature, which is very handy for making them in advance of needing them. If you glug plenty of olive oil over them before roasting, you get loads of amazing juices to drizzle over the plate when serving.

Serve with bread so everyone can soak up all the delicious, oily, sweet peppery, garlicky juiciness. That's it, now my mouth is watering. (JoJo)

Alternatively, as one of many accompaniments to a summer BBQ spread (Olly)

Serves 4 or 8 as a starter.

Ingredients

4 large red peppers (either serve a whole or half a pepper each, maybe depending on who you are feeding, or how much else you are eating, or the size of the peppers).

4 medium tomatoes

8 salted anchovy fillets (or dried herbs see blurb above)

2 cloves of garlic (I think I'd happily use more)

8 tbsps olive oil (plus a few glugs more)

Salt and pepper

Fresh basil leaves to serve.

- If you don't have any fresh basil, don't give it a second thought. It's a nice idea, but I'm not sure I ever saw mother serve them with fresh basil

and they are just as good without. And actually, now that I think about it, I'm pretty sure I've seen Becca serve them on a bed of a few rocket or mesclun leaves.

Method

Preheat oven to 180°C

Cut the peppers in half, from top to bottom, cutting the stalk in half lengthways. Leave the stalk intact but remove the seeds and pith. You can't eat the stalk, of course, but it looks good. Put the peppers skin side down in a pan. It's good if the sides of the pan are not too high as this will help the edges of the peppers to crisp up. However, too low and your juices will flow all over the oven. You'll work it out.

Cut the tomatoes into 6ths. And stuff 3 pieces into each half with the back of the tomato showing (it just looks nice when they are cooked, but you can put them in any old way if you like. You could also use cherry tomatoes if you felt so inclined).

Peel and thinly slice the garlic. Stuff most of the garlic in-between the pieces of tomato, and over the tomato, and sprinkle the rest in the pan.

Lay an anchovy fillet over the tomatoes, inside the pepper, or sprinkle with dried herbs, or go to town and do both. (Don't listen to the fussy eater – the anchovy fillets are a must as their saltiness is what makes the sauce so good)

Spoon a tblsp of olive oil over the tomatoes, into the pepper. And then glug a bit more around the pan. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Consider how salty your anchovies are when adding the salt.

Put the pan on a high shelf in the oven for about 45 to 50 mins. Check the oven with 10 mins to go and whack it up to 200°C if you think they need a little more crisping up around the edges.

Scatter with a few basil leaves and serve with the amazing juices and bread.



Crab Ramekins

This is a family favourite from meals at the Seaview Hotel on the Isle of Wight – the Island has always been a huge part of our family life.

I'm not sure that this recipe is exactly the same as theirs, but it's a good copy...

A super impressive (but cunningly simple) starter or light lunch. (Becca)

Serves 4

Ingredients

200g mixed crab meat, two thirds white is best

250g cheese sauce, homemade or quality ready-made

150g mature cheddar, grated

1 tsp English mustard

½ tsp Cayenne pepper

Juice of ½ a lemon

S & P

Method

Turn on the grill to the highest heat it will go. Warm your cheese sauce over a very low heat until bubbling, stirring constantly. Remove from the heat and working quickly stir in the mustard, cayenne and crab meat. Season well and add lemon juice to taste.

Divide the mixture evenly between 4 greased ramekins and top with the grated cheese.

Place under the grill until the cheese is melted, golden and bubbling. Serve straight away with plenty of crusty bread or granary toast.



French Dressing

Ma spent time in her last year in school at school in Lille, France. I'm not sure if it was for a term or the whole year, but it was long enough to get quite good at French, and take on board the recipe that is a constant in any Saxby house. It has its own bottle, within easy reach, in each of our kitchen's, and is never allowed to be empty winter or summer. I always think I should get good at different salad dressings, but I just can't go past this one. Having said all of that, Becca, Olly and I bicker amongst ourselves about the recipe. Surely there is only one recipe. So below is mother's dressing (as I make it, and, Oliver and Rebecca, how our mother taught me).

Makes a good amount of dressing which can be stored in an airtight bottle for use as and when you need it. I can't tell you how long it lasts, because it doesn't last long enough, at our house, to find out. (jojo)

Ingredients

300ml extra virgin olive oil (the better the quality the better the dressing)
100ml white wine vinegar
5 large cloves garlic – crushed
1 very heaped teasp Taylors English mustard (I would point out that it has to be Taylors, but surely, if you know my parents, you'll know there is no other mustard allowed in their kitchen, so it's probably not even worth mentioning)
1.5 teasp sugar (honey is nice too – Becca)
S&P – to taste, but it needs a decent amount.

Method

Put all ingredients into a measuring jug and whisk with a fork. Pour the dressing into the bottle you will store it in and give it a good shake.

Make sure to shake the bottle each time you use the dressing.

As with most things the flavour tends to improve with sitting.



Avocado Vinaigrette

A 70's classic, and one I remember mother serving as a starter, quite often, at Flitwick Manor. It's simple but so delicious.

Ingredients - Per Person

½ Avocado, skin on (stone removed obviously, and try to keep both your thumbs)

Mother's French dressing

Method

Slice a tiny slither of Avocado skin from the round bottom of the avocado half so that it sits flat on a plate with the indentation from the stone facing up to the ceiling. Fill the indent with the dressing and serve with a teaspoon. Done!

Becca would probably ask you to garnish it with some leaves, and I guess some bread on the table might be nice, but don't mess with the simplicity too much.

Gambas à la Saxby

Like most things, this dish definitely tastes better in the sun, with a chilled glass of rosé, but don't let that stop you from making it in Aspley Guise in the rain.
(Becca)

Serves 6

Ingredients

Whole raw prawns in their shells. For a starter you want 3 or 4 each approx 5cm long. For a main maybe 5 or 6, or less if they are bigger. If you can get them about 8-10cm long, even better and lucky you, you are in for a treat.

Glug of olive oil

100g butter

6 fat cloves garlic, crushed

1 tbsp sugar

S&P

Large glug brandy or cognac - (alternatively a splash of Pernod, or both - Olly)

Juice of a lemon

Lemon cut into 6 wedges, to serve

Lots of crusty bread

Method

Ideally you want a large flat pan for this, something like a paella pan that you can take straight to the table. You really don't want to decant these into something else for serving because then you might lose a few drops of the juices, and that would be very sad. The juices are the highlight. That's what the bread is for, to mop up every last drop.

Place the pan on the hob on a fairly high heat. Add the butter, some olive oil (mainly just to stop the butter burning), the crushed garlic, some salt & pepper and the sugar. Let them all melt together and when the garlic starts to cook and it all becomes very fragrant, throw in the prawns.

Move the prawns around from time to time, turning them over too, so that they are lovely and pink and cooked, but try not to overcook them. The size of your prawns, and how many are in the pan, will obviously dictate the cooking time, but between 5-10 minutes.

When they are cooked pour over the brandy, carefully set fire to it with a match (or the flame from your gas hob if you are brave) and step back (make sure to turn off your extractor fan first, as that can end very badly if you don't). Once the alcohol has burnt off, squeeze over the lemon juice and serve immediately.

Don't forget the bread!





Figs with Parma Ham & Blue Cheese

Another South of France classic. It's a bit of a fiddly thing to stuff and wrap all the figs but well worth the effort in my opinion. And if you happen to have "fussy eaters" in the family like we do (Jo, Grant, Olly & Pip I am looking at you all) then sub mozzarella or goat's cheese for the blue cheese, and you can even wrap the figs in thin strips of courgette. (Becca)

No one will like this recipe Becca – hot blue cheese – yuck (Olly).

Ingredients

3 figs per person, or 2 if they are big

Same again of parma ham slices

Piece of blue cheese – roquefort or stilton for blue cheese eaters, but gorgonzola is a good creamy alternative for those (sensible) people that are a bit ambivalent to blue cheese

Olive oil

Balsamic vinegar

Salt & pepper

Rocket, to serve

Lots of bread for mopping

Method

Preheat the oven to 200°.

Take your figs and cut a cross in the top (pointy end) of each one. Cut small pieces of cheese (about 1cm x 2cm) and stuff into the centre of each fig. Then carefully wrap a slice of ham around each fig, covering the base as much as possible and leaving the top slightly open. It's a good idea to have the fat on the top if possible so it crisps up.

Line all of your wrapped figs up in a roasting tray that they fit comfortably, touching so they stay wrapped as they cook. Drizzle over olive oil and balsamic vinegar and season. Place in the hot oven and cook for about 15 minutes until the ham has coloured and crisped up and the figs and cheese are soft and melty. Don't overdo it though or all the cheese will run away. (That would be a

shame!) Serve hot, on a bed of rocket is nice, with lots of the yummy juices spooned over the top.



All wrapped up and ready for the oven

Smoked Haddock Mousse

Another regular on the buffet table at Saxby parties. The recipe says to serve it in a soufflé dish but Mum used to make it in a ring mould and turn it out. Very classy and completely delicious. (Becca)

There are very few things I miss about not eating meat and fish, and although I can't have eaten this in over 30 years, my tastebuds can remember exactly how good it is. (jojo)

Ingredients

200g smoked haddock (weighed when cooked and flaked)
2 eggs, hard boiled
300ml cold bechamel sauce
150ml mayonnaise
14g gelatine
75ml chicken (or vegetable) stock
75ml double cream, lightly whipped
Watercress, cucumber slices or rocket, to serve
Did it not have horseradish sauce in it? - Ah – that might have been the mackerel pate (Olly)

Method

Have the haddock ready cooked and flaked, and the eggs chopped. Mix the bechamel sauce and the mayonnaise together. Soak the gelatine in the stock, dissolve it over a gentle heat and add to the sauce mixture. Stir in the haddock and eggs, and as the mixture begins to thicken, fold in the cream. Turn into a soufflé dish or ring mould, cover and leave to set in the fridge.

Gravlax

Another dish which is great on a buffet table, as all the work is done beforehand.

Ingredients

Filletted, but not skinned, whole salmon

Per 800g salmon:

6 tbsp fresh dill

25g sea salt

25g caster sugar

1 tbsp black peppercorns, crushed

2 tbsp brandy

Method

Place one side of salmon skin side down in as close-fitting as possible glass or plastic container. Rub over with the salt, sprinkle on the sugar and crushed peppercorns. Roughly chop the dill and spread over the salmon, then pour over the brandy. Cover with the other side of salmon, skin side up.

Cover with foil or cling film, weigh the fish down cans of fruit, bricks, handy gold bars, whatever you have to hand!

Turn and baste the salmon morning and evening for 3-4 days, replacing the cover and the weights each time.

Slice thinly and serve with gravlax sauce.

Gravlax sauce

4 tbsp wholegrain mustard

1 tsp English mustard

25g caster sugar

2 tbsp white wine vinegar

120ml olive oil

3 tbsp chopped fresh dill

Blend all the ingredients together, except for the olive oil, then slowly whisk in the oil until a thick sauce is formed.

Tomato Tart

Funnily this is the only vegetarian main in this book (or it can be a starter, or yet another accompaniment to a summer BBQ), and I don't think I've ever made it. No need, Mother, Becca and Olly have made it for me loads. I really thought the cheesy base was going to be Boursin, so I'm surprised to see it isn't. I think that would work well too, if you were in a hurry. (jojo)

Boursin does work brilliantly, and I made the one in the picture with the peppery boursin and it was lovely. (Becca)

Of course you can use Boursin, or the herby philly – all work. Drizzle some olive oil over it before you cook if you feel the tomatoes are not as ripe as they should be (Olly).

Ingredients

350g puff pastry

1.5kg ripe tomatoes, all around the same size

150g mascarpone cheese (I think we have established that this could be any other soft cheese and herb combo that you have to hand)

50g parmesan, freshly grated

1 bigish bunch fresh basil, leaves picked and sliced

S&P

Method

Preheat the oven to 200°C

Roll the pastry to a circle slightly larger than 30cm in diameter. Put the pastry circle on a tray and let it rest in the fridge for 20 minutes or so while you prepare the tomatoes. Remove the cores from the tomatoes and slice them about 5mm thick. Keep all the slices together and put the ends on a separate pile.

Mix the mascarpone with the parmesan and basil and season well. Spread the mascarpone across the centre of the pastry circle, leaving about 10cm at the edges. Layer the sliced tomatoes around the outside of the cheese, making a full circle each time. Tuck the tomato ends under each layer to prevent them caving in, then continue toward the centre. Put the last slice right in the middle.

Bake the tart in the oven for 30minutes, then turn the oven down to 150°C and bake for a further 45 mins. When cooked there should be almost no liquid left in the tomatoes, and the pastry base will be crisp.



Coronation Chicken

This one was made again and again by Mother and Di Redfern for parties and Point to Points. I have such great memories of Point to Points. The one that sticks in my mind the most, was when mother decided to nick a large orange and white traffic bollard as we were leaving and we had to have it on our laps in the back all the way home. I think she was rather embarrassed the next day. I believe that after this Point to Point Di decided to try eating daffodils while sitting at the table in our kitchen, to see if they were tasty!! It was a good day. (JoJo)

I won't mention the Berni Inn incident. (Olly)

My main memory of coronation chicken was Mum using her hands to mix a massive pan full of it for one of their catering jobs – curried mayonnaise up to the elbows! (Becca)

Ingredients

For 1 cooked 1.5kg / 3-4lb Chicken - stripped

140ml / ¼ pint single cream
140ml / ¼ pint plain yoghurt
140 ml / ¼ pint mayonnaise
2 tsp curry powder
2 tsp finely chopped onion
60g / 2oz browned almonds
1 cup chopped apple
1 cup chopped celery
1 cup chopped green pepper

Method

Mix the cream, yoghurt, mayonnaise and curry powder together.
Stir in all the other ingredients.
Leave in the fridge for at least an hour for all the flavours to mingle.

Serve as part of a Point to Point picnic, or with new potatoes and salad.



Coronation chicken served in a lettuce leaf is great as a large nibble at a drinks party

Minty Lamb & Apricot Tagine

Penny asked for this recipe to be included. It was one of Mum's favourites and Penny fondly remembers cooking it with her the last time she visited The Cornerhouse in January 2020. (Becca)

Serves 6

Ingredients

2 tblsp olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
1.25 kg boneless lamb, cubed
450ml chicken stock
1 tblsp red wine vinegar
1 tblsp runny honey
85g dried apricots, chopped
10g fresh mint, chopped + sprigs for garnish
50g pinenuts, toasted

1 pot natural yoghurt, to garnish

Method

Heat the oil in a large pan, then fry the onion until lightly browned. Add the lamb and stir well, allowing it to seal slightly.

Add the stock, vinegar, honey and apricots. Bring to the boil, then lower the heat, cover and simmer for 1 hour, stirring occasionally.

Stir in the chopped mint and pine nuts (keep back a few nuts for garnishing) and season with salt and pepper to taste. Simmer for 15 minutes.

Serve with couscous, garnished with some mint, pine nuts and a drizzle of natural yoghurt.



Lasagne and Garlic Bread

This is a party classic. New Year's Eve at Guise House or the Red House springs to mind. As opposed to Chilli Con Carne and Jacket Potatoes, which is next on the list and makes me think of Bonfire Night Parties at Flitwick Manor. (jojo)

Serve with a simple green salad, with, of course, Mother's French dressing.

Serves 6 - 8

Ingredients

Approx. 12 lasagne sheets
1 onion, peeled and finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 tblsp oil
800g mince beef
1 tsp dried oregano
175ml red wine
2 x 240g tins tomatoes
4 teasp tomato paste

White sauce:

200g butter
200g flour
1 litre milk
100g grated cheese

Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Fry the mince in the oil in a frying pan on a medium-high heat until it begins to brown. Remove the mince and place onto a plate. Put the frying pan back onto the heat.

Add the chopped onion to the pan and fry for a few mins until it starts to soften. Add the garlic and fry for a minute more, then add the mince back into

the pan. Pour in the red wine and let it simmer until it has mostly been soaked up by the meat. Add the oregano, tomatoes and tomato paste.

Cover the pan and cook for at least 20-30 mins so that the mince cooks through and the flavours have a chance to blend. The longer the better, stirring occasionally. Then season to taste.

Meanwhile prepare the white sauce. Melt the butter in a small saucepan and stir in the flour. Cook the roux for 2-3 mins, then slowly start adding the milk, a little at a time, stirring continuously. Cook for 5 minutes over a gentle heat. Season to taste.

Lightly grease an oven proof dish and put in a layer of meat mixture. Cover with a little white sauce, then a layer of lasagne sheets. Repeat these layers ending with a layer of white sauce on the top. Cover with grated cheese and bake for about 45 mins until the pasta is cooked and the cheese bubbling and golden. Remove from the oven and let it sit for 10 mins to firm up.

Garlic Bread

I'm mean you've all made it before, 100 times, so I'm not going into detail. I've got other recipes to be getting on with. (jojo)

Bread

Butter

Shit loads of garlic

Combine crushed garlic with soft salted butter. Slather it on chunky sliced baguette. Wrap with tin foil and chuck it in the oven for 15 mins.

Chilli Con Carne (for a crowd)

As Jo mentioned in the Lasagne intro, bonfire night at Flitwick Manor was all about chilli & jacket spuds. As children we loved the build-up – helping Pop, Joe & John to build the bonfire. There were always lots of people there to celebrate with us, and bonfire night has held a special place in my heart ever since, despite living in France where it doesn't exist.

I have written this recipe to feed 12 so just multiply up if your crowd is larger.
(Becca)

Ingredients

3 medium onions
4 cloves garlic
3 medium carrots
2 sticks celery
2 red peppers
olive oil
2 heaped tsp chilli powder
1 heaped tsp chipotle chilli flakes
2 heaped tsp ground cumin
1 heaped tsp ground coriander
1 heaped tsp ground cinnamon
(Star Anise) 1 or 2 (Oily)
1 beef jelly stock pot
2 x 400 g tin of red kidney beans or black-eyed beans
2 x 800 g tin of chopped tomatoes
1kg quality minced beef
(I would swap some out for 250g of diced beef steak) Oily
a bunch of fresh coriander (20g ish)
S + P
(A splash of Whisky – or Bourbon – or Vodka) (Oily)

Method

Peel and finely chop the onions, garlic, carrots and celery. Halve the red peppers, remove the stalks and seeds and roughly chop.

Heat a decent glug of oil in a large casserole pan on a medium-high heat, add the chopped veg, chilli powder and flakes, cumin, coriander, cinnamon and a good pinch of sea salt and black pepper, then cook for about 10 minutes, or until softened, stirring regularly.

(If you are going to use my tip – empty the stock pot keeping every available morsel of flavour, and then heavily brown the diced steak in the same pan. Carry on Becca)

Add the minced beef, stirring regularly to colour the mince as much as possible. Once all the mince is browned, tip in the tomatoes, (and the veg if you took them out earlier) then pour in 1 tin's worth of water and the beef stock.

Pick the coriander leaves and put aside, then finely chop and add the stalks to the pan, with the balsamic vinegar. Season with a good pinch of sea salt and black pepper.

Bring to the boil, (add the star anise now if you want to)* then reduce the heat to low and simmer with a lid ajar for at least 1 hour, or until thickened and reduced, stirring occasionally, adding the rinsed and drained kidney beans half way through.

*At this point I would probably transfer it to a low oven with the lid on – say 150°C - for about 3 hours. Less stirring and watching needed but don't forget about it entirely. Long and slow is always best for a dish like this. If you are serving Jackets however you will need a hotter oven so maybe get the chilli done ahead of time and just reheat it to serve.

Serve up with jacket potatoes (we think) but fluffy rice or couscous, or just a hunk of crusty bread is good too, with some sour cream/creme fraiche, guacamole, grated cheddar and wedges of lime on the side for squeezing over. Sprinkle over the reserved coriander, and some fresh chilli, if you like, then tuck in.

(If you are serving to the table – add the booze just before you serve and it will help improve the aroma and the taste!)

Roast Pheasant with Fennel and Apples

No comment, never tried it. But I do remember when we were kids that the smell of pheasant casserole filled the whole house when Ma made it, and I thought it smelt awful. (JoJo)

This is the ONLY way to eat pheasant in my opinion. I have often smuggled frozen ones through customs to get them back to France. (Becca)

Jojo is clearly insane. Pheasant casserole is amazing (Olly)

Serves 6 -8

Ingredients

2 small oranges
2 large cooking apples
1 tsp juniper berries, crushed
Soft butter
150ml / 5 fl oz carton sour cream
2 hen pheasants
2 fennel bulbs
180g / 6oz rindless streaky bacon rashers
140ml / ¼ pint dry vermouth

Method

Preheat the oven to 220°C. Spike the oranges all over and push them into the cavities of the pheasants. Spread apple slices over the bottom of a large roasting tin. Cut fennel across into thin rings and lay over apple. Scatter crushed juniper berries over and season with pepper and salt. Lay the bacon rashers on top. Smear the pheasants with the butter and place breast downwards on the bacon. Cook in the centre of the oven for 30 minutes. Turn the pheasants over to be breast upwards and pour the Vermouth into the pan. Put back in the oven until the breasts are browned and the pheasants are cooked. Remove the pheasants and bacon onto a carving board. Stir the soured cream into the apple and fennel mixture and heat on top of the stove for a few minutes. Put into a bowl to spoon the apple and fennel over the carved pheasants.

Alternatively, the pheasant can be carved/jointed in advance and placed into a large shallow serving dish with the apple and fennel mixture poured over then covered with foil and kept ready in a low oven until needed.

Chicken in a Lemon Tarragon Dressing

This recipe came out for every buffet lunch for as long as I can remember, or at least since I was a teenager, and was then adopted by Becca and Philippa for their 'Fab Food' catering menu in La Garde Freinet. Surely, they must be bored of making it by now, as I'm pretty sure every order they get includes it. (JoJo)

No, not bored. It's so simple and so delicious. We always buy the green olives to serve on top, and we always forget. You will too. (Becca)

Serves 8

Ingredients

6 chicken breasts, with skin on
1 tsp olive oil
100 – 175ml / 4-6 fl oz vegetable stock

For the dressing:

Rind and juice of 1 lemon
1 tblsp white wine vinegar
1 clove garlic
1 tsp Dijon mustard
2 tsp castor sugar
Salt and pepper
100ml / 4 fl oz olive oil
4 tblsp snipped fresh tarragon leaves
6-8 green olives to garnish

Method

Heat the oven to 180°C. Arrange the chicken breasts, skin side up, in a deep baking dish or roasting tin, selecting one the right size to keep them closely packed. Brush the skins with a little olive oil. Pour in enough stock to come part way over the breasts, but not completely submerging them. Put in the oven, uncovered, and bake for 30-35 minutes. Let the breasts cool in the stock, then refrigerate (in the stock) until needed.

For the dressing, combine the finely grated lemon rind, lemon juice and vinegar. Add the peeled and crushed garlic, mustard, sugar, salt and milled pepper and olive oil; mix well. Add the tarragon leaves.

Lift the chicken breasts from the stock and pull away the skins. Slice the meat diagonally, or use a fork to tear it into strips. Arrange the chicken in one layer on a shallow serving dish. Spoon over the dressing, add the green olives to garnish and serve.

St. Tropez Chicken

This is a lovely summery dish, but the rich flavours work well in the winter too. Mum asked me for the recipe lots of times, she was a big fan. I am definitely a fan of things that you marinade, then chuck in a roasting tray to do its thing! (Becca)

Serves 6

Ingredients

1 large chicken, jointed into 10 pieces
Juice of 1 lemon
60ml olive oil
60ml honey
125ml rose wine (though white is fine too)
2 cloves of garlic, bruised
1 tblsp mixed herbs with lavender
S&P

Method

Put the jointed chicken into a large freezer bag or shallow dish (one with a lid would be good). Squeeze the lemon juice into a jug, and stir in the oil, honey and wine to dissolve the honey. Pour this mixture into the bag or dish of the chicken and chuck in the bruised garlic cloves and the herbs.

Seal the bag or tightly cover the dish and put in the fridge overnight or for up to two days.

Preheat the oven to 170°C. Put the chicken into a roasting tin with its marinade, skin side up, and cover with foil or the lid of the dish. Season well with s + p. Cook for 2 hours, and then remove the cover from the tin and turn up the oven to 220°C. Cook for another 15 mins or until the skin of the chicken is bronzed. Keep an eye on it though, as the honey in the marinade will make it catch quite quickly.

Remove the chicken to a warmed plate, and pour or spoon off excess fat from the cooking liquid. Put the tin on the hob, add 125ml water and deglaze the pan juices to make your glossy, golden brown sauce-cum-gravy. (To be honest there are usually enough juices that you don't need to add any water, but do try to spoon off the excess fat)



Delia's Fish Pie with Rosti Caper Topping

The ultimate comfort food, unless you're a fish, or say, a vegetarian, but I did used to love it. (jojo)

One can vary the fish in this luxurious dish, as long as you have 1kg in total.

Serves 4 - 6

Ingredients

700g halibut
225g king scallops, including the coral, cut in half
110g uncooked tiger prawns, thoroughly defrosted if frozen, and peeled
150ml dry white wine
275ml carton of fish stock
1 bay leaf
50g butter
50g plain flour
2 tblsp cream fraiche
6 cornichons drained, rinsed and chopped
1 heaped tblsp chopped fresh parsley
1 dstsp chopped fresh dill
S & P

For the Rosti caper Topping:

900g Desiree or Romano potatoes, even sized if possible
1 tblsp salted capers or capers in brine, drained, rinsed and dried
50g butter, melted
50g strong cheddar cheese, finely grated

Method

Preheat the oven to 220°C

Butter a 5cm deep/1.5 litre baking dish.

Prepare the potatoes by scrubbing them, but leave their skins on. As they all have to cook at the same time, if there are any larger ones cut them in half. Then place them in a saucepan with enough boiling, salted water to barely

cover them and cook them for 12 mins after they have come back to the boil, covered with a lid. Strain off the water and cover them with a clean tea-cloth to absorb the steam.

Meanwhile, heat the wine and stock in a medium saucepan, add the bay leaf and some seasoning, then cut the fish in half if it's a large piece, add it to the saucepan and poach the fish gently for 5 minutes. It should be slightly undercooked.

Then remove the fish to a plate, using a draining spoon, and strain the liquid through a sieve into a bowl.

Now rinse the pan you cooked the fish in, melt the butter in it, whisk in the flour and gently cook for 2 minutes. Gradually add the strained fish stock little by little, whisking all the time. When you have a smooth sauce turn the heat to its lowest setting and let the sauce gently cook for 5 minutes. Then whisk in the creme fraiche, followed by the cornichons, parley and dill. Give it all a good seasoning and remove it from the heat.

To make the rosti, peel the potatoes and, using the coarse side of a grater, grate them into long shreds into a bowl. Add the capers and the melted butter and, using two forks, lightly toss everything together so that the potatoes get a good coating of butter. Now remove the skin from the white fish and divide it into chunks, quite large if possible, and combine the fish with the sauce. Next, if you're going to cook the fish pie more or less immediately, all you do is add the raw scallops and prawns to the fish mixture, then spoon it into the well buttered baking dish. Sprinkle the rosti on top, spreading it out as evenly as possible and not pressing it down too firmly. Then finally scatter the cheese over the surface and bake on a high shelf of the oven for 35-40mins.

If you want to make the fish pie in advance, this is possible as long as you remember to let the sauce get completely cold before adding the cooled white fish and raw scallops and prawns. When the topping is on, cover the dish loosely and refrigerate the pie until you're ready to cook it. Give it an extra 5-10 minutes cooking time.

Serve with peas. Always peas with fish pie. It's the law. (Becca)



Luxurious Layered Salmon

This started featuring regularly on the menu when Jo & Grant were home from New Zealand (in those halcyon days when Jo ate fish! 😊)
Lovely for a special meal, or as part of a buffet. (Becca)

I bet those fish didn't think they were halcyon days 😊 (jojo)

Serves 6-8, generously

Ingredients

1 kg side salmon
20g butter
3-4 tblsp vermouth
200g approx smoked salmon (may need more if slices are thick)

For the mousse:

400g salmon fillet – very cold, freeze for 10 minutes before making mousse
300g whipping or double cream (very cold)
100g creme fraiche (very cold)
1 tblsp lemon juice
Pinch cayenne pepper
Salt

Method:

Blend all the mousse ingredients in a food processor until smooth.

Line a baking tray with oiled foil.

Place the whole salmon fillet on the tray.

Divide the salmon mousse into three equal portions and spread 1/3 over the salmon.

Cover with half of the smoked salmon slices.

Repeat with another layer of mousse, then another layer of smoked salmon, then finish with a layer of mousse.

Chill until you are ready to cook it.

Preheat the oven to 170°C (top and bottom heat, not fan)

Dot the salmon with 20g butter, sprinkle with the vermouth, then cook for 30 minutes in the centre of the oven.

Allow to rest for a few minutes before serving as its easier to slice.

Serve with a hollandaise sauce or salsa verde.

Also excellent cold!

Salad Nicoise

Salad Nicoise is the classic of all Paula classics in my opinion. Pop said again, and again that 'he could eat it every day', and I think I could have too. It also covered Pop's 2 favourite kitchen jobs, toping and tailing green beans and boiling and peeling eggs. (jojo)

Ingredients

Mixed lettuce leaves
Boiled waxy potatoes
Green beans, topped and tailed and steamed so still crunchy
Cucumber, cubed
Sweetcorn, tinned or frozen is fine, but sliced from the kernel is even better
Spring onions, finely sliced
Boiled eggs, peeled and halved
Tomatoes, chunked
Canned tuna in spring water
Anchovies, salted or marinated, or both
Olives, whichever are you favourites, but the marinated hot olives, now cold would be wonderful
Mother's vinaigrette

Method

Gather all your ingredients and place them in a flatish salad bowl starting with the leaves and working your way through the ingredients until you get to the Olives.

This is not the kind of salad you can toss as you don't want to ruin the look, so we place the dressing bottle on the table and let people dress their own plates. However, you could toss the first four ingredients together in dressing first and then place everything else on top, then put the dressing on the table for anyone who would like extra.

And being very greedy I've always been keen on a wee dollop of mayo on my egg.



**Please note slightly under cooked egg yolk. Oozy and delicious and not at all bouncy!
(Becca)**

Aubergine with Red Onion Salad

This was a more recent addition to the collection of classics, coming from Nigellissima, one of Nigella Lawsons fine books. If you haven't made it before it's a great one for a buffet table as it can be made some hours in advance.

Serves 6 as a side dish.

Ingredients

500g aubergines (Nigella suggest baby ones, but regular size work just fine)
3 tblsp olive oil
2 teasp dried oregano
1 small red onion, sliced into thin half moons
3 tblsp red wine vinegar
Salt
4 tblsp olive oil
1 clove garlic, peeled
1 ½ tblsp old water
A few sprigs of fresh oregano (optional)

Method

Preheat the oven to 220°C fan bake.

Slice the aubergines into half lengthways leaving the stalk in place (this is for aesthetics only, don't feel the urge to eat them). Then slice the halves, lengthways again, into 3 or 4 wedges. If using baby aubergines, just slicing them in half will be perfect.

Pour the 3 tblsp of olive oil into a very shallow roasting tin, sprinkle in the dried oregano, add the aubergines, cut side down, and swirl them gently around. Turn them so they are cut side up and put the tray in the hot oven for 15 minutes, by which time they should be tender and turning gold in parts.

As soon as the aubergines are in the oven, put the fine halfmoons of red onion in a bowl and cover with the red wine vinegar and a half teasp of salt, and scrunch it up.

Remove the cooked aubergines to a platter, and now whisk into the vinegary onions the 4 tbsps of olive oil, then crush and add the garlic and finally whisk in the cold water.

Pour this over the warm aubergine using your hands to arrange the glowing pink onion and leave to cool before you eat, scattering with fresh oregano, if you have any, when serving.

Nigella leaves it there, but I have been known to serve it on a bed of rocket.



Egg Mayonnaise

Pop had one or two jobs in the kitchen he particularly liked – topping and tailing beans and shelling hard boiled eggs, he would actually get upset if you shelled the eggs before he got there – funny.

If you're Becca you'll have the yolks soft, so 6.5 mins in boiling water, if you're Pop you'll want them cooked until they'd bounce, so at least 10 mins in boiling water. Me, I'll take them any way you want to serve them. (JoJo)

Ingredients

Eggs (either one or half per person, depending on what you serve it with)

Hellmans Mayonnaise (or I like to make my own)

Natural yoghurt

S & P

Sumac or paprika

Chives or microgreens

Method

Hard boil the eggs, cool and shell them.

Slice them in half and lay them on a plate yolk side down.

Mix mayo, yoghurt and season with salt and pepper. You can thin it with a little milk if you feel it's too thick, you want the mixture to coat the eggs. Then spoon this mixture over each of the eggs.

Sprinkle with paprika or sumac and finely chopped chives or microgreens (or both).

Tomato and Red Onion Salad

It's simple, but effective. (jojo)

We now also go for multiple vinegars, Olive oil and loads of mixed fresh herbs (Olly)

Serves 6

Ingredients:

9 Ripe tomatoes, core removed and thinly sliced

½ red onion, sliced into thin rounds

Mother's vinaigrette

S&P

Method

Place the sliced tomatoes on a large plate or platter so that they overlap haphazardly.

Scatter the red onion rounds across the top of the tomatoes.

Season with Salt and Pepper

Drizzle generously with vinaigrette

Let it sit for a little while, maybe an hour, for the flavours to mingle, but too long and it will turn watery.

Carrot Slaw

A really popular and versatile salad that will go with just about anything. Extra lovely with lamb dishes. Can be made hours ahead and keeps well. This amount will serve about 6-8 people.

Ingredients

400g carrots, peeled and grated
4 tbsp olive oil
2 cloves garlic, crushed
½ tsp caraway seeds, bashed
½ tsp ground cumin
½ tsp paprika
¾ tsp harissa paste
½ tsp sugar
3 tbsp lemon juice
2 tbsp parsley, finely chopped
2 tbsp fresh mint, finely chopped

Method

In a small pan cook the garlic, caraway, cumin, paprika, harissa and sugar in the olive oil until fragrant, about one to two minutes. Remove from the heat and add the lemon juice and a pinch of salt. Pour over the grated carrots and mix. Add the herbs and mix. Cover and leave to infuse in the fridge for at least an hour, but be sure to bring to back to room temperature before serving.



Carrot slaw, served here on a flatbread with some slow cooked lamb shoulder, pickled red onions, and tzatziki. Yum.

Potatoes O'Brien

Christmas Eve chez Saxby was glazed ham, Potatoes O'Brien and braised red cabbage. (Peas, definitely peas. Becca)

Mother glazed her ham with grainy mustard and honey. It was followed by snooker, the Royal Oak, midnight mass and more snooker. (Jojo)

Serves 6 to 8 (so 7 😊)

Ingredients

1 large brown onion
3 fat cloves garlic, crushed
Oil and butter
1 large red pepper
1 large green pepper
1kg waxy potatoes
1 tblsp plain white flour
S&P
200ml pouring cream
200ml milk
100g mature cheddar or parmesan (or a mix)

Method

Preheat the oven to 190°C

Peel and roughly chop the onion and sauté in a pan, on a medium heat, with a little oil and a knob of butter. Fry until the edges of the onions start to colour and brown, add the garlic and cook for another minute.

Meanwhile, cut the peppers into smallish pieces roughly 1.5cm squared, and then add these to the pan with the onions and garlic. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally, while you peel and cut the potatoes into 2cm square cubes. In a large bowl, toss the cubes of potatoes in 1 tblsp of plain white flour. Throw in the onion, pepper mixture, S&P and toss. In a measuring jug mix the milk and cream together. Empty the contents of the bowl into the baking dish you wish to serve it in and pour the cream and milk mix over the

top. Sprinkle on the grated cheese and place in the centre of the oven for about an hour.



Plastic Potatoes

Plastic potatoes deserve another name. They are delicious, but as far as I am aware you can only make them in France, unless you know anywhere else that vacuum packs boiled insipid potatoes. And they are insipid, until you do this to them and then they are a thing of delicious beauty.

If I was to make them, I would leave out the lardons, I'd add some chopped sundried tomatoes a minute or two before the end instead. But apparently lardons are best. (jojo)

Serves 6

Ingredients

2 packets of vacuum-packed potatoes
A large dollop of butter
Olive Oil
200g Lardons
Garlic – 6 cloves

Method

Take the potatoes out of their packaging and rinse them in a colander. Leave to dry. Peel and crush the garlic.

Melt the butter and a glug of olive oil (the oil will stop the butter from burning) in a large, heavy based, frying pan.

Carefully (so you don't get splashed) add the potatoes, lardons and garlic to the pan.

Cook on a medium heat, stirring and scraping the lovely crunchy bits off the bottom of the pan every so often – but not too often or you won't get the lovely crunchy bits. They are ready when the potatoes are golden and hot through – 20 minutes ish?

Hazelnut Meringue with Raspberries

Another Mother lunch party classic. I've only tried making it once, quite a long time ago, and in fact the only time I've tried making baked meringue (as opposed to lemon meringue pie which is quite different and I am very good at if I do say so myself), and I thought it was a terrible failure. Very recently my friend Amanda, here in NZ, told me her favourite pudding I ever made was 'that meringue thing, and I think there were berries and nuts in it' - so clearly I didn't do such a bad job after all.

Grant and I grow hazelnuts and raspberries in our garden, so I shall have to give it another go.....I gave it another go. Photo below. (JoJo)

Requires 2 x 8 inch sandwich tins

Ingredients

4 egg whites
255 g / 9oz castor sugar
3 – 4 drops vanilla essence
½ tsp vinegar
130g / 4.5oz hazelnuts (shelled, browned and ground)
½ pint double cream
½ lb raspberries (fresh or frozen)
Icing sugar (for dusting)

Method

Preheat the oven to 190°C.

Butter and flour the sides of the sandwich tins and line the bottom with a disc of non-stick cooking paper.

Whisk the egg whites until stiff with an electric beater, add the sugar 1 tablespoon at a time and continue beating until the mixture is very stiff and stands in peaks. Whisk in the vanilla essence and vinegar, then fold in prepared nuts.

Divide the mixture between the two prepared tins and smooth the top with a palette knife; bake 30-40 minutes but no longer. The top of the meringue will be crisp and the inside soft like a marshmallow. Turn on to wire racks to cool.

Top Tip - Always fill the meringues at least 3 hours before serving; the cake will then cut into portions without splintering.

Whisk the cream, sweeten and flavour with extra sugar and vanilla; Cover the bottom layer of meringue with the cream. Pile the raspberries on top of the cream. Then put on the top layer of meringue and dust the top with icing sugar.



White Chocolate and Red Fruit Trifle

Becksy insists this is one for the book, but I can't say I've ever had it. I guess that's what happens when you bugger off to other side of the world for quarter of a century, you miss out on pudding. (JoJo)

Make this a day ahead so the flavours have time to develop.

Serves 8 – 10

Ingredients

3 x 500g bags frozen mixed berries
125g / 4oz caster sugar, plus 1 level tsp
250g / 9oz biscotti or cantuccini biscuits
5 tblsp dessert wine or fruit juice

White chocolate topping

450ml / $\frac{3}{4}$ pint double cream
200g / 7oz good quality white chocolate, such as Lindt, broken into pieces
500g carton fresh custard (remove from fridge 20 mins before using)
500ml carton crème fraîche

Method

Put the mixed berries in a large pan with 125g / 4oz caster sugar and heat gently for about 5 min until the sugar has dissolved and the berries have thawed.

Drain berry mixture through a sieve with a bowl underneath to catch the juices. Return the juices to the pan and bring to the boil; simmer for about 10min or until reduced to about 150ml ($\frac{1}{4}$ pint). Mix with the berries and leave to cool in the bowl.

Lay the biscotti in the bottom of a 3 litre ($5 \frac{1}{4}$ pint) trifle dish and spoon the dessert wine or fruit juice on top, followed by the cooled berries.

Lightly whip the cream, place half in the fridge and leave the remainder at room temperature. Put the chocolate in a bowl over a pan of gently simmering

water and stir until melted. Pour into a cold bowl, gradually fold in the custard a little at a time, then fold in the room temperature cream. Doing it in this order stops the chocolate separating.

Cover the fruit evenly with the custard mixture. Beat the crème fraîche until smooth; fold in the reserved chilled whipped cream and extra sugar, then spoon over the custard. Chill for at least 2 hours. Remove from fridge 20min before serving.

Papa's Rice Pudding

Papa always served this after Sunday roast lunch with his home-made apple pie. Sadly, we don't have the recipe for the pie. I love it served with plain stewed apple, or just au natural. (JoJo) The Saxby children would all fight over the delicious skin that formed on the top... Luckily the Soskin children didn't. (Olly)

Serves 6 or more or less. In our house it feeds 2.

Ingredients

3 heaped tblsp pudding rice
3 heaped tblsp sugar
a good grating of nutmeg
1 x 410g can Evaporated milk (not condensed, it won't end well)
3 empty evaporated milk cans of cold water.

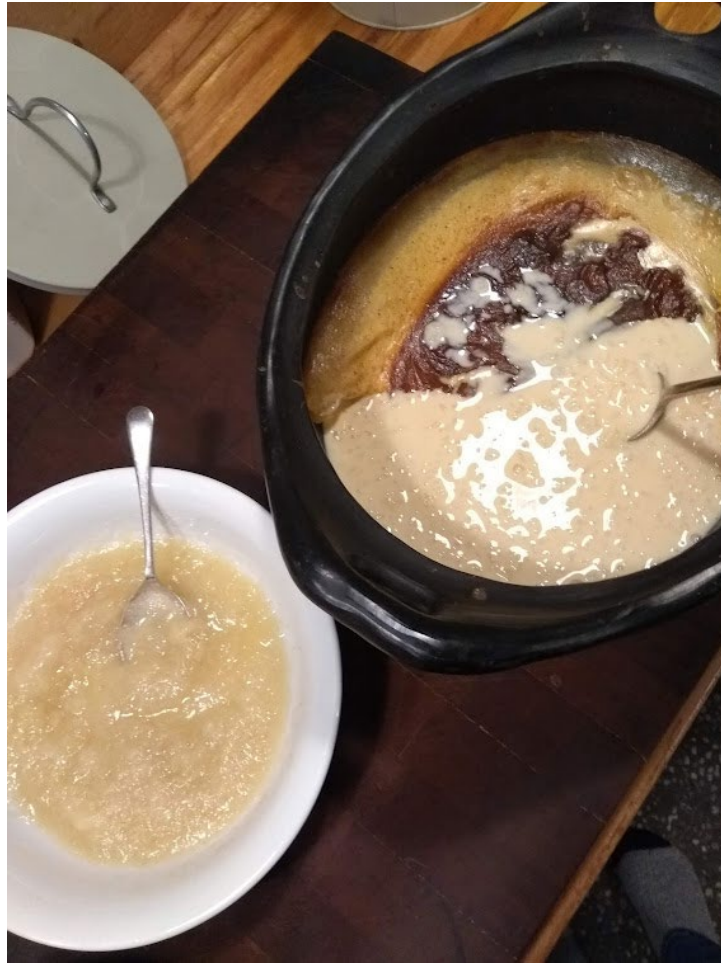
Method

Preheat oven to 170°C

In a bowl that will take at least 3 pints of liquid, perhaps a bit bigger, mix the rice, sugar and nutmeg.

Pour in the evaporated milk and water and stir.

Bake in the middle of the oven for 2 ½ hours.



Stewed apple and Rice pud – delicious.

Saxby Trifle

Christmas has traditions. Everyone has their own. And one of ours is Saxby Trifle.

My first Christmas with Grant's family, I introduced them to our trifle. Grant's grandmother, Maisie, who didn't normally drink alcohol, had three helpings. I think she liked the tradition, although it was slightly hard to tell with all the slurring.

When Olly, Becca and I were at home in the Corner House after Pop had passed away, we had to choose which things of Ma and Pa's we would like to keep. It was very amicable, there was nothing we argued over and if two people wanted the same thing then we easily came to an agreement, until it came to the trifle bowl. Frankly, at this point I'm surprised we're still talking. Becca now has the trifle bowl! Just saying. (jojo)

Outrageous slander 😊 (Becca)

Ingredients

1 ½ boxes of trifle sponges. - You can't buy these in NZ. You have to make sponge and let it go stale, it's not quite so good, but it's still awesome

1 jar of Strawberry jam - I used raspberry once, it was very nice but i was absolutely told off by my mother. Honestly, you'd think I'd added fish sauce for the fuss that was made.

1/3 bottle of medium sherry - but don't worry if your hand slips and over half a bottle falls in, that happens to me every time.

1 pint custard - it has to be Birds, which is obvious to most of you, but, again, in NZ, you can't get it. I have to get it shipped in. Life is tough.

1 pint cream - whipped

Slivered almonds, toasted and scattered to garnish - a new NZ addition, as of this year, it's good. Give it a try Becksy and Ol before you scoff.

Method

Slice the whole trifle sponges down the middle long ways and smother with raspberry, oh no I mean strawberry, jam.

Sandwich the two halves of the sponges back together and cut into individual sponges and then in half again. Throw all of the chunks of jam filled sponge into a glass bowl.

Slosh the sherry all over the top of the sponges.

Make the custard according to the directions of Mr Bird.

Meanwhile, decide you can't possibly have put enough sherry on the sponges, and slosh some more on for good measure.

Pour the hot custard over the sponge and using a table knife cut through the sponges adding a stirring action every now and again. You want the trifle to still have some chunky bits of sponge but you also want most of it mixed together. Put it in the fridge or a cool place overnight.

The next day, whip the cream to soft peaks, and spread it over the trifle, place it into the fridge until serving. Toast the slivered almonds and sprinkle over the cream just before serving.



Saxby Trifle at its best – for breakfast on Boxing Day!

Grape Brulée

My word, here we are again with another 1970's classic. This is a good pudding to make if you have seedless grapes or children who you can make de-seed the grapes, which they are willing to do because they like the pudding so much. It's super quick (other than the deseeding, which is very therapeutic), but best to make it the day before you want it, to let the flavours and grape juices mingle. I'm so sorry, the recipe is very vague, I was 10 the last time I made it. (jojo)

Ingredients and Method

Grapes – cut in half, de-seeded and enough to cover the bottom of a dish that you're happy to put under the grill. The grapes need to be roughly 2 or 3 cm deep in the dish. The edges of the dish need to be at least slightly higher.

Whipping cream. The cream needs to be whipped to soft peaks (the cream needs to be soft enough to fall through the grapes, but firm enough to withstand having sugar sprinkled on top without it falling through) and then spooned over the grapes. The cream needs to cover all of the grapes, but not too thickly, or when you eat it, it's all cream which is too full on.

Soft brown sugar. Sprinkle the cream with the sugar so that it's scattered. It doesn't matter if it's a bit clumpy in places, but you do still want to be able to see some of the cream (see photo).

Place the dish under a hot grill until the sugar has melted and starts to bubble.

Leave to cool and then place it into the fridge until you need it – 8 hours will be fine, 24 hours will be better.



Rhubarb and Frangipane Tart

Two of Pop's favourite things almond tart and rhubarb. I have no further comment. (jojo)

Serves 6 to 8

Ingredients

Short crust pastry of your choice, to line a 24cm flan dish. You can buy it, you can make it, it's completely up to you.

½ cup whole natural skinless almonds

100g ground almonds

50g butter, soft

100g soft brown sugar

½ teasp vanilla essence

3 eggs

1 ½ cups rhubarb, chopped into 2cm long pieces (you can use other fruit if you prefer)

A handful of slivered almonds

1 tblsp melted butter

Method

Heat oven to 180°C

Line the flan dish with pastry, prick it with a fork a few times and rest it in the fridge for 20 minutes before blind baking it for 20 minutes or so, lined with baking paper and blind baking stones, or dried beans or whatever.

For the filling, blitz the whole and ground almonds together in the kitchen whiz. I know this seems odd, but do it anyway.

Cream the butter and sugar together for bloody ages, then add the vanilla and eggs and beat for another minute or so. If the eggs curdle, don't worry about it, just keep going, it'll be fine. Next, fold the almond mixture into the buttery almondy mix.

Sprinkle 1 cup of the rhubarb into the baked pastry case. Spread the almond mixture over the top by dolloping spoonfuls over the rhubarb and then

spreading it with a fork. Dot the remaining rhubarb on top of the frangipane and sprinkle with the slivered almonds. Then brush over the top with a little melted butter, including the edges of the pastry.

Bake for 30 minutes or until cooked through and golden on top.

Serve warm or cold with cream/natural yoghurt/ice-cream/custard or just by itself, however, you are only allowed a fork to eat it.



Bread & Butter Pudding

Arguably the most requested Sunday lunch pudding, if Budge Wells was expected for lunch, anyway.

A great base recipe that can be used with panettone, pain au chocolate, croissants, brioche. Or just stick to the classic. Mum always did. Although there is no mention of alcohol in the original Robert Carrier recipe that she used, and there was ALWAYS a decent slug of something in hers. (Becca)

I've just made it. I really thought we should have a photo of it, so I took one for the team. You can thank me when you see me.

So, I'm going to make one alteration to the recipe below. Push the currants, between the slices of bread. I didn't have currants so I used sultanas, but I wasn't the slightest bit surprised when I had to pick the burnt sultanas off the top, I can't imagine that currants would be any different. (jojo)

If Budge was there when this was served for lunch, and there were leftovers, you could guarantee he'd be round again the next day on some pretext or another, just so he could get to the leftovers (Pippa).

Serves 4 (probably only 2 if Budge is coming for lunch)

Ingredients

4 large slices white bread
25g soft butter + extra for greasing dish
1 tsp grated orange zest
3 large eggs
275ml cream
275ml milk
4 tblsp caster sugar
½ tsp vanilla essence
Good slug of Cointreau or Grand Marnier
4 tblsp currants
15g butter, melted
Icing sugar or caster sugar to dust

Method

Heat oven to 170°C

Remove the crusts from the bread. Spread each slice generously with the butter and cut each into 3 fingers. Stack these next to each other in a well buttered oblong dish; the dish should be about half full. Sprinkle with the grated orange zest.

Beat the eggs in a mixing bowl then add the cream, milk, caster sugar, vanilla and booze. Mix well and strain over the bread. Allow the pudding to stand for 15-20 minutes or until the bread is well soaked.

Sprinkle with currants and brush the soaked bread with the melted butter. Place the dish in a baking tin two thirds full of boiling water. Bake in the oven for 40 minutes, or until the pudding is firm to the touch. Sprinkle with sugar and serve warm.



Apricot Clafoutis

Pop would request this pudding every time he arrived in France. It's a super versatile recipe and you can use just about any fruit, but apricot was his favourite.

Serves 8

Ingredients

20g unsalted butter, softened
30g plain flour
500g fresh ripe apricots, halved
50g vanilla sugar, or caster sugar

For the batter:

100ml milk
1 tsp vanilla extract or paste
150ml whipping cream
60ml amaretto (optional but why wouldn't you?)
4 eggs
120g caster sugar
a pinch of salt
25g plain flour

Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Use the softened butter to grease the inside of an ovenproof dish. Sprinkle this with the flour, then shake off the excess. This will give you a non-stick surface. Arrange the halved apricots in the dish then sprinkle with the vanilla sugar.

Combine the milk, cream, vanilla and amaretto in a jug and set aside for the flavours to combine.

In a bowl whisk the eggs, sugar and salt until the mixture triples in volume. Fold in the flour, and then the milk mixture. Pour the batter over the apricots then place into the preheated oven and bake for 30-35 minutes, until just set.

Remove from the oven, allow to cool slightly, dust with a little more caster sugar and serve warm with creme fraiche or cream.



Fig & cherry clafoutis

Oranges in Grand Marnier

Ma must have loved these, they seemed to feature in the dinner party pudding spread an awful lot. On that note, if I have friends for dinner, I make a pudding. Ma made always 3, what's that about, is it a generational thing? How many do you make? (jojo)

I'm pretty sure they'd go really well with the bread and butter pud.

Serves 8

Ingredients

6 ripe oranges
2 tblsp granulated sugar
Juice of ½ lemon
3 tblsp Grand Marnier

Method

Using a sharp paring knife, peel the oranges of all rind, pith and inner skin. Cut the oranges crosswise into ½ inch rounds. Place rounds on a serving platter in one or two layers. Sprinkle the slices with oranges zest, sugar, lemon juice and Grand Marnier. Baste the fruit with the liquid.

Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight. Baste or gently toss periodically. Serve chilled.

Cyprus Pudding

And these 1970's puds just keep on coming. But this one is courtesy of Aunty Alison. We don't eat this very often these days, I don't know why not, it's delicious and simple. It can also be made with tinned peaches, which is how I remember it, but Alison says, no, definitely mandarins. Alison also fed me my first curry, I was probably about 10 or maybe younger. It wasn't hot, but it was delicious and I have loved curry ever since. It is funny the things that stick in your head isn't it. (jojo)

Ingredients

400g of digestive biscuits

150g Butter – melted

1 large or 2 small cans of mandarin segments in syrup. (I tried juice, don't do that, it's not good, it needs the sweetness of the syrup).

Whipping cream.

Crush the biscuits, a food processor is the best way to go here. But if you want to put them in a bag and bash them with a rolling pin – go for it. However, they do need to be fine crumb.

Melt the butter and stir it into the biscuit crumbs and then push the mixture firmly into the base of a pretty dish. Using the bottom of a glass to press them down will give you a solid base with a flat surface.

It's not going in the oven so any dish will do. Mother used a low sided cut glass dish so you could see the different layers.

Cover the biscuit base with the mandarin pieces, saving a few for decoration.

Whip the cream and spread it over the mandarins and garnish the top. Place it in the fridge until you need it but I would suggest it would need at least an hour to get the base to set. Kai ekei to echete.

Orange Soufflé

So, here's the thing. None of us have made this recipe, it's a Gordon Ramsay recipe that I borrowed from one of his books that I have. But there is a reason that it is important that there is an orange soufflé recipe in this book.

Apparently, once, Pop made an orange soufflé from the oranges that grew in the garden at their Tower Lane house in LA. He made it once, I'm sure it was very nice, however, he talked about that soufflé for the rest of his life. Always suggesting he'll make another, and we knew he wouldn't, and he didn't. In fairness to Pop, he became very good at looking after Ma and cooking for both of them. So, this one's for you Pop.

If Pop can do it, you can do it. I might even give it a go myself, they sound bloody good. (jojo)

Preparing soufflé dishes

As this recipe is light and delicate, it is more suited to individual soufflés than one large one. So, you need 6 to 8 ramekins depending on the size of your dishes. (6 x 150ml ramekins or 8 x 120ml ramekins).

To ensure the soufflé mixture can climb up the sides of the dish, you first need to brush the insides with **soft butter** then a fine crumb mixture. If the ramekins aren't prepared properly, the soufflé may not rise evenly. Using a pastry brush apply a generous layer of soft butter using vertical strokes. Chill until set.

Brush a second layer of butter in the same way just before applying the coating.

For the coating, use **4-6 tbsp ground almonds or hazelnuts** toasted if preferred, **or grated dark chocolate**. Tip it into the dish and rotate to ensure the side and base are evenly and liberally coated.

Ingredients

Creme Patissiere ingredients (the base of the soufflé - makes 320ml)

150ml milk

100ml double cream

40g caster sugar

15g plain flour

10g cornflour

3 large free-range egg yolks

Then to complete the soufflé

Grated zest and juice of 2 large oranges
500ml fresh orange juice
3 tblsp Grand Marnier
2 large free range egg whites
50g caster sugar

Method

This base is very thick, almost the consistency of choux paste. It must be both cooked thoroughly and perfectly smooth when you incorporate it into the soufflé mixture.

To make the creme pâtissiere, heat the milk and cream in a heavy based saucepan with 1 tablespoon of the sugar until it starts to scald. Meanwhile, sift the flour and cornflour together.

Beat the egg yolks and remaining sugar together in a large bowl, then beat in the flour, a third at a time.

Slowly pour on a third of the hot creamy milk, whisking well so the mixture remains smooth. Whisk this back into the pan.

Simmer gently, whisking continuously, for about 3-4 minutes until smooth and thickened. Mix in the orange zest.

Put all of the orange juice into a saucepan and boil until reduced to 200ml. Stir into the cream pat and set aside to cool. Mix in the Grand Marnier.

Meanwhile you can coat the ramekins and preheat the oven to 190°C.

When almost ready to serve, whisk the egg whites in a bowl until they form firm peaks, then gradually whisk in the sugar. Carefully fold this meringue into the citrus mixture and spoon into the prepared ramekins. Level the tops with a palette knife or the back of a spoon. Place on a baking tray and bake until risen and golden, allowing 12 to 15 minutes for small ramekins and 15 to 18 minutes for larger ones.

Serve at once.

Pig Food

(also known as Millionaire's Shortbread)

Mum's mummy Megan, known to just about everyone as Mama, was an amazing baker. The tea trolley would be wheeled out laden with delicious yumminess, but the one we always fought over was the Millionaire's Shortbread. Saxby's and Soskin's alike, we would be willing to fight to the death (almost) for the last piece. Hence it became known as Pig Food in our family because that's how we behaved around it.

This is actually Jolene Lynch's recipe because sadly Mama's didn't get passed on (how did we let this happen?! 😞)

For those of you who don't know her, Jolene (aka Akey Bakey), is a fabulous cook and baker who lives across the road from The Cornerhouse. Once Pop realised that he had such a talented neighbour she was roped into doing all sorts of things for them – canapés, bread, and of course her fabulous cakes.

Thank you for sharing this recipe, Jolene. We love you (and your cakes!)

(Becca)

Ingredients

175g unsalted butter
75g caster sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
225g plain or GF flour

For the caramel

200g unsalted butter
1 can condensed milk (usually 400g)
100g golden syrup

To finish

200g 70% chocolate
50g white chocolate

Method

Preheat the oven to 180C and line a 20cm square cake tin.

Cube butter and put it plus sugar, flour & vanilla in a food processor. Pulse to a sandy crumb. Press the dough into the cake tin.

Bake in the oven for 5 mins then reduce the oven to 150C and bake for 35 mins. Cool in the tin.

Put the condensed milk, butter & golden syrup in a pan over a medium high heat. Stir all the time with a wooden spoon. As soon as it starts to bubble, turn the heat down to medium and stir continuously for 10-12 mins. This will very easily burn so be careful!

Pour the caramel mixture over the shortbread. Chill in the fridge until the caramel has cooled and hardened slightly.

Melt the dark chocolate in the microwave for 1 min. Check and stir & cook for another min. Once melted, pour the chocolate over the caramel. Do the same with the white chocolate. Use a teaspoon to drizzle over the dark choc. Shake the pan to level out and then use a cocktail stick to create swirls or feathers. (I didn't have any white chocolate so I covered the caramel with 70% dark chocolate then sprinkled it liberally with Maldon smoked salt flakes for that salted caramel vibe. Yum.)

Chill in the fridge then cut into cubes. It's hard to cut the chocolate without it splintering (which is fine if you intend to keep it all for yourself), but if you want it to look tidy heat up a knife before cutting into it to get a clean cut. Try not to eat it all at once, unless your cousins are there and then it's completely permissible.



Pig food. Worth fighting for.

Carrot Cake

Turns out Mother loved cake. I don't know if she got a taste for it as she got older or if she had always loved cake but didn't allow herself to indulge too often. Possibly she decided that having Parkinsons was so rubbish, that she might as well eat cake whenever she liked. And good on her for that. I have to say I was delighted to eat cake with her. On my last visit before she passed away, I remember suggesting that maybe we should share a piece, which was frankly rejected as a ridiculous idea. So, we had a piece each.

I think Mother got the recipe for Carrot Cake when we lived in The States, when people in Britain hadn't quite grasped the fact that you could put vegetables in baking. Now, of course, it's common place. But still, fairly recently, I had a friend who told me how delicious my chocolate and zucchini cake was, until he found out that zucchini was courgette and then he wouldn't eat another bite. Nutter! (jjo)

It's cake sized, so it serves 8, or 10, but maybe 6.

Ingredients and Method

Preheat oven to 180°C

2 cups of wholemeal flour (I use gluten free white flour and it works really well)
2 tsp baking powder
1.5 tsp baking soda
1 tsp salt
2 tsp cinnamon (personally I like my carrot cake with lots of spice so I add more and I also throw some mace or mixed spice in)

- Sift the above ingredients together into a large bowl.

2 cups brown sugar
1.5 cups peanut oil
4 eggs

- Beat together well, the above 3 ingredients in a separate bowl.
- Mix the 2 bowls together. Then stir in

2 cups grated carrot
227g can pineapple pieces (or crushed pineapple is fine too)
2 cups walnut pieces.

- The original recipe says to pour the mixture into 2 greased and lined cake pans and bake for 35 to 45 mins. (or longer if using gluten free flour). However, mother, and I, and no doubt Becca and Olly too, just use one large tin and then only put the icing on the top of the cake and not in the middle. Less faffing about, and just as delicious.

Cream Cheese Icing

This is a bit controversial. Becksy is probs going to tell me off, but I really don't think you need as much butter or icing sugar as this recipe suggests. I like the sharpness of the cream cheese and I think too much butter and sugar hides it. So, here's the recipe and you can decide how much butter and sugar to add. (jojo)

Top Tip – the butter must be lovely and soft. If it is not, you will get lumps of it in your icing that will be very difficult to get out.

Ingredients

455g icing sugar (sifted, definitely sifted, don't try and get out of it, sift it!)
115g butter (room temperature – this is summer time room temperature or winter time with a lovely roaring fire or delightful central heating. But this is definitely not, oh no I forgot to get it out of the fridge so I'll just stick it in the microwave room temperature – that is not room temperature, that is a puddle.)

227g cream cheese (I would recommend you go for Philadelphia; it has a certain freedom to it)

1 tsp vanilla essence

Zest of 1 Orange. (This is not in the original recipe; however, we live and learn and I think you'll find it's worth adding).

Method

Cream the SOFT butter with the cream cheese and vanilla (and orange zest if using). Slowly add the SIFTED icing sugar spoonful by spoonful. Spread over the cold cake, and decorate however you fancy. Bloody lovely!



Banana and Chocolate Cake

I think it only fair that Olly weighs in here. This cake, after all, is his childhood.....(jojo)

This really is a super easy cake to make and I took one back to school every 3 weeks and it never failed to go down a treat. I would say that you should only cook it for about 45 minutes, but essentially, it takes better if the centre is nice and moist. The older the bananas, the better. This cake is also a good way to get rid of a surplus of easter egg chocolate. (Olly)

What on earth is surplus easter egg chocolate?! (jojo)

This cake is super easy as it's made in the blender. It is best kept for a day before serving. By then it will be deliciously moist close-textured cake.

Ingredients

225g SR flour
½ teasp baking powder
40g drinking chocolate
2 eggs
4 tblsp milk
150g caster sugar
100g soft margarine (or butter)
2 small ripe bananas, cut into 5cm pieces
Milk and white chocolate chips or chopped up chocolate of any sort

Method

Oven to 180°C.

Sift the flour, baking powder and chocolate powder into a large mixing bowl. Place all the other ingredients in the blender in the order given. Blend for about 20 seconds on a high speed. The mixture will look curdled. Pour into the dry ingredients in the bowl and mix together by hand.

Turn into a greased 18cm/7inch round cake tin. Bake in a preheated oven for about 1 hour or until cooked in the centre – test with a skewer. Turn out onto a wire tray and leave to cool.

Give it to your 7 year old child to take to boarding school to appease your guilt.
(A bit harsh, jojo! Olly)



Christmas Mince Pies with a Marzipan Centre

Ma put marzipan into the middle of her mince pies, and that is a good thing. However, she did buy the pastry and the jar of mincemeat, and who can blame her, there is enough going on at Christmas time. However, I make the mincemeat and the pastry, and so I'm giving you my recipe. In fact, the mincemeat recipe was given to me by Grant's mother, Margaret, and the pastry from my good friend Emma, and I just put them together, so I can't really claim them as mine. (jojo)

Pastry

This short crust pastry is incredibly short. It is extremely buttery and fabulously delicious. Make sure you hand out plates to catch any crumbs. You will require a food processor to make it.

This quantity of pastry will make 20 mince pies.

Ingredients

250g butter, fridge cold
2 cups plain white flour
1 tblsp white castor sugar

Method

Put all the ingredients in the food processor and process until it comes together in a ball. Rest, in the fridge, covered, for 20 minutes (that's the pastry not you).

Mincemeat

I double the recipe and then always have left overs which I keep in a sealed jar, in the fridge until the following year, which then always tastes amazing.

Ingredients

2 small apples
1 cup sultanas
1 cup mixed dried fruit
½ lemon, rind and juice
Rind of ½ orange
½ cup soft brown sugar
1 teasp ground mixed spice
1 teasp ground cinnamon
½ teasp salt
¼ teasp ground cloves
¼ cup of brandy, whiskey, rum, cointreau, amaretto or any other spirit you like

Method

Using the food processor, first chop up the thinly peeled orange and lemon rind with the sugar, then add the chunks of unpeeled apple and process with the metal chopping blade into pieces the size of sultanas. Add the dried fruit and process until chopped as finely as desired. Add the remaining ingredients and process briefly to mix. Spoon in to sterilised jars, pour extra spirits over the surface, cover tightly and store in a cool place for up to 3 months (or a year if you are me).

Jo's Mince Pies

Ingredients

Margaret's Mincemeat

Emma's Short crust pastry

Milk to glaze

Butter to grease the trays

1 packet of marzipan (which you are going to buy or look up a recipe elsewhere
)

Method

Preheat your oven to 180°C

Your pastry is now in the fridge resting. Your mincemeat was made several weeks ago, if not months, go find it.

Gather up the marzipan, butter and milk, a rolling pin, mincemeat tart oven trays, pastry cutters (one large and one small or as you can see in the photo, I like a star on the top) and a pastry brush.

Butter the oven trays.

Now as I said the pastry is very short, so just roll out pieces of it at a time, on a floured board. If you try to roll out the whole thing at once, it just becomes a bit of a nightmare. (If you are using this pastry to make a base for 1 large tart, be it mincemeat or other, which I thoroughly recommend, because everyone loves it, cut slices off your ball of pastry, about ½ cm thick, and press them into a butter flan dish, to form a pastry base.)

For the pastry rounds, on the bottom of the tarts, they need to be reasonably thick, so they don't break when you take them out of the tin, about 4mm. The top crust can be thinner.

Cut rounds out of the rolled pastry pieces using your larger pastry cutter. (I'm hoping you've already measured that it is the right size for you tin, slightly larger than the hole for the tart.) Place the pastry rounds in the holes for the tarts, but no need to push it down too much, they'll sort themselves out in the oven. Put 1 level teasp of mincemeat on the pastry base and then a small ball of marzipan, on that. Cover with another level teasp of mincemeat. Do not over fill the tart case. Then either cut rounds of pastry with your smaller cutter and place on the top, using a little milk around the edge of the underside of the top pastry circle to stick the two together, or like me, just place a star on top. Brush the pastry with a little milk.

Bake in the oven for 15 minutes or until golden and delicious looking.

Dust with icing sugar, just before serving.

Top Tip Wait 10 to 15 minutes before taking them out of the tin. Too hot and they will just break, too cold and the butter lining the tin will hold them firm and they will just break. 😊



The Best Ever Christmas Cake

This has been my go-to Christmas cake ever since I spotted it in a Good Food magazine about 20 years ago. I lost the recipe and had to make an appeal on the BBC Good Food website for someone to share it with me, and it was the original baker himself, Dan Lepard, who replied with the recipe. Happy days.

In his words “this is a very rich yet simple cake, dark with fruit, wine and a hint of chocolate and spice”. You can’t really taste the wine and marsala marinade, or the hints of cocoa and coffee, but all of those flavours marry together to make the most delicious fruit cake.

You can make two smaller cakes, and give one away, if you are nicer than me; but I prefer to make one big cake, eat it on a regular basis, sharing with very special friends only, until I realise it’s time for the post-Christmas diet, then I freeze a chunk to come out at Easter when it is still completely delicious (Becca)

Makes either 2 small (18cm) round cakes or 1 large (24cm) cake

Baking time (18cm) $\frac{3}{4}$ hour at 180°C, + $\frac{3}{4}$ hour at 160°C

Baking time (24cm) $\frac{3}{4}$ hour at 180°C, + 1 – 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ hours at 160°C

For the marinade

200ml Marsala

400ml full-bodied red wine (such as Shiraz)

300g currants

300g raisins

360g sultanas

100g dried figs, cut into thirds

140g dried pears, peaches or apricots, cut into thirds

300g luxury glacé fruit

2 tblsp cocoa

2 tsp instant coffee

Zest 1 orange

1 tsp mixed spice

200g unsalted butter, softened

200g dark muscavado sugar

5 x 60g eggs, at room temp
150g toasted hazelnuts, ground
225g plain flour
75g self-raising flour

Method

The night before baking, place the wine and Marsala in a saucepan and boil until reduced by half. Next, mix in the dried fruit, cocoa, coffee, zest and spice. Heat to a simmer, and then lightly stir the fruit until the mixture is quite hot. Remove from the heat, transfer to a bowl, cover and leave to cool.

The following morning prepare the cake tin. Line the base of the tin with 3 circles of non-stick baking parchment, then wrap the inside with a further 3 strips. This will help to protect the cake during its long bake, and will help prevent burning. Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Beat the butter with the sugar until light. Add the eggs, one at a time, and beat well after each addition. The mixture should be light and fluffy, but don't worry if it separates a little. Next, sift the flours together and stir into the mixture, together with the ground hazelnuts. Finally, stir in the dried fruit, together with all of the juices. Make a wish as you stir, for good luck at Christmas! Stir the fruit in very well, so that all of the juice is evenly blended with the cake mixture.

Tip the mixture out into the prepared cake tin, and lightly smooth the surface with a spatula. Take a square of foil, slightly larger than the surface of the cake tin. Pinch the corners together so that the foil sits lightly but securely on the top, like a hat. The foil will prevent the top of the cake from burning. Place the tin in the centre of the oven, and bake for 45 minutes, then remove the foil, reduce the temperature to 160°C, and bake for a further 45 minutes (or longer for a larger cake). Test the centre with a skewer, if it comes out clean the cake is cooked. Remove from the oven and allow to cool completely.

Once cool, remove the cake carefully from the tin but do not remove the layers of parchment paper. Wrap the cake securely in foil and leave in a cool place for 2-3 weeks. Feel free at this stage to feed the cake with rum – little and often is best to avoid creating a soggy cake.

To serve ice with marzipan and royal icing.



THE END