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Great British FOOD

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Summer

100+ mouthwatering
seasonal recipes

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MASTER

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*English
wines*

to relish
right now

artichoke



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LEFT: Paul Hollywood creates summer showstoppers (p. 66)

ABOVE: Tom Kerridge gets the grill fired up (p.18)

LEFT: Tom Parker-Bowles serves his family's ultimate trifle (p. 33)

RIGHT: Jack Stein dishes up the tastiest catch of the day (p.60)



Welcome to Summer!

Welcome to the summer issue of Great British Food, jam-packed full of delicious inspiration to have you making the most of the glorious season ahead.

We've got a delectable menu that will see you host every occasion with style, whether it be prime picnic fare, recipes that will get you mastering the barbecue, or dishes inspired by far-flung destinations that bring your holidays home.

Fresh, vibrant food is the order of the day while the temperatures rise, and it doesn't come fresher than

foraged finds – head to page 26 to learn how to make your own tipples from the season's bounty.

Plus, we catch up with Tom Kerridge to find out how he makes his summer gatherings sing on page 18, Paul Hollywood to uncover why cakes really deserves a starring role at seasonal celebrations – and exactly what to bake to wow the crowds – on page 66, and Tom Parker-Bowles shares two family favourite recipes that will impress all your family and friends on page 33.

Enjoy!



GREAT BRITISH FOOD ONLINE

Fancy another bite of Great British Food? Head to greatbritishfoodawards.com for the latest seasonal recipes, restaurant reviews, food news, travel inspiration, and giveaways.

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easy recipes to enjoy tonight
www.geetasfoods.com

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Everything you need to make Summer 2025 go with a (delicious) bang

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Great British
FOOD

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HELLO *Summer!*

Welcome to the sunniest season of all, and our
pick of the best food and drink to get you
celebrating in the sunshine

Date for your Diary

English Wine Week is taking place 21st-29th June this year, and it's the perfect opportunity to dive into the delicious tipples that the skilled winemakers up and down the UK have created for your delectation and delight. For inspiration and a handful of recommendations, turn to page 102, and for more information about English Wine Week visit winegb.co.uk.



Time for tea

UK afternoons simply wouldn't be the same without a classically comforting cup of tea, and British icon Fortnum & Mason have changed the game with their new range of flavour-packed and fruity infusions which play on traditional foodie favourites (**£10.95 for 15 silky tea bags, fortnumandmason.com**). We particularly love the Toffolusus (inspired by the world-famous biscuits), Apricot Honey & Lavender and Cocoa Mint options – but the Knickerbocker Glory and Rose & Violet Creams are also well worth trying, especially if you have a taste for traditional confections! If a celebration is on the cards, may we suggest Fortnum & Mason's Sparkling Tea Magnum (0%) (**RRP £45, fortnumandmason.com**)? With tropical, citrusy notes and the aroma of jasmine, it's ripe for any special moment and can be enjoyed by all.



Revamp your burgers

We all love a great British burger, but HECK's new Minted Lamb Burgers (**RRP £4, available from [Tesco heckfood.co.uk](http://Tescoheckfood.co.uk)**) have inspired us to try a new take on the classic beef patty this summer. We love these lightly smashed for extra crunch then topped with soured cream seasoned with salt, pepper and garlic powder, slices of roasted beetroot and thinly sliced red onion, and a sprinkling of feta.

What we're drinking

Vára Gin, meaning "become spring" in Old Norse, is Deerness Distillery's award-winning pink gin crafted in Orkney, Scotland. Infused with botanicals like rose, cardamom, elderflower, and citrus, it offers a delicate balance of floral and herbaceous notes. Try Vára Gin this summer and taste true artisanal excellence.

RRP £38.00, available at deernessdistillery.com



Be party-ready in moments

Anything that allows us to throw a tasty party at the drop of a hat gets our vote, and the Gourmet Tapas Box from BOXTAPAS! is a winner this summer (£69.95, boxtapas.co.uk). Full of seafood, snacks, sauces and even sweet treats, it's an authentic Spanish experience that can be guest-ready in mere moments, leaving you free to enjoy the seasonal sunshine.



In season

The GBF team are passionate about eating seasonally for the best flavour and all-round experience. This is the British produce to relish now:

June

Radishes, peas, broad beans, chillies, new potatoes



July

Beetroot, chard, lettuce, cucumber, courgettes (don't forget the flowers!)



August

Tomatoes, cauliflower, celery, peppers, aubergine



For a whole host of inspiration on what to grow - and how - CHECK OUT PAGE 47

Hungry for health

When time is tight but the hunger for health is rumbling, there's nothing better than the newly-released Veg'Chop by Oh So Wholesome to add a delicious dose of goodness to your day. Available in Original and flavour-packed Mexican options, it's not only tasty but supremely versatile, too. Try it in place of falafel in wraps and buddha bowls, or swap with your usual protein in a curry for a nutritional boost.

Ultra low-processed and packed with protein and fibre, it's a speedy way to up your intake of the good stuff and is available from Tesco. RRP £3 ohsowholesome.com



Don't forget!

Father's Day falls on 15th June this year, and there are plenty of food-centric ways to celebrate the father figure in your life. Our pick this year is Paxton & Whitfield's Cheese Board & Knife Gift (RRP £60, paxtonandwhitfield.co.uk).

Filled to the brim with tasty cheese and all the accompaniments you need to create an occasion - think crackers, chutneys and beer - this thoughtful gift is sure to be appreciated. What's more, he might even be up for sharing!



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Wild at Heart

Discover the Spirit of Orkney with New Sule Skerry Gin

There's a place where the sea sings stories into the wind, where only a lonely lighthouse stands as a silent guardian, and where selkie folk - those shape-shifting creatures of Orkney legend - are said to slip from sea to shore under moonlight. From this untamed, windswept edge of the world comes Sule Skerry Gin, the newest release from the award-winning Orkney Gin Company.

Inspired by Sule Skerry - the remote, westernmost point of the Orkney Islands - this New-Western style gin captures the wild heart of the North Sea, and the warmth of a family craft rooted in island heritage. And now, you're invited to taste its magic.

Hand-crafted in Orkney, Sule Skerry Gin is unlike anything you've tried before. Drawing

flavour inspiration from the delicate balance of traditional craft cola, each small batch is infused with a captivating blend of orange zest, cinnamon, cardamom, nutmeg and more, creating a gently caramelised finish for a whisper of nostalgia. But don't be fooled - this is still a traditional, unsweetened gin at heart, with juniper leading the charge, grounding the botanical chorus in tradition.

From your very first sip, you'll notice its

"This New - Western style gin captures the wild heart of the North Sea, and the warmth of a family craft rooted in island heritage. And now, you're invited to taste its magic"

vibrant citrus lift, softened by silky vanilla and warming botanics, delivering a bold, refreshing finish that lingers like the last rays of a midsummer sunset over the Orkney seas.

Its bottle is just as spellbinding. Designed by the Orkney Gin Company family, the bottle is a tribute to the timeless glass vessels once found on Orkney's shores - strong, beautiful, and made to last. Embossed with the Orkney Spirits Limited name, crowned with a gleaming selkie coin, and wrapped in art that captures solan birds in flight and the lone Sule Skerry lighthouse, it's a piece of the island's soul in your hands.

Enjoy Sule Skerry Gin your way - neat for full flavour, with tonic and orange for a bright and zesty twist, or in a cocktail as radiant as Orkney's skies. However you serve it, you'll be drinking in the story of a place where land, sea, and folklore meet.

Sule Skerry Gin is more than a spirit. It's an invitation - to adventure, to tradition, to the mysteries of Orkney.

Available direct from the makers at orkneygincompany.com

25 WAYS TO MAKE THIS SUMMER YOUR TASTIEST YET

Burst into the season with some fresh ways to squeeze the most out of the warmest months of the year



1 THE SPRITZ OF THE SEASON

The Hugo Spritz is popping up the chicest hotels and restaurants in Britain and across Europe. Infused with elderflower liqueur it's like a liquid taste of summer. Make it for your al fresco events this year by filling a large cocktail or wine glass with crushed ice, and pouring over 40ml elderflower spirit, 60ml sparkling wine and a large dash of soda. Finish with wedges of lime and fresh mint leaves.

2 GO RETRO

Nostalgic puds are all the rage this summer. Think about what your granny might have served for Sunday lunch. Big blousy trifles and pavlovas. Eton Mess billowing with cream. Roulades. Even blancmange has made a comeback. It's time to raid the charity shops and kitchen stores for kitsch vintage serving platters and trifle bowls.



3 GROW YOUR OWN WINE (ALMOST)

Well, you'd need quite a plot to grow enough grapes to fill a bottle, but you can easily grow your own grapes. All you need is a sunny South or West-facing garden and around 1m x 2m of ground per plant. Pop them in at the end of this summer and you'll reap the rewards next year. We like 'Fragola' - a variety that tastes of strawberries.



4 CHURN SOME ICE CREAM

It really is easier than you think! To make a large tub warm 300ml double cream and 300ml whole milk in a pan. In a bowl whisk 1 tbsps cornflour with 4 egg yolks (freeze the whites to make meringues later) and 100g caster sugar. Slowly add the cream / milk mixture and whisk, then return all to the pan and warm gently, stirring until thickened. Flavour as you like, cool and churn in an ice cream machine (or by storing in the freezer and whisking with a fork every hour until smooth). Summer pairings we like include rosewater and strawberries, and raspberries with white chocolate chunks (add the chocolate after churning).

5 PIMP UP YOUR STRAWBERRIES

You can make those ripe strawberries taste more delicious by:

- Slicing (400 - 500g) and combining with 1 tbsp caster sugar and 1 tbsp high quality balsamic vinegar
- Slicing, and sprinkling cherry molasses over
- Running a sharp knife over the skin of a lime before cutting them - which gives them a Twister lolly flavour

6 FLOWER POWER

Edible flowers aren't just pretty - they bring flavour to food too. Grow at home (in an area where you don't use chemicals) or buy pesticide-free varieties from an edible flower company.

Violas have an earthy, sweet taste that's gorgeous infused in a syrup

Nasturtiums bring a peppery touch to salads and mezze platters

Cornflowers clove-like, with a hint of sweetness

Marigolds citrusy, bittersweet and a touch spicy - great with white fish

Borage tastes like cucumber.

Stunning frozen into ice cubes for your summer drinks



7 UPGRADE YOUR SALAD PANTRY

Make those salads really exciting this summer. Invest in flavoured fruit vinegars and the best cold-pressed British rapeseed oil to start (the ideal ratio is 1 part vinegar to 3 parts oil), and prepare jars or pots of exciting additions. We're talking toasted nuts and seeds coated in various spices and seasonings, marinated feta cubes and olives to keep in the fridge, and flavoured croutons (a canny way to use up leftover bread).



8 CRAFT YOUR OWN ICE POPS

It's so easy to mix up your own ice lollies, and there's a dizzying array of moulds available now. We favour the silicon 'Calippo' style push up variety because we've found them the easiest to use and clean. To make our favourite combo, mix 1 tin condensed milk with 1 tin coconut milk, the juice of 1 fresh pineapple and 3 limes. Taste and add a little extra sugar if you like. This will make at least 12 lollies.

9 INVEST IN A PIZZA OVEN

Homemade wood-fired pizza is easily in reach for most people now, with pizza ovens starting at a very reasonable £60. They're super versatile. Use the high heat for pizza, then bake bread and cakes, and use the residual heat for slow-cooking meat and veg.

10 CATCH OF THE DAY

Join Boat Trips Torbay on a Catch and Cook evening (Wednesdays). Departing from Brixham, the two-hour cruise will teach you how to catch your own supper, which is barbecued on board and loaded into fresh rolls with salad. funfishtrips.co.uk



11 A TASTE OF DUBAI

The Dubai Chocolate Bar craze is everywhere!

Here's how to make your own:

- Toss 200g shredded kadaifi pastry with 2 tablespoons neutral oil and bake on a lined tray in the oven at 160°C until just golden – keep your eye on it. Allow to cool.
- Melt and temper 400g milk chocolate and use ¾ of it to line a couple of chocolate bar moulds. Allow to set.
- Mix 100g melted white chocolate with 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, a large pinch of salt, the cooled pastry, and 250g pistachio paste. Spread evenly in the set chocolate moulds.
- Cover each bar with the remaining milk chocolate. Leave to set before unmoulding.



12 SMASH THOSE BURGERS

Smash burgers are the hottest ticket in top tier fast food joints. To recreate them at home, heat a non-stick, heavy-based flat griddle or frying pan. Per person take 75g minced prime British beef mince (at least 20% fat) and form into a rough burger shape. Place on the hot griddle and season liberally. Now press down so as much surface is in contact with the pan as possible. Cook for 2 minutes, pressing down throughout, then turn, season the other side, and cook for a further 2 minutes. They'll be beefy, crunchy and gnarly at the edges. Best served in a soft brioche bun with lashings of sauce and cheese.

13 ICED TEA GOES HARD

Hard iced tea (made with alcohol) has been a 'thing' in the States for a while, but is starting make waves here now too. To make it, combine 4 teabags of your choice in a pan with 1 litre boiling water, 150g caster sugar and leave to steep until cold. Add the juice of 1-2 lemons to taste, and 250ml vodka, rum or whisky. Pour into a container with a lid and chill in the fridge. Serve in tall glasses over loads of ice with fruit and herb garnishes.



14 STUFF COURGETTE FLOWERS

If you grow your own courgettes, these are a treat. Wash gently, brushing away any dirt and removing the stamen. Mix a tub of ricotta with your choice of snipped herbs and seasonings (we like to add finely diced roasted red pepper and a little garlic and chilli) and use to fill the flowers (about 2-3 teaspoons each) so that the petals can easily encase and twist around the mixture with none peeping out. Make a batter with 100g plain flour, 40g cornflour, ½ tsp baking powder, a pinch of salt and enough cold sparkling water to turn into a texture similar to pancake mix. Carefully dip your filled flowers and deep fry until golden.

15 FILL UP A 'TASTE JAR'

Bring a sense of adventure to your kitchen by making a 'taste jar' with your family or friends. On small bits of paper write down ingredients you've never tried before, recipes you've always wanted to cook, products you want to buy, and restaurants, cafés, pubs and street food spots you'd like to visit. Folder over the paper and store in the jar, ready to inject a bit of fun into the day when the whim takes you.

16 HOST A SHOOTING STARS PARTY

Pre-mix cocktails and flasks of boozy hot chocolate, prepare a few snacks (including Asian moon cakes if you can get them) and grab your cosiest blankets and a few friends to watch the breathtaking spectacle of the Perseids meteor shower. Peaking this year between 11th - 13th August, expect to see around 50 shooting stars per hour. Magical.

17 FORAGE

Buy a foraging book or join a foraging course to discover the edible gems on your doorstep. Summer is abundant – with elderflowers, pineapple weed, rowan berries, chickweed, meadowsweet, fat hen and more. Never pick and eat anything you're uncertain about.



18 CRAFT YOUR OWN FRAGRANT ROSEWATER

If you have an aromatic, unsprayed rose bush in your garden, the petals can be crystallised (using egg white and caster sugar) or turned into rosewater, for infusing in drinks and desserts. To make it, wash enough rose petals to fill an American 1 cup measurement. Add to a small pan with 2 cups distilled water and a splash of vodka. Bring to the boil, then turn the heat down to the lowest setting and leave for 20 minutes. Turn off the heat and allow to cool completely before straining into a bottle or jars. Keep in the fridge and use within a few days. Gorgeous frozen into ice cubes too.

19 MICHELIN MOMENTS

Gourmet food lovers can spend the summer ticking off some of the newest Michelin Starred restaurants in Britain. Moor Hall in Aughton gained 3 stars this year, while Hide and Fox in Saltwood, Humble Chicken and The Ritz in London were awarded 2 stars, and numerous fine dining destinations took 1 star.



20 CELEBRATE SEASONAL FISH

Did you know British fish is seasonal? Seek out your closest fishmonger and try to use as much of the summer's bounty as you can. Summer's catch includes: cod, coley, crab, halibut, herring, langoustines, pollack, plaice, sardines, queen scallops, sea bream, shrimp, whelks, trout and whitebait.

21 START A RUMTOPF

The age-old tradition of making a rumtopf was a way, in the past, of preserving fruits across the growing season, culminating in a richly-flavoured drink and lots of boozy delights come winter. You'll need to invest in a very large glass jar or rumtopf container. Throughout the summer add to it layers of clean, washed berries and stone fruits (from strawberries, gooseberries and currants through to cherries, peaches, apricots, and even sloes). Whenever you add a layer, sprinkle generously with sugar, and top up with enough rum to cover. In winter decant into smaller jars as gifts. The fruits make a sumptuous porridge topper, and the syrupy drink is a warming toddy for cooler nights. It's customary to crack it open on the first day of advent.

22 GROW YOUR OWN PESTO

Basil grows with wild abandon on sunny windowsills. In June invest in a few pots and a tray, some good quality compost, and seeds – and get growing. Basil doesn't like to be overwatered, so don't drown the plants! Make a quick pesto by blitzing two handfuls of the herb with a handful of grated Parmesan or even vintage British Cheddar, a clove of garlic, squeeze of lemon, 3 tbsps of pine nuts or cashew nuts, and season to taste.

23 HOST A SEAFOOD BOIL

Seafood boil restaurants are popping up in major cities across the UK, inspired by the Deep South. To host your own, get a big, heavy-bottomed pot suitable for use over open flames, and set it over a fire pit or low barbecue. Fill with water, a few halved lemons, seafood boil or Cajun seasoning (both widely available online), sliced new potatoes and corn. Once the vegetables are tender, throw in loads of shellfish – prawns and crayfish on the shell and mussels are easiest for those squeamish about live crabs and lobsters. When cooked, strain and pour over a table lined with paper. Provide napkins, lemons, pots of aioli and loads of bread for mopping.



24 PYO BERRIES

There's something soul nourishing about picking your own fruit – and it's often cheaper too. Look out for signs in the countryside near you as prime picking season (mid-June onwards) arrives. We like:

- **Friday Street Farm Shop, near Snape, Suffolk:** A huge farm shop and cafe, with one of the biggest PYO strawberry fields in the East of England. It's close to the coastal foodie destination of Aldeburgh.
- **Meopham PYO, Kent:** Not just for strawberries. Here you can pick (in season) gooseberries, apples, blackcurrants, sweetcorn, plums, pears, pumpkins and squash.

25 BAKE THE TRENDS

Spend some time in the kitchen making the season's hottest cakes and bakes. Trending right now are Italian maritzozzi buns (doughnut-like, split and filled generously with cream), spiral croissants, cruffins, anything with pistachio or matcha, and Asian specialities such as chiffon cakes or red bean paste pastries. Don't forget to share your efforts with us by tagging gbf_mag on Instagram.



ABER FALLS RELEASES BRAND-NEW ‘Madeira’ Single Malt Welsh Whisky

The North Wales based whisky distillery, Aber Falls, has released a brand new ‘Madeira’ whisky, which is available from its Visitor Centre and website ready for summer

Aber Falls is launching this new, Single Malt Welsh Whisky, to add to its rich and diverse collection, exclusively made with Welsh malted barley. Its flavours and colour truly highlight the unique character of Welsh whisky, with this new release offering 100% natural colour, non - chill filtered and finished in specially selected Madeira casks. This aging process imparts vibrant notes of peaches, honeyed fruitiness, and a subtle nutty sweetness, creating a truly distinctive character.

In the bottle you will find it an amber gold colour, whilst on the nose, the new whisky gives the delicious scent of peaches and apricots, honey and caramelized sugar, as well as a slight citrus zest with floral hints.

Meanwhile, on the palate it offers honeyed fruitiness with notes of stewed apples or pears, roasted nuts, and a hint of marzipan. At 47% ABV, the finish is medium to long balanced by fruity warmth.

Sam Foster, distillery manager at Aber Falls, said: “This release is something we are immensely proud of, it brings out the best in our whisky. The Madeira casks have worked their magic, adding layers of rich fruit, honeyed sweetness and a nutty warmth. Perfect for those who appreciate a whisky with depth and character.”

UNCOVERING MORE ABOUT ABER FALLS DISTILLERY

Aber Falls, which is located on the foothills of Snowdonia, in the village of Abergwyngregyn, is the first whisky distillery in North Wales for more than 100 years. It offers a premium portfolio of the finest handcrafted whiskies, gins, and liqueurs, using sustainably sourced ingredients and Welsh-inspired botanicals.

Previously a slate works in the 19th century and a margarine factory during the world wars, Aber Falls Distillery opened in 2017 and rose to fame with its production of gins and liqueurs that have achieved a spate of awards, creating brand recognition in the UK and beyond.

The Distillery’s Visitor Centre, which opened in 2021, helps promote the region, supports local businesses and provides a platform to engage customers with the product journey.

The team of local distillers take immense pride in putting Wales on the map for whisky production; they currently produce single malt whiskies, made using genuine Welsh malted barley, with the first single malt whisky released in 2021.

Responsible for orchestrating the taste profile has been the distillery team and Sam Foster, Distillery Manager at Aber Falls, adds:



“The setting of Aber Falls is so unique, nestled between the Menai Straits and the Carneddau mountain range, offering a remote microclimate, creating the ideal conditions to influence the character of the whisky. One of the big advantages of producing whisky in Wales is having more scope to experiment with a variety of casks, and our wood strategy has also been a key contributor to the finished liquid, which we’re extremely pleased with for a three-year-old bottling.”

However, it’s not all about the whisky; Aber Falls also offers a premium portfolio of award-winning gins and liqueurs, using sustainably sourced local ingredients and Welsh-inspired botanicals, as well as unique experiences for visitors...

THE ABER FALLS GIN LAB

This summer, the Aber Falls Whisky Distillery is continuing to offer its hugely popular Gin Lab experience.

Become a distiller for the afternoon, using the finest botanicals. Using your own choice of botanicals, create your own gin recipe with a personalised 70cl bottle to take home with you.

Book via the website from £80 per person.

TRY THE UNIQUE CAFE & TOURS

Aber Falls Distillery’s Cafe is open all day with food and drink to suit any appetite. Whether you’re going for a hike up the Falls or calling in for a tour of the Distillery, Aber Falls has a locally sourced menu that you’re sure to enjoy, featuring some of the best produce Wales has to offer.



Whilst visiting, why not take part in a tour of the whisky distillery. They take place every day, and the enthusiastic guides will show you how we create The Spirit of North Wales. The gift shop is open every day for you to browse Aber Falls merchandise, locally sourced goods, and of course our award-winning portfolio of spirits.

WEEKEND EVENTS: ARTISANS AT ABER FALLS

Don’t forget to keep an eye out for unique stalls during warm, summer weekends. Artisans at Aber Falls provides local and independent Welsh businesses with a regular space to showcase their products, whether it be food and drink or arts and crafts. The event series is looking to connect the local community with small and upcoming businesses, by showcasing the best of Wales and encouraging the community to support these local suppliers.

Artisans at Aber Falls will be happening at different weekends across the year – keep an eye on the website to see when the next event is on.

Directions

To get to the distillery, take J13 off the A55, which will bring you to the small village of Abergwyngregyn, where Aber Falls Whisky Distillery is based. aberfallsdistillery.com

Smoky Pulled Pork with Quick Pickled Cabbage

Tempt your guests' taste buds with this
flavoursome (and deceptively simple) slow cook

1kg boneless pork shoulder

For the marinade:

1 large onion, finely chopped
6 garlic cloves, minced
5 tbsp ketchup
2 tbsp black treacle
2 tbsp Worcester sauce
2 tbsp English mustard
1 tsp coriander seeds, ground
1 tsp cumin seeds, ground
50g dark brown sugar
Sea salt and black pepper

For the pickled cabbage:

300g red cabbage, sliced
½ red onion, thinly sliced
100ml red wine vinegar
1 tsp caster sugar
1 tsp coriander seeds, crushed
Sea salt and black pepper

To serve:

Brioche buns
Sliced gherkins
Coriander

1. Place all of the ingredients, apart from the pork shoulder, into a blender and combine until you have a smooth paste.

2. Pour over the pork and massage in until the meat is well coated, then put it in a large lidded pan and place in the fridge to marinate overnight (or for a minimum of three hours if you're tight on time).

3. Cover the meat with water and bring to the boil, then bring down to a simmer and cook for around two hours or until the meat can be pulled apart with a fork.

4. For the quick pickle, bring all the ingredients apart from the cabbage and the onion to a simmer in a small pan then pour over the sliced cabbage and onion. Leave to steep for at least 20 minutes.

5. To assemble, put some quick pickle and coriander on the base of a brioche bun, then pull the meat apart with two forks and place a generous amount on top. Top with sliced gherkins and the other half of the brioche bun.



Crowd PLEASERS

These flavour-packed recipes from **Tom Kerridge** are sure to draw the crowds this summer



Nineties house music, slow-cooked meat and children having a water fight are part and parcel of Tom Kerridge's ultimate summer barbecue. "I have memories of spending time outdoors with family and friends, children running around and dogs barking, and that energy is as important to me as the food," he begins. While playful chaos reigns on the day, careful planning and structure is key to getting optimum results, Tom advises.

"I can't host a barbecue without some sort of slow-cooked meat, and putting love and care – and a good amount of time – into a marinade or dry rub makes all the difference." A butterflied leg of lamb recipe in his new book, *BBQ*, is a popular centrepiece chez Tom, but creativity is the name of the game. "It's marinated with some herbs and anchovies, classic flavours, but really you could create something with what's already in your cupboard – just give it time to work its magic before you cook

it, and make sure it has a good rest before it's served."

A dish as jawdropping as a slow-cooked joint deserves extra special accompaniments, and that's where uplifting salads and zingy pickles come in. "Pickles are a game-changer; they cut through the char and fattiness of the meat brilliantly – and they don't have to take much time to prepare. Even a quick pickle of vinegar, sugar and aromats, brought to a simmer and poured over sliced vegetables an hour before serving

Smoky Beef Short Ribs

Now we're talking! These tender short ribs are seasoned to perfection and present big, bold flavours. The secret is in the initial low, slow cooking, before they are finished on the grill: this is where they will take on that unmistakable smokiness that only a barbecue can deliver.

Prepare: 20 minutes

Cook: 3 hours plus 8 minutes grilling time

Serves: 4

4 beef short ribs (about 450g each)

Dry rub:

1 tbsp soft light brown sugar
1 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp ground cumin
2 tsp sweet smoked paprika
1 tsp onion powder
½ tsp cracked black pepper
1 tsp salt

To cook the ribs:

100ml malt vinegar
150ml apple juice
2 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
200ml good-quality smoky barbecue sauce (from a jar)

To serve:

Pickles

1. Place the beef short ribs on a tray. For the dry rub, mix the sugar, spices and salt together in a small bowl. Sprinkle the ribs all over with the spice mixture and place in the fridge to marinate overnight.
2. The next day, preheat your oven to 170°C/150°C Fan/Gas 3.
3. Transfer the beef ribs to a roasting tray. In a bowl, mix the vinegar, apple juice, 200ml water and the Worcestershire sauce together.



can level - up your barbecue game.

Flatbreads, soft and charred from the barbecue, chicken wings – a favourite of his son's – and glazed sausages are must - have additions to Tom's ultimate outdoor spread, "and beef with a high fat content that has been cooking for hours and hours for an incredible smokiness."

The feast doesn't stop there; sweet treats can get the barbecue treatment too. "Cookies cooked on the barbecue always go down brilliantly, especially when you toast marshmallows and

serve them together like s'mores."

For extra brownie points, add a scoop of ice cream and dip in chocolate for the ultimate dessert.

It's time to relax and enjoy. "A great barbecue can bring together the very best elements of summer," says Tom, so get your meat marinating, ramp up the music and get the grill smoking... It's going to be a great day!

Playing with your food may just be a great thing after all... Read on for some of BBQ's most lipsmacking recipes.

"A great barbecue can bring together the very best elements of summer, so get your meat marinating, ramp up the music and get the grill smoking"



“It’s more than just the cracking textures that sets this slaw apart!”

Pour the mixture over the ribs and cover the roasting tray with a sheet of baking paper, then a layer of foil. Scrunch the edges of the foil and paper around the rim of the roasting tin to seal.

4. Place the roasting tray on the middle shelf of the oven and cook for around 3 hours until the ribs are meltingly tender.

5. Remove the tray from the oven and leave the ribs to cool slightly. Carefully lift the ribs out of the cooking liquor and place them on another tray.

6. When you’re ready to serve, brush the short ribs all over with the barbecue sauce. Lay the ribs on the barbecue over indirect heat (to achieve a medium heat) and cook for 8 minutes or so, basting the ribs with

the barbecue sauce as they cook.

7. Lift the ribs off the barbecue, transfer them to a serving platter and brush with any remaining barbecue sauce. Serve straight away, with your favourite pickles alongside.

Creamy Kale Slaw with Hazelnuts

It’s more than just the cracking textures that sets this slaw apart! I use cabbage, carrots and red onion, but also throw in heaps of kale because I love its irony flavour. The addition of toasted hazelnuts and the tangy, lush dressing makes each bite special.

Prepare: 15 minutes

Serves: 6 as a side

250g bunch of curly kale, stems removed

3 tbsp white wine vinegar

¼ red cabbage (150g)

¼ white cabbage (150g)

2 large carrots

1 large red onion, halved and thinly sliced

A large handful of flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped

A large handful of dill, roughly chopped

100g toasted hazelnuts, roughly chopped

Salt and freshly ground pepper

Dressing:

100ml soured cream

100ml natural yogurt

2 tsp Dijon mustard

2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

Juice of 1 lemon

1. Shred the kale leaves and place in a large bowl. Trickle over the wine vinegar and sprinkle lightly with salt. Massage the leaves with your hands for a couple of minutes to tenderise the kale.



2. Finely shred the red and white cabbage and immerse in a bowl of iced water for 5 minutes or so to crisp up.
3. Cut the carrots into fine julienne strips and add to the kale with the sliced onion and chopped herbs.
4. Drain the cabbage thoroughly in a colander and pat dry with a clean tea towel. Add the cabbage to the other veg.
5. For the dressing, put all the ingredients into a bowl and season with salt and pepper. Whisk together to combine.
6. Pour the dressing over the kale slaw and mix well until everything is evenly coated. Add three-quarters of the toasted hazelnuts and mix through.
7. Transfer the slaw to a serving bowl, scatter over the remaining toasted hazelnuts and serve.

Dry-rub Buffalo Chicken Wings

This is an absolute banger of a starter! Juicy, crispy wings are coated in punchy spices that bring the heat, but I've got you covered: the cool, creamy ranch dressing keeps things balanced. These are the ultimate crowd-pleaser and you'll likely be making them on repeat all summer long!

Prepare: 20 minutes plus brining and marinating time

Cook: 12 minutes

Serves: 6

16 large chicken wings (1.5kg in total), tips removed and jointed
200g table salt
10 black peppercorns
4 bay leaves
2 tbsp light olive oil

Dry rub:

1 tsp chilli powder
½ tsp cayenne powder
1 tsp sweet smoked paprika
2 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp onion powder
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp dried thyme leaves

Ranch dressing:

3 heaped tbsp soured cream
3 heaped tbsp mayonnaise
½ garlic clove, finely grated
3 dashes of Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp white wine vinegar
1 tsp mild American mustard
1 tbsp finely chopped dill
1 tbsp finely chopped chives
Salt and freshly ground pepper

To serve:

Hot sauce
Celery sticks



Recipes extracted from *The BBQ Book* by Tom Kerridge (Bloomsbury Absolute). Photography by Cristian Barnett.



1. First brine the chicken. Pour 2 litres water into a large bowl, add the table salt and whisk to dissolve, then add the black peppercorns and bay leaves. Immerse the chicken wings in the brine and place in the fridge for 2 hours.
2. Remove the chicken wings from the brine and pat them dry with kitchen paper.
3. For the dry rub, mix all the ingredients together in a bowl. Drizzle both sides of the chicken wings with the olive oil and sprinkle with the dry rub to coat the wings evenly all over.
4. Cover and leave to marinate in the fridge for at least 30 minutes, ideally 2–3 hours.
5. For the ranch dressing, mix all the ingredients together in a bowl, seasoning with salt and pepper to taste.
6. When you're ready to cook, place the chicken wings on a hot barbecue in a single layer, making sure you have an area with some indirect heat to move them to, as and when you need a lower heat. Cook for 10–12 minutes until the wings are nicely browned on each side, turning regularly.
7. Serve up the chicken wings with the ranch dressing on the side for dipping. Accompany with your favourite hot sauce and some crunchy celery sticks.

“These are the ultimate crowd-pleaser and you'll likely be making them on repeat all summer long!”

5 WAYS WITH... MINT

This verdant, aromatic herb is well worth growing in a pot in the garden or on the windowsill to bring a pop of freshness to sweet and savoury cooking

3 FRESH MINT CHOC CHIP ICE CREAM

Roughly chop 2 handfuls of fresh mint and add to a pan with 300ml whole milk. Bring to the boil, then simmer for a few minutes. Leave to cool and pour into a tub with a lid. Pop in the fridge overnight. The next day, strain the milk, discarding the mint. Return to a pan with 300ml double cream and simmer gently. Whisk 4 egg yolks with 2 tablespoons cornflour and 100g caster sugar in a bowl. Pour over half of the warm milk/cream mixture and whisk thoroughly. Add the rest of the milk/cream and stir to fully combine. Wash the bottom of the pan and pour in the mix. Cook, stirring all the time, on a low heat until the ice cream base thickens to a custard consistency. Strain through a sieve into a bowl to cool. Churn in your ice cream maker, adding 100g chocolate chips halfway through.

4 MINT JELLY

Chop 2kg cooking apples into large chunks (including peel and core) and place in a pan with 75g chopped fresh mint. Add 500ml water, bring to the boil, then simmer for 20-30 minutes until soft. Pour in 500ml cider vinegar and simmer for 5 minutes. Turn off the heat and use a potato masher to finely mash the apples. Place clean muslin in a sieve over a large bowl or pan and add the mashed apple and liquid, then leave to strain for several hours. Weigh the liquid. For every 235g, weigh out 200g preserving sugar and add to a pan. Boil, then reduce to a simmer, cooking for 10-15 minutes, taking off any scum that forms. Take to 104°C on a sugar thermometer. Store in sterilised jars.

5 MINT PESTO

Add 75g nuts to a food processor with 3 handfuls fresh mint, 1 large handful flat leaf parsley, 1 large clove garlic (roughly chopped), 100ml extra virgin olive oil or rapeseed oil, and the juice of 1 lemon. Blitz to the consistency you like and season to taste. Wonderful on bruschetta with fresh peas and parmesan shavings.

1 MINT JULEP

For one cocktail, roughly tear 10 mint leaves and add to a cocktail shaker with 10ml sugar syrup and 50ml Bourbon whisky. Add a handful of crushed ice. Churn the mixture with a long spoon for 20-30 seconds, then pour into a glass. Garnish with an extra sprig of mint.

2 STRAWBERRIES WITH MINT SUGAR

Place 100g caster sugar and 50g fresh mint in a food processor. Blitz until fine. Hull and thinly slice two punnets of fresh strawberries and arrange across a pretty platter. Sprinkle over the mint sugar and allow to marinate for 30 minutes at room temperature before serving. Serves 4-6.



Spice Up Your SUMMER

Anjula Devi's speedy Indian dishes are sure to
add a kick to your summer soirées



Tomatoes in Yoghurt

Prepare: 1 minute

Cook: 10 minutes

Serves: 2

6 fresh tomatoes
 1 tbsp vegetable oil
 1 tsp cumin seeds
 1 tsp fennel seeds
 1 tsp garlic paste
 1 tsp ginger paste
 1 tbsp white wine vinegar
 ½ tsp ground turmeric
 Chilli powder, to taste
 2 tsp jaggery (or soft brown sugar)
 2 tbsp natural yoghurt
 Fine sea salt, to taste
 Handful of fresh basil leaves
 Flaky sea salt
 Serve with crusty bread (optional)

- 1.** Cut the tomatoes in half.
- 2.** Place a wok on a medium heat, then add the following ingredients in this order: oil, cumin seeds, fennel seeds, garlic paste, ginger paste, white wine vinegar, turmeric, chilli powder, jaggery, yoghurt and salt to taste. Fry for 2 minutes.
- 3.** Place the tomatoes in the wok, with the cut sides facing down, and reduce the heat to low. Place the lid on the wok and cook for 6 minutes.
- 4.** Remove the lid and stir-fry the tomatoes gently for 2 more minutes, tossing occasionally.
- 5.** Switch off the heat, roughly tear in the basil and sprinkle with flaky sea salt. Toss one more time, then enjoy with crusty bread.



Chickpeas with Baby Spinach

Prep: 2 minutes

Cook: 13 minutes

Serves: 4

2 x 400g (14oz) tins chickpeas
1 green chilli, or to taste
1 tbsp coconut oil
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp fennel seeds
2 tsp ginger paste
2 tsp garlic paste
2 tbsp coconut cream
250g (9oz) baby spinach
Chilli powder, to taste
1 tsp ground turmeric
200g (7oz) tinned chopped tomatoes
1 tbsp white wine vinegar
1 tsp jaggery (or soft brown sugar)
Fine sea salt, to taste
2 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp ground coriander
Handful of fresh dill
Juice of 1 small lime

1. Fill and boil the kettle.
2. Drain the chickpeas.
3. Slit the green chilli lengthways.
4. Place a wok on a high heat, then add the following ingredients in this order: 200ml (7fl oz/¾ cup plus 2 tbsp) hot kettle water, coconut oil, cumin seeds, fennel seeds, ginger paste, garlic paste, coconut cream, chickpeas, baby spinach, chilli powder, turmeric, chopped tomatoes, green chilli, vinegar, jaggery and salt to taste.
5. Place the lid on the pan and reduce the heat to medium. Cook for 10 minutes. Remove the lid, then add the ground cumin and coriander. Stir well and continue to cook for a further 3 minutes without the lid on.
6. Meanwhile, chop the fresh dill.
7. Switch off the heat and add the fresh dill and lime juice. Stir well and enjoy.

Easy Fish Molee

This mildly spiced fish, flavoured with coconut, is a dish I often make over the summer months. I am always conscious not to add too much spice to fish. This is one for the whole family.

Prepare: 4 minutes

Cook: 10 minutes

Serves: 4

500g (1lb 2oz) firm white fish (I use haddock)
2 ripe tomatoes
1 mild red chilli
2 tbsp coconut oil
1 tsp brown mustard seeds
1 tsp fennel seeds

1 tsp cumin seeds
8-10 fresh curry leaves
½ tsp ground turmeric
Chilli powder, to taste
1 tbsp white wine vinegar
2 tsp ginger paste
1 tsp garlic paste
100ml (3½ fl oz/scant ½ cup) coconut milk
Fine sea salt, to taste
Fresh coriander (cilantro – as much as you like)
Zest and juice of 1 small lime
Serve with fried puris or plain boiled rice (optional)

1. Fill and boil the kettle.
2. Cut the fish into large bite-sized chunks.
3. Finely chop the tomatoes.
4. Pierce the red chilli a few times with a cocktail stick.
5. Place a wok on a high heat, then add the following ingredients in this order: 50ml (3½ tbsp) hot kettle water, coconut oil, brown mustard seeds,

fennel seeds, cumin seeds, curry leaves, turmeric, chilli powder, vinegar, ginger paste, garlic paste, tomatoes, coconut milk and salt to taste.

6. Place the lid on the wok, reduce the heat to medium and cook for 6 minutes.

7. Remove the lid, add the fish and gently stir well. Now cook without the lid on for 4 minutes.

8. Meanwhile, pick the fresh coriander leaves from the stems.

9. Switch off the heat, add the fresh coriander leaves, lime zest and juice. Stir gently and enjoy



Extracted from *15 Minute Indian* by Anjula Devi, £22
Carnival. Photography by Tom Regester



"This mildly spiced fish, flavoured with coconut, is a dish I often make over the summer months"

As Nature Intended

Mo Wilde's recipes for foraged drinks offer a refreshing take on seasonal tipples

Many wild plants can be used to make a wide variety of drinks. If you've stuck to regular tea and coffee before, you may be surprised at how delicious and satisfying some alternative plants are. After all, modern 'tea' is merely the leaves of *Camellia sinensis* and coffee the roasted bean of *Coffea arabica*.

Equally, many other plants than just the Grape *Vitis vinifera* can be used to make wines and the ubiquitous Hops *Humulus lupulus* only became exclusive to beer in 1710, when an Act of Parliament designated it as the only bittering agent allowed in beer. Before then many other wild plants and herbs were used.

Drinks can be simple – a sprig of wild mint, or a handful of Cleavers steeped in cold water overnight, can replace the next day's drinking water. Or you can put a great deal of effort into fermenting country wines or infusing exotic vermouths.

However, if you get truly adventurous, remember that while it's not illegal to own a still – for example, to make essential oils – it is illegal to distil alcohol without a licence and paying tax. So stick to elderflower champagne and nettle beer. Cheers! Or sláinte, as we say up north!



Make a sugar solution: In a large pot, dissolve sugar in warm water to create a sweet solution. The amount of sugar you use will depend on the sweetness of your ingredients and your personal taste. A good rule of thumb is to use about 500 grams of sugar to 5 litres of water.

Add your ingredients: Once the sugar solution has cooled, add your prepared ingredients to a fermenting bucket and pour the solution over them. Then give them a stir.

Ferment the wine: Transfer the mixture to a fermentation vessel, such as a glass demijohn or a food-grade plastic bucket. Add a packet of wine yeast to the mixture and stir well. I often fall back on a basic champagne yeast. Cover the vessel with a clean cloth, lid or bubbler and put it in a cool, dark place to ferment. Stir the mixture daily to aerate it and release any gases.

Rack the wine: After a week or so, transfer the wine to a new demijohn with a bubbler, leaving any sediment behind. This process is called racking and will help to clarify the wine.

Age the wine: Allow the wine to age for several weeks or months, depending on the recipe and your personal preference. The longer you age the wine, the more complex and smooth the flavour will be.

Bottle and enjoy: Once the wine has aged to your liking, transfer it to bottles and cork or cap them. Enjoy your home-made wild wine with friends and family. Following are some personal favourites.

Red wines:

Bramble berries *Rubus fruticosus* a good red wine with a fruity body

Elderberry *Sambucus nigra* makes a good red wine, an excellent port and can be fermented with Belgian beer yeast to make an exotic mead

Also: Damson, Bullace, sloes, Blackcurrant, elderberry, Hawthorn berry, Bilberry, Mulberry, Cherry Plum and Bird Cherry.

Wild wine

Making wild wine, or country wines, from foraged ingredients can be a fun and rewarding process. Here are some general steps to follow:

Collect your ingredients: First, you will need to gather your ingredients. Look for fruits, flowers or herbs that are in season and abundant in your area. Some common ingredients for wild wine include berries, apples, plums, elderflowers, dandelions and flowers like honeysuckle or primrose.

Prepare the ingredients: Once you have collected your ingredients, wash them thoroughly and remove any stems, seeds or other unwanted parts. Chop or crush the fruit to release the juice, or bruise herbs to release their oils.

Get your equipment together: It's important to use clean and sterilized equipment throughout the wine-making process to prevent contamination and spoilage. You may also want to use a hydrometer to measure the alcohol content of your wine.



Rosé wines:

Japanese knotweed spears *Fallopia japonica* make a Rhubarb-like pinot that is especially good carbonated and chilled

Also: rosehips, Flowering Currant flowers and Black Elder (the flowers are pink). Willowherb flowers also impart a nice rosé colour but need to be mixed with something else for flavour.

White wines:

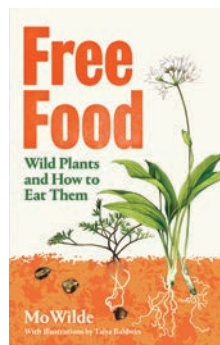
Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale*: use the open flowers to make an excellent white wine. The flower heads must be fully open and removed from the stalk. Don't soak the flowers for more than three days or you'll spoil the flavour

Elderflower *Sambucus nigra*: the flowers make excellent champagne-style wines and a good mead

Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* the flowers make a good white wine and a good

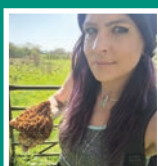
mead. Don't soak them for too long or a note of wet bandages creeps into the flavour

Also: flowers of Cowslip, Primrose, Honeysuckle, Coltsfoot, Gorse, Goldenrod, Linden and Pineappleweed. Crab Apple and Quince also make lovely white wines. For the fruits, chop them up and measure 4.5 litres of water. You need to allow more volume than the flowers as there will be more air gaps between chunks.



Extracted from
**Free Food: Wild
Plants and How to
Eat Them by Mo
Wilde (Simon &
Schuster), with
illustrations by
Talya Baldwin.**

“Drinks can be simple – a sprig of wild mint, or a handful of Cleavers steeped in cold water overnight, can replace the next day’s drinking water. Or you can put a great deal of effort into fermenting country wines or infusing exotic vermouths”



**Lizzie Farmer,
director /
owner of
Tellus Mater**

Wild food foraging. The trend, its rise in popularity and the general public's desire to learn how to forage their own wild foods has been gaining pace at astounding speed these last few years here in the UK. For other neighbouring countries and beyond, the practice, art and tradition of foraging for one's family was largely unheard of a decade ago here in the UK as a mainstream hobby or activity, and also had a stigma attached to doing so.

The rise of social media as a platform to share both beautiful images of wicker baskets filled with wild foraged ingredients for additions to meals, and 'How To' guides with wild foods dominating both reels and stories (and now a growing number of quality books too), has led to an acceleration of it as an established trend, starkly aligning with our desire collectively to do both better for both our bodies and the environment. Foraging is wonderful –

it's clean, free eating, sustainable, easy to get started with even as a beginner, and a hobby and lifestyle choice that you can immerse yourself in quickly... with a few simple rules to be mindful of.

“Foraging is wonderful – it's clean, free eating, sustainable, easy to get started with even as a beginner, and a hobby and lifestyle choice that you can immerse yourself in quickly”

Some folks I have witnessed discussing the 'art' or act of foraging, have alluded to the fact it is imperative you are an aspiring mycologist or botanist to get started with discovering wild foods that you can consume safely. Of course, utmost care is needed as you develop a taste for wild foods and wish to progress with your learning to identify more advanced species as you grow in confidence. I urge everyone entering the wild food world to arm themselves with a good book or two to use as a reference point. However, if you start off gently and focus on the simpler species such as dandelion, nettles, wild garlic and dock (this is my new favourite to talk

How to make a basic flower wine

For a classic flower wine in a standard demijohn you'll need:

3.5 litres of flowers

4.5 litres of water

1.4 kilograms of sugar rind and juice of two lemons and one orange

A pack of wine yeast

Yeast nutrient

450 grams of raisins

1. Put the flower heads in a large stainless-steel saucepan, boil the water and pour it on to the flowers. Cover with the lid. Stir every day for three days, keeping it covered in between.
2. After three days, bring to the boil, adding the sugar and citrus rinds, and simmer for an hour. Remove from the heat and add the citrus juices. When the temperature has dropped to 20–21 degrees C, add the yeast and the yeast nutrient. Cover and leave for a further three days.
3. Strain into a demijohn, add the raisins and a fermenting lock (a bubbler) to seal the demijohn. Leave until the wine clears then siphon it into a clean jar, cork and leave for 6 months. Siphon it off into bottles and keep it for a further 6 months to mature to its best.
4. This recipe can be used for all the flower wines. For a sweeter dessert wine, increase the sugar to 1.5 kilograms (stopping fermentation to leave sweetness or you'll end up with a stronger alcohol %); for a dry wine reduce to 1.2 kilograms.

about as many of us are so familiar with it already re nettle stings), you can be well on your way without an unsubstantiated fear of needing a visit to the hospital. With the food industry here in the UK now recognising the growing demand, there has been an influx of new products both in stores and dishes in restaurants showcasing some of the beautiful wild foods native to the UK. Which is wonderful. When stepping foot outside to start exploring what you may have locally to eat, on top of books start simply and look firstly at a hedgerow, lane or greenspace local to you. Most of what I forage for to incorporate into daily meals is to be found within three miles of my home. A rule of thumb is if you are not sure DO NOT consume it. Perhaps take photos or a sample home to research. Do think like a deer and graze gently at your foraging spots. A little here, a little there and by doing this your impact is both minimal, and in keeping with the consensus and values of the foraging community are doing it with grace and care, and who knows – you may find the process itself therapeutic too.

Al Fresco FEASTING

Picnic season is finally upon us, and these are our favourite treats to celebrate with

1. Yeo Valley Kefir Mango & Passionfruit, from £2.00, available in most major stores including Sainsbury's

This kefir offers a vibrant, tropical twist on traditional kefir. Crafted from organic British milk and fermented with 14 live cultures, it delivers a creamy, tangy taste that's both refreshing and gut-friendly. A source of calcium and protein, it's perfect for a healthy snack or breakfast addition.

2. Garlic Farm Smoked Garlic Balsamic Vinegar, £13.95, thegarlicfarm.co.uk

The Garlic Farm's Smoked Garlic Balsamic Vinegar is a truly unique infusion of hot, oak-smoked garlic and rich balsamic flavours. Drizzled over salad, served as a dipping sauce or used in a marinade, the distinctive smoked garlic taste makes this balsamic vinegar totally moreish.

3. Delamere Dairy Plain Goats' Yogurt, £2.60, Ocado, Morrisons, Spar, Booths, Budgens, Londis

A creamy, versatile dairy product made from pasteurised goats' milk. Free from artificial additives and preservatives, it's suitable for those with cow's milk sensitivities. Ideal as a snack, in smoothies, or as an ingredient in cooking. Vegetarian Society Approved.

4. Gusto Low Cola, 12 pack for £25.99, available at Ocado, Abel & Cole and drinkgusto.co.uk

Gusto's Low-Calorie Cola is a full-flavoured and unique cola that's both low calorie and free from chemicals and artificial sweeteners. With a unique blend of organic spices, essential oils, African cola nut and Fairtrade Madagascan vanilla it's a delectable cola treat sweetened with Fairtrade Mexican agave.

5. Gusto Blood Orange, 12 pack for £25.99, available at Ocado, Abel & Cole and drinkgusto.co.uk

This lightly sparkling Sicilian Blood Orange from Gusto Organic uses whole organic blood oranges from the slopes of Mount Etna; their peel and juice deliver a wonderful complex range of flavours from citrus to fresh raspberries. Free from refined sugar and Fairtrade-certified, it's a sparkling bottle of sunshine that has your summer covered.



6. Sandford Orchard Devon Mist Cider, £2.25, available in selected Morrisons stores and sandfordorchards.co.uk

A medium, naturally cloudy cider made with fresh juice from Devon apples, unfiltered for extra flavour and texture. It's gently sparkling and bursting with the taste of ripe, heritage West Country cider apples, all with a beautifully rounded finish. It's a traditional cider, made for today.

7. Yeo Valley Free Range Beef Steak Burgers, £5.25, available in most major stores including Sainsbury's

Crafted from 100% British organic, grass-fed beef, ensuring a rich, natural flavour. Raised on free-range pastures without artificial fertilisers or pesticides, these burgers offer a sustainable and ethical choice. Their succulent texture and meaty taste make them ideal for grilling.

8. Little Yeos Red Berries Whole Milk Yoghurt, £3 multipack, available in most major stores including Sainsbury's

A creamy, organic treat made with British whole milk and blended with strawberry and raspberry purées. Free from artificial additives, it's suitable for children aged six months and above. Packaged in recyclable pouches, it's perfect for on-the-go snacking.

9. Thermos ICON Flask, £30, thermos.co.uk

Wherever your day takes you, the ICON FLASK is built to keep up. With a durable stainless steel body, twist-and-pour stopper, and built-in insulated cup, it's perfect for outdoor adventures, road

trips, or long days on the go. A fold-away handle, non-slip base, and dishwasher-safe design make it as convenient as it is reliable.

10. Lidl Honey & Mustard Pork Sausages, £2.49, lidl.co.uk

These sausages offer a delightful blend of sweet honey and tangy mustard, enhancing the rich pork flavour. These Great British Food Award-winning sausages are perfect for grilling or pan-frying, making them a versatile addition to any meal.

11. Purely Pesto Basil Pesto, £3.50, purleypesto.co.uk

A vibrant, fresh blend crafted from organic basil, cashew nuts and olive oil. Made in small batches without artificial additives, it delivers a rich, nutty flavor with a delightful texture. Ideal for pasta, sandwiches, or as a dip, it's a versatile kitchen staple.

12. Butlers Stratford Blue, £4, available in Waitrose and butlerscheeses.co.uk

Something of a dark horse (not literally!), Stratford Blue is delicate, creamy and perfectly rich. The blue bite develops with warmth but soon mellows in a sea of creaminess making Stratford Blue cheese truly unique and unbelievably moreish.



Stylish tipples

Simple tricks like pre-mixing cocktails in a stylish jug and taking it to the table will not only save you time, but make you look like a master host too! We adore this pitcher made with glass and rattan from Gisela Graham (£39.99, giselagraham.co.uk). Its generous sizing will keep plenty of guests refreshed, whether you decide to fill it with a zesty homemade lemonade or go all out with Pimm's.



Seasonal sweetness

Whether you're eating in the park, on the beach or even your garden lawn, make it extra special with this sweet picnic blanket from Sophie Allport (£53, sophieallport.com). Complete with faux leather straps to make it super easy to carry around and water-resistant backing to keep you dry if the ground is wet, it's a must-have for fans of the most iconic British fruit of summer – and there's plenty of matching accessories, too!



Up your salad game

'Tis the season of salads, and if they're homegrown they deserve to be showcased even more! That's why this summer we're treating ourselves to this stunning Collinsville wooden bowl and serving spoon and fork set (£34.99, wayfair.co.uk). Made from bamboo, a natural and renewable resource, it will make even the simplest of salads shine.



Sunny SEASON

Make the most of the warmer weather with our pick of the best kit for outdoor eating



Smart scents

Eating outdoors can invite some unwelcome visitors, but a traditional citronella candle will keep those pesky bugs at bay. We particularly love St Eval's variation (£15, st-eval.com), which brings together the zesty notes of citronella, floral rose petals and fresh apple and is inspired by the coast of North Cornwall. Indeed, the tin showcases a hand-drawn illustration by a Cornish artist to enjoy while you while away your time al fresco.

Light the way

While summer evenings can seem to stretch out endlessly, there will come a time when you need to shed some light on proceedings so you can carry on relaxing in the warm moonlight. A hurricane lantern allows you to do just that, and Feuerhand's classic style – it's over 125 years old! – is both temperature resistant and shatterproof, so you can safely continue the celebrations. The Baby Special 276 (£69.99, feuerhand.com) is our pick.



Set the scene

Make an occasion out of even the simplest of summer suppers with a beautiful tablecloth. At this time of year we particularly like gingham – and this gentle blue option from Walton's (£40, waltonsofryorkshire.co.uk) is sure to be a favourite for years to come. 100% cotton, it will elevate every culinary moment.



Floral Fancies

Celebrate the floral colours and flavours of summer with these pretty-as-a-picture biscuits from Foodie Flavours



Parma Violet Iced Biscuits

Prepare: 25 minutes, plus drying time

Cook: 12 minutes

Biscuits:

225g plain flour
75g self raising flour
100g caster sugar
100g unsalted butter, chilled
1 large egg, slightly beaten
1-2 tsp whole milk
1 tsp Foodie Flavours Gorilla Vanilla

Icing:

300g royal icing sugar, sifted
2-3 tbsp water
15 drops Foodie Flavours Violet Flavouring
Purple food colouring
Gold food paint (optional)

1. To make the biscuits, mix together the flours in a large mixing bowl.

2. Cut the butter into small chunks and add to the bowl. Rub the butter into the mixture using your fingertips until you have a breadcrumb consistency. Stir in the sugar.

3. Make a well in the centre of the mixture and add the egg and vanilla. Mix together and form a ball of dough. If the mixture is too dry, add 1-2 tsp of milk.

4. Place the dough onto a sheet of non-stick baking paper and roll out using a rolling pin. You want the dough to have a thickness of between 5mm and 7mm. Put the sheet of rolled out dough in the fridge to chill for at least 30 mins.

5. Once chilled, cut the dough using a round cookie cutter. We used a 7cm/2.75 inch cutter.

6. Place the cut dough onto a baking tray lined with either a silicone mat or non-stick baking paper, leaving a gap between each.

7. Put the baking tray in a preheated oven at 160°C fan and bake for 12-15 mins.

8. Remove from the oven and leave the biscuits on the tray for 5 mins, then transfer to a wire rack to cool.

9. To make the icing, pour the royal icing sugar into a shallow bowl and make a well in the centre. Add 1 tbsp warm water to the well, along with the violet flavouring and stir, gradually incorporating the royal icing sugar.

10. When the icing gets too thick to stir, add another tsp of warm water and keep repeating these steps until the icing runs off the spoon in ribbons and forms a pattern on top of the bowl of icing. When you jiggle the bowl the pattern should disappear.

11. Add a few drops of purple food colouring to the icing and swirl it around using a cocktail stick or sharp knife.

12. Dunk the top of a biscuit into the icing, lightly pushing it down. Lift and hold upside down to allow any excess icing to run off. Tap the biscuit on your work surface and pop any air bubbles using a cocktail stick (or similar).

13. Repeat for the rest of the biscuits, swirling the icing in between each. Add more food colouring if necessary.

14. Either dry the biscuits over night at room temperature or place them on a baking tray and pop them into the oven at its lowest temperature for approx. 30 mins.

15. To further decorate, dip a small food safe paint brush into some gold edible paint, then flick the brush to splatter the paint across each biscuit.

16. Enjoy!

To add a delicious floral touch to your bakes, you can stock up on Foodie Flavours Violet Natural Flavouring (RRP £5.99) from **foodieflavours.com** and **amazon.co.uk**



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Classic Comfort

Tom Parker-Bowles
shares his family's
take on British all-time
favourites

“Food is everything. Food is life,” smiles Tom Parker-Bowles in his kitchen, “so even after 25 years of doing this I still wake up every day excited about what I’m going to eat.”

We’re here to discuss *Let’s Eat*, the food writer’s most personal recipe book which has recently been reissued – much to the delight of food lovers (including this one).

When it came to the re-release of *Let’s Eat*, nothing – apart from a few supplier shout-outs – needed to be changed; testament to the timelessness of Tom’s philosophy of good, seasonal food cooked with love and respect.

For him, food is more than sustenance, it’s a luscious way of life – and the ultimate way to bring people together. “My grasp of foreign languages is pretty second rate, but sitting down and breaking bread together, smiling and rubbing your tummy, is a universal language.”

Dishes don’t need to be complicated, Tom says, in fact often the simpler they are the better – but eating seasonally is a non-negotiable that was instilled in him as a child. “We were a greedy family, always talking about food, and going to the butcher or fishmonger was a celebratory moment. Of course my sister and I were desperate for the processed foods everyone else was eating, but we grew up with an understanding and appreciation of where food came from – which I am grateful for.”

The family’s rural groundings inspired their menus. Local chicken and fresh, seasonal asparagus were the order of the day, alongside food grown, shot and fished for by his father. “It was a very traditional English upbringing with really good food, and it began in me a love for excellent British produce.”

Read on for two of the most popular – and timeless – recipes for the book, ripe for relishing with family and friends.



My mother's roast chicken

My wife swore that if she heard me mention this dish one more time, she'd shove it where the sun don't beam. Well, words to that effect. Because this was such a staple of my youth, I roll it out any time anyone asks if my mother is a good cook – which is pretty much all of the time. She is, although she was always less bothered with the cakes, puddings and pies side of things: anything that requires exact measurements. Which was fine by us. All my sister and I really wanted was Findus Crispy Pancakes and Ice Magic chocolate sauce. Sadly, we had to seek those illicit pleasures elsewhere. This is a classic recipe, cooked in the top right-hand oven of the Aga. I've adapted it for normal ovens. My mother insists that chopping off that dangly bit above the cavity and putting it on top of the bird improves the flavour. As it releases about a ton of schmaltz, or chicken fat, I'd agree. Buy the best chicken you can afford. Rather eat one decent free-range than four of those flabby imported beasts with all the depth of a puddle.

Prepare: 10 minutes

Cook: 1 hour plus resting time

Serves: 4

1 unwaxed lemon
1 x 1.8 kg/4 lb chicken (the best you can afford), rinsed inside and out with cold water and then drained
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
About 75 g/3 oz butter, at room temperature

Gravy:

200ml/7 fl oz dry white wine
450 ml/16 fl oz chicken stock (a cube is fine)

1. Preheat the oven to 220°C/425°F/Gas Mark 7.
2. Pierce the lemon with a small knife and 'shove it up the chicken's bottom'. Season the bird with salt and pepper, inside and out, then massage the butter all over it. Cook for 20 minutes, then turn the oven down to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 and cook for a further 40 minutes.
3. Poke a skewer into the thickest part of the thigh: the juices should be golden, not pink. If not, cook for a little longer, then retest. Let it rest for 15–20 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, for the gravy, spoon excess fat from the roasting tin, but leave a little in the tin. Put the tin over a high heat. When everything starts



“Because this was such a staple of my youth, I roll it out any time anyone asks if my mother is a good cook – which is pretty much all of the time”

bubbling, deglaze with the white wine. Simmer while the alcohol cooks off, then add the stock, stirring all the time. Tip in any juices from the resting chicken. Boil to reduce a little, then strain through a sieve into a warm jug.

5. Serve the chicken with the gravy.

Trifle

Is there any dish less suited to its name than trifle? This glorious spectacle of a pudding is neither slight nor trivial. Or frivolous either. It requires hard work (baking the sponge, making the custard) and dedication. And it's miles removed

from the school version, a sorry travesty and depressing mix of tinned fruit and lurid yellow custard (mixed from custard powder). Trifle has a long history, starting out as the bastard child of tipsy cake (sponge bathed in booze) and basic custard, little more than almond milk. Over time, the two dishes melded by way of a thickened, spiced cream to create this buxom queen of the festive table. It was a dish for the rich (good ones always were; the poor made do on scraps and gruel), but there's no authentic version. Aside from making everything fresh, a huge glass bowl is essential to show off all those lovely



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For the custard:

600 ml/20 fl oz single cream
1 vanilla pod, split
3 eggs
4 egg yolks
50 g/1½ oz caster sugar, plus extra for sprinkling
2 level teaspoons cornflour

For the layers:

140 g/5 oz strawberry jelly tablet
4 tablespoons fino sherry
350 g/12 oz raspberries
300 ml/10 fl oz double cream
2 x 40 g/1½ oz Crunchie bars, roughly chopped
2 tablespoons flaked almonds, toasted

1. First, make the sponge. Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/ Gas 4. Butter a 15 cm/6 inch round cake tin and line with baking parchment. Beat all the sponge ingredients together in a mixing bowl until smooth. Spoon into the tin, level the surface and bake for 20 minutes, or until lightly golden, well risen and the top springs back when lightly pressed with a fingertip. Leave to cool in the tin, then loosen the edges and turn out onto a wire rack to cool completely.

2. To make the custard, put the cream into a saucepan with the vanilla pod and heat slowly, until it reaches boiling

point. Leave to stand for 10–15 minutes for the flavours to develop. Remove the vanilla pod, scrape out the seeds and add to the cream. Discard the pod. In a bowl, whisk the eggs, yolks, sugar and cornflour together until well mixed. Reheat the cream, then gradually whisk it into the egg mixture until smooth, using a balloon whisk. Return the mixture to the pan over a medium–low heat, stirring gently until thick. Put it into a bowl, whisk again, then sprinkle the surface with a little extra sugar or cover with a piece of crumpled and wetted non-stick baking parchment to prevent a skin from forming. Cover and transfer to the fridge to chill well.

3. Make up the jelly as directed on the packet, then allow it to cool. Slice the sponge and arrange it in the base of a 2.5 litre/4½ pint glass bowl. Douse in sherry until wet but not soggy. Top with a good layer of raspberries, keeping a few to decorate. Pour in the liquid jelly, cover and leave in the fridge to set. Spoon the custard over the set jelly.

4. Whisk the cream until it form soft swirls, then fold in two-thirds of the Crunchie. Spoon the cream over the custard and leave as soft waves. Sprinkle with the remaining Crunchie, raspberries and the flaked almonds. Chill until ready to serve.



These recipes are extracted from *Let's Eat* by Tom Parker Bowles out in reissue now. Published by Pavilion, Harper Collins. Photography by Christian Barnett 2025

layers. If you are artistically inclined, the top of a trifle is a blank canvas on which to indulge your most outrageous candied fruit and petalled whims.

Prepare: 20 minutes

Cook: 30 minutes

Serves: 4

For the sponge:

50 g/1½ oz butter, softened, plus extra to butter the dish
50 g/1½ oz caster sugar
1 large egg, lightly beaten
50 g/1½ oz self-raising flour, sifted





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Take Stock

TRUEfoods doesn't just offer a masterfully crafted range of stocks and broths; it also provides a deliciously simple way to travel the world...

A great stock is the beating heart of a huge number of dishes, but as any home cook will know, it takes hours of preparation and simmering to get a DIY batch just right. Thankfully, TRUEfoods is on-hand with its flavour-packed array of stocks and broths to take the time-consuming processes out of your cooking – leaving you to master the other elements, comfortable in the knowledge that TRUEfoods has the heart of the dish covered.

Since 2007, TRUEfoods has been slow-roasting bones, double-filtering stocks and abiding by time-honoured culinary principles to ensure that no stone is left unturned in their mission to produce the best stocks and broths possible. The resulting pouches are of such high quality, in fact, that they play a key role in the menus of Michelin-starred restaurants up and down the country as well as in home kitchens helmed by passionate cooks.

Natural, honest ingredients are the secret to these stocks' success. They contain no preservatives or flavour enhancers, only real food sourced ethically and sustainably for optimum flavour.

No wonder premium retailers such as Fortnum & Mason, Ginger Pig, Whole Foods, Booths, Selfridges, Waitrose and Provenance Butchers are proud to have the range on their esteemed shelves – as well as TRUEfoods popular online store.

Kombu Dashi Broth

Prepare: 5 minutes

Cook: 10 minutes

Serves: 2

500g TRUEfoods Kombu Dashi Broth
150g of chicken breast (or any meat or fish of your choice)
150g mixed vegetables like pak choi, baby corn, mangetout, tenderstem broccoli
75g exotic mushrooms
100g cooked udon noodles (or noodles of your choice)
10g spring onions, sliced
10g red onion, sliced
10g fresh coriander
3g sliced fresh chilli

1. Slice the chicken breast into strips. Cut the vegetables and mushrooms into bite size pieces. Cook the noodles in boiling water till tender with a little bite left. Refresh under cold running water and drain well till needed. Thinly slice the chillies and roughly chop the coriander.

2. Bring the broth to a simmer and add the chicken breast. Poach for one minute. Add the vegetables and cook for a further 2 minutes. Add the cooked noodles and simmer for one minute till the vegetables are tender and the chicken is cooked through. Add the chillies to your liking and finish with the fresh coriander just before serving.

INTRODUCING TRUEfoods' Asian range

Adventurous and health-conscious food lovers are sure to be wowed by the latest products in the TRUEfoods stable. Sold chilled and ready to use straight away, these broths provide authentic and restaurant-worthy Asian flavour without compromise.

Light Chinese Broth

A delicate and aromatic broth perfect for serving with noodles or dumplings, this has a base of fine quality chicken stock, Chinese rice wine, spring onion, ginger, garlic, coriander and lemongrass and boasts a clean, savoury finish. Low in fat and calories, it's ideal for health-conscious foodies looking for an authentic taste of China.

Kombu Dashi

This plant-based broth is rich with umami thanks to its carefully crafted blend of kombu (seaweed) and shiitake mushrooms, and absolutely no artificial ingredients. It's the ultimate foundation for ramen and miso soup, and its true Japanese depth of flavour makes it an optimum base for Asian stocks and sauces.

Fragrant Thai Broth

An aromatic blend of lemongrass, kaffir lime leaves, coriander, red chilli and galangal, this broth offers a bold taste of Southeast Asia and a skillfully crafted balance of freshness and depth. It is delicious served in Thai soups, curries and noodle dishes.

"It's a brilliant idea to launch a new Oriental range of stock. Today's chefs are constantly exploring global influences – as an example, from Japanese, Thai, Chinese, South Korean to Nordic cuisines – even in the subtlest ways. We need to open our minds beyond traditional European cooking and embrace the incredible diversity the world has to offer. There is so much to learn, and this range will help chefs and home cooks alike to discover and integrate new flavours with confidence. I'm certain it will be a great success"

– Daniel Galmiche, Michelin Star chef, TV chef, consultant and published author

For more recipes and authentic Asian inspiration, visit truefoodsltd.com/blogs/recipes

7 of this year's tastiest FOODIE FESTIVALS

Whether you have a penchant for seafood, grilled meat or cheese, 2025's festival season has you covered

Every corner of Britain (from sprawling cities, to seaside fishing villages) has its own unique culinary treasures and traditions. And there's no better way to learn more about regional specialities, delicacies (and eccentricities) than by getting in the car and heading to a local food festival.

Here are just a few to circle on your calendar this year.

Taste of East Anglia

WHERE: **Kentwell Hall, Long Melford, Suffolk**

WHEN: **14th June**

Kentwell Hall, one of the UK's finest examples of a Tudor mansion, provides a striking backdrop for this celebration of East Anglia's artisan producers.

Eighty producers are attending in 2025, selling fine chocolates, local craft ales, award-winning bread and much more, alongside a buzzing demo tent and a raft of street food vendors.

This year an area dedicated to the region's best vineyards has been created, with free talks and pairings from businesses including Thorington Mill, Toppsfield Vineyard and Gunyard Vineyard.

Another new feature is the BBQ Zone, manned by influencer and expert Jack Rowbottom of Jack's Meat Shack, who'll host a number of 'grillmasters' showing off their live fire cooking skills.

tasteofeastanglia.co.uk

Smoke & Fire Festival

WHERE: **Windsor Enclosure, Ascot Racecourse, Ascot, Berkshire**

WHEN: **5th-6th July**

If barbecued food is your jam, you simply cannot miss this event – the biggest celebration of smoked and grilled food in the country.

There's just so much to see and do. Stallholders selling grilling equipment, rubs, sauces and essentials. Chef demonstrations from the likes of Dark Side of the Grill, Matt Tebbutt, and Jurgen Hofman. Music from bands including 90s legends Toploader and Dodgy.



And that's just for starters. Other highlights for 2025 include the World Butcher Wars and the Tacover. This new zone, dedicated to tacos and tequila, will be a feast for the senses, hosting competitions to find the best margarita and best taco in Britain, as well as a hot taco challenge.

Elevate your day by booking an advance seat in the Ember Lounge, where chefs will cook multi-course tasting menus right in front of you.

smokeandfirefestival.com

Lymington Seafood Festival

WHERE: **Bath Road Park, Lymington, Hampshire**

WHEN: **11th-13th July**

This festival is a huge deal on the seafood scene. Organiser Richard Nowell says visitors this year can expect to find more than 100 different dishes to try from traders – including soft shell crab, cod cheeks and



seafood tacos – with a special focus on cooking over fire, and an opportunity to sample the likes of Nordic smoked salmon flammlachs.

TV's Chris Bavin hosts the Chef's Stage, introducing experts from Chewton Glen, Lime Wood and The Pig, and the on-site cookery school is a great place to learn new seafood skills. Every class ends with a glass of wine to pair with the dish you've cooked.

"Set to stunning views across the Solent, it's the perfect place to gather friends for a local craft beer, rum or gin and dance away to soul, blues, Motown, ska and heaps of pop and rock classics," Richard adds.

lymingtonseafoodfestival.co.uk





LYMINGTON SEAFOOD FESTIVAL



FEAST ON



FEAST ON

Feast On

WHERE: **Clifton Downs, Bristol**

WHEN: **24th-27th July**

Following a hugely successful debut last year, Feast On is back for its second installment, championing Bristol's incredible food and drink scene at the Clifton Downs.

The spotlight will shine firmly on producers and eateries that have contributed to putting the city on the foodie map, with demonstrations from creative chefs and innovative restaurants, street food and food stalls being joined by live music, sustainability talks and family-friendly activities.

New for this year are a series of summer work parties on Thursday afternoon. Designed with team bonding in mind, they offer the chance to try food and take part in activities such as axe throwing and wine tasting.

feaston.co.uk



Edinburgh Foodies Festival

WHERE: **Inverleith Park, Edinburgh**

WHEN: **1st-3rd August**

The UK's biggest touring celebrity food and music festival is back in the Scottish city for the 20th year, and organisers say it just might be the best yet.

Known as 'Gastro-Glastonbury', the three-day event will feature demonstrations from *MasterChef*, *Great British Menu* and *Great British Bake Off* contestants alongside Michelin and award-winning chefs.

Already announced are The Hebridean Baker, Dean Banks and Gary Maclean.

Also featuring in the jam-packed schedule are a Cake & Desserts Theatre, Kids Cookery School, Drinks Theatre (with tutored Champagne, beer, cider, cocktail and wine tastings), the Shopping Village, Artisan Market and Feasting Tent, offering street food from across the world.

The Great Taste Market is a new feature this year, as are the Tasting Theatre (discover something new in a themed tasting), and the International Cook School, where you can learn new techniques and cook a dish to take away. And if all that's not enough to whet your appetite, visit the Fire Stage for chilli



eating competitions, dance the afternoon away at a silent disco, or listen to music headliners Scouting For Girls and The Wanted 2.0.

foodiesfestival.com

Harrogate Food & Drink Festival

WHERE: **Ripley Castle, Harrogate, Yorkshire**

WHEN: **23th-25th August**

As one of the biggest counties in England, Yorkshire has a huge amount to offer Britain's foodies. Stunning seafood, heritage cheeses ... and Fat Rascals!

Harrogate Food & Drink Festival is all about showing love to the people, producers and places that contribute to Yorkshire's culinary greatness.

Stroll the Fine Artisans Market to discover local charcuterie, fudgy brownies and beers. Watch chefs from some of Harrogate's most acclaimed establishments cook their signature dishes in live demonstrations. And entice your tastebuds with street food from some of the best traders in the UK.

Eight independent bars have refreshments covered (take a seat on a colourful deck chair while you sip).

And there's oodles of entertainment planned too, as over 26 performers bring live music to the event.

harrogatefoodfestival.com



Sturminster Cheese Festival

WHERE: **Sturminster Newton Recreation Ground, Sturminster Newton, Dorset**

WHEN: **13th-14th September**

The area around Sturminster Newton was once referred to as 'the vale of little dairies' by Thomas Hardy, with farmhouse cheesemaking being commonplace. This festival, first held in 1999 (shortly after its calf market - the largest in Europe - closed) pays homage to this part of Dorset and its rich cheese and dairy history.

Meet some of the finest cheesemakers from the area to find out more about their fascinating craft, while trying a huge variety of cheeses - from soft, creamy Brie-styles to pack-a-punch blues.

Also attending are a number of other food producers and crafters, and street food traders (don't go home without trying some gooey Raclette). There's plenty to keep young visitors interested too.

cheesefestival.co.uk



PHOTOGRAPHER © ISSY CROKER

TEMPTING BITES

Wow your guests with these deliciously moreish – and deceptively simple – recipes from **Thomas Straker**



“If you add some excellent mozzarella, you can elevate this to become a main course”

Caponata

Aubergine is the star of the show in this classic Sicilian dish, which is a great way to celebrate the abundance of summer. This recipe makes enough to have some left over, which is great as it's arguably even better the next day. If you add some excellent mozzarella, you can elevate this to become a main course.

Prepare: 10 minutes

Cook: 15 minutes

Serves: 4–6 as a side dish (or see recipe introduction)

60g pine nuts
2 tbsps sultanas

1 litre vegetable oil
2 aubergines, cut into 3cm chunks
100ml extra virgin olive oil
2 red onions, thinly sliced
3 celery sticks, sliced into chunks
2 garlic cloves, finely grated
2 tbsp sugar
4 tbsp red wine vinegar
2 excellent, ripe beefsteak-type tomatoes, roughly chopped (or a 400g can of very good-quality plum tomatoes, chopped)
Leaves from a small bunch (15g) of mint, roughly chopped
Leaves from a small bunch (15g) of parsley, roughly chopped
Sea salt flakes

1. Start by toasting the pine nuts: you can do this gently in a dry frying pan, or in an oven preheated to 160°C/140°C fan for 8 minutes. Soak the sultanas in boiling water in a small bowl.
2. Put the vegetable oil in a deep heavy-based saucepan and heat until it reaches 180°C. Fry the aubergine chunks for a couple of minutes until golden brown and soft. Remove with a slotted spoon and place on kitchen paper to blot off any excess oil. At this point, drain and roughly chop the sultanas.
3. Set a large frying pan over a medium heat and pour in the olive oil. Add the sliced red onions to the pan with a generous pinch of salt and fry for 2 minutes, then add the celery and garlic and cook for a further 4 minutes until softened but not taking on any colour. At this point, add the sugar and vinegar and cook off quickly to reduce the vinegar to a glaze. Add the chopped tomatoes and continue to cook until most of the liquid has reduced.
4. Transfer the fried aubergines to the pan, along with the chopped sultanas and toasted pine nuts. Stir gently to combine, being careful not to break up the aubergine chunks.
5. Cool to room temperature, check

the seasoning, then add the mint and parsley to serve.

Crushed potatoes

Try to find the La Ratte variety of potato for this. These irregular-shaped long potatoes have a great waxy dense flesh, which allows them to hold up to crushing and roasting with burnt butter. Herbs and garlic, added at the right time, perfume this dish beautifully and catapult it right to the top of the potato tree.

Prepare: 5 minutes

Cook: 20 minutes

Serves: 4 as a side dish

1kg La Ratte potatoes
100ml extra virgin olive oil
100g unsalted butter, cubed
4 garlic cloves, peeled and bashed with the side of a blade
6 thyme sprigs
12 rosemary sprigs
Sea salt flakes

1. Boil the potatoes in well-salted water for about 10 minutes, or until easily pierced with a knife. Drain and allow to cool slightly, then gently crush each potato with the palm of your hand.
2. Set a large frying pan over a high heat and add the olive oil. Once hot, add the crushed potatoes and cook until crispy. Flip them and repeat on the other side, adding the butter and bashed garlic along with the herbs for the final 2–3 minutes.
3. Serve the potatoes in warmed bowls, spooning over the buttery juices from the pan and sprinkling with sea salt flakes.

Chicken schnitzel, burnt salsa, fennel slaw

There is something quite special about a smashed chicken breast covered in breadcrumbs and fried in oil. This dish is crunchy, juicy and slathered in a sharp, spicy tomato salsa with a

refreshing fennel slaw. It was the first recipe video I made during lockdown and it was something I always knew people would connect with.

Prepare: 20 minutes

Cook: 15 minutes

Serves: 4

4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts
100g plain flour
2 eggs, lightly beaten
200g panko crumbs, or a mix of fresh breadcrumbs and panko
Vegetable oil
Sea salt flakes and freshly cracked black pepper
1 lemon, cut into wedges, to serve

For the salsa:

300g cherry tomatoes
1 onion, roughly chopped
5 garlic cloves, peeled and bashed with the side of a blade
1 long red chilli
Leaves from 30g bunch of coriander, finely chopped

80ml olive oil
60ml white wine vinegar
For the slaw
2 fennel bulbs, thinly sliced
3 tbsp mayonnaise
Juice of 2 lemons

1. Start by preparing the chicken schnitzel. Use a sharp knife to cut each breast horizontally nearly in half, leaving a piece attached so it remains in a single piece, then open it out to butterfly the breasts. Place the first between sheets of clingfilm or baking paper. Gently bash them out one by one with a rolling pin to an even thickness of ½–1cm.

2. Put the flour, eggs and crumbs into 3 separate shallow bowls and season the flour well. Get 2 baking trays lined with baking paper ready for the breaded schnitzels to rest on later.

3. First, dip an escalope into the seasoned flour, shaking off any excess, before passing it through the eggs. Finally, press into the crumbs, applying a little pressure to ensure the whole



“Herbs and garlic, added at the right time, perfume this dish beautifully and catapult it right to the top of the potato tree”

escalope is coated. Try to keep 1 hand dry at all times by alternating between the wet and dry bowls. Put on to a lined baking tray until ready to cook, then repeat to coat all the schnitzels. If preparing them in advance, be sure to keep the escalopes separate; you can stack them on a plate if each is separated by a sheet of baking paper.

4. Next, make the salsa. Place a cast-iron or heavy-based pan over a high heat. Once hot, add the whole cherry tomatoes, onion, garlic and chilli and cook for 3–4 minutes until everything is well-charred all over. Remove from the pan and allow to cool, then finely chop. Put in a bowl with the coriander, olive oil, vinegar and salt to taste. Set aside at room temperature.

5. To make the slaw, mix the fennel, mayonnaise, lemon juice and a generous pinch of salt in a bowl. Taste for seasoning, adding more salt as needed.

6. Heat 2cm of vegetable oil in a large frying pan until hot (you want it to reach 180°C). Gently lower in 1 schnitzel and cook for about 2 minutes until golden, turning to ensure it cooks evenly. Remove to a wire rack or baking tray lined with kitchen paper and season with sea salt flakes. Repeat until all the schnitzels are cooked.

7. Serve the chicken schnitzels topped with the tomato salsa and fennel slaw, with lemon wedges for squeezing.



Recipes extracted from *Food You Want to Eat* by Thomas Straker (Bloomsbury). Photography by Issy Croker

THE ALLURE OF *al fresco*

Step into the great outdoors and expand your eating horizons this summer

It's a very special feeling, eating outside. And as sure as the sky is blue, us Brits will be out in force making the most of every ray of sunshine and every kiss of the summer breeze as often as we can this year. After all – we deserve it after a long, cold and wet winter!

Want to try something different? Let us inspire you ...



HOME

Pizza Party

Are you one of those lucky people who invested in a pizza oven during lockdown? Bravo! They're a super useful investment piece for the garden. Did you know you can use some of them to make bread, slow roast meats, and even to create fabulous desserts?

If you haven't taken the leap yet, there's so much choice right now in this space, with pizza ovens available from budget (under £100) to mid-range (Ooni) all the way up to the super-duper Italian beasts which will cook multiple pizzas at a time.

Set the scene: Create a relaxed Italian vibe in the garden. Throw a simple cloth over a trellis table, drape fairy lights around the fence, decant a few bottles of red wine into carafes, and gather the kit for a few spritzes.

Perfect pizza dough: Start two days before eating. For four people mix 100g strong white bread flour with a pinch of dried yeast, a pinch of caster sugar, and enough room temperature water to make a paste the texture of thick double cream. Cover and leave in a warm place overnight. The next day measure out 500g strong white bread flour

and add to this the premix with 1 tsp fine sea salt, 7g dried yeast and 300ml warm water. Mix with a knife, leave for 30 minutes to rest, then knead on a lightly floured surface until smooth. Turn into a large, oiled tub with a lid and pop in the fridge overnight. Remove from the fridge two to three hours *before cooking.

It's all in the sauce: You don't need to spend hours making pizza sauce. For eight pizzas blitz two tins of tomatoes with Mediterranean vegetables (available in most supermarkets) with a handful of basil, a couple of cloves of garlic, a drizzle of good olive oil and seasoning to taste.

Flavour forward: Have fun with your toppings. If you're going OG (with a Margarita) choose the best San Marzano tomatoes and buffalo mozzarella. But if you want to be different, how about trying the Cinderella (roasted pumpkin or squash, blue cheese, roasted onions and pumpkin seeds), The Whole Hog (sausage, bacon, bacon jam and crushed Frazzle crisps), or the Honolulu (ham, smoked cheese and spicy pineapple salsa)?



Pizza like a pro

1. Create a rolling and prepping area right next to the pizza oven with everything you need.
2. If you're cooking for a crowd of more than six, part-bake your pizza bases at 220°C in your usual oven for eight to 10 minutes, layering them between greaseproof paper as you go. Then top and bake in the pizza oven when it's ready. This gives you more time to enjoy the party... without flour all over your clothes!
3. Don't top fresh pizza dough until it's on the (lightly dusted with flour or semolina) peel – they're easier to handle this way.
4. Use a laser thermometer to check the temperature of the pizza oven. Don't attempt to cook your dough until it's up to 250-260°C.
5. Use the initial heat, while you're firing up the kindling, to char halved citrus fruits for cocktails, or to roast a little tray of vegetables for bruschetta, or kebab skewers to serve while everyone waits for the main event.
6. For dessert, roast a tray of strawberries in the dying heat of the pizza oven. Toss with a generous splash of limoncello, cool, and stir into crushed amaretti biscuits and...



Host a Seafood Boil

This is pure, unadulterated pleasure. Big, bold, messy, interactive food that everyone can get stuck into. Flavours that smack you about the chops.

You'll need a medium to large low fire pit and a very large stock pot.

Set the scene: Fun is the order of the day.

This is not the time to get out your finest crockery! In fact, we highly recommend investing in some good quality, recyclable, compostable or sustainable tableware for a seafood boil. Lay a table with a paper cloth and run foil all the way along the middle, allowing an extra piece at each setting.

Pop piles of napkins, finger bowls and maybe even bibs between guests. And don't forget the garnishes – bottles of hot sauce in varying strengths, pinch pots of salt, dishes of melted garlic butter, wedges of lemon, baskets of crusty bread. Fill buckets with ice and plenty of beer!

How to cook it: For six to eight people add 5-6kg seafood to a large pot. Cover with water, add seafood boil seasoning (see below), 1kg halved large new potatoes, 2 halved large onions, 1 halved lemon, 2 halved heads of garlic, 150g butter and a generous shake (up to half a bottle depending on how spicy you like it) of hot sauce. Bring to the boil, cover, and boil for 15 minutes.

Remove the cover and add some fresh cobs of corn, a few cooking chorizo sausages, and any shellfish you like (prawns, mussels, clams). Boil for another few minutes until the shells of the seafood open.

Take off the heat and let it sit for up to 20 minutes before straining and dishing up. Keep the boiling liquor in bowls for dunking.

Seafood boil seasoning: Combine 3 tbsp each of garlic powder and onion powder, 2 tbsp each of dried oregano, thyme and sea salt, and 1 tbsp each of ground black pepper, paprika and Old Bay Seasoning.

Nighttime nibbles

Outdoor entertaining doesn't have to be over-the-top. Sometimes a casual platter of canapes, beautifully presented, with a few bottles of great wine will do the trick.

1. Top thin slices of toasted baguette with blue cheese, roasted red grapes and snippets of fried rosemary.
2. Griddle chunks of watermelon and serve on skewers with feta pieces marinated in oregano, olive oil, crushed garlic and black pepper.
3. Spanish gildas are having a moment, and they couldn't be easier. Simply load cocktail sticks with a few green olives, a guindilla pepper and a cured anchovy.
4. Make Italian style spiedini by wrapping fried chunks of bread with Prosciutto, alternating on a skewer with grilled pieces of pork and salted, fried sage leaves.
5. Whip up a batch of rillettes by roughly mixing 400g smoked mackerel and 100g cream cheese in a food processor with the zest of a lemon, a clove of crushed garlic and plenty of fresh snipped chives. Serve with crudites and over toasted bread.

AWAY

Picnic like it's 1979

Everything retro is 'in'! You heard us right. Nostalgia in food is everywhere at the moment, and we're here for it. If trifles, wibbly pastel-shaded blancmanges and cakes piped ostentatiously with outrageous amounts of buttercream are your thing, you really are in for a treat this summer.

Forget crustless sarnies and salads embellished with unpronounceable ingredients. Now's the time to raid your parents' or grandparents' cookery book collection of yore to dabble in an edible slice of the past.

Here are just a few 'hero' dishes to get you started.

Sandwiches: There has to be cheese and pickle (the darker the better), of course. And don't forget your roast beef and mustard, egg and cress, ham salad, or cucumber filled beauties either. Preferably on a mixture of white or brown sandwich loaf.

The cheese ball: What was a picnic in the 70s without a cheese ball, we ask you? To make one, mix cream cheese (one or two packs) with loads of grated cheese and a few twists of black pepper. Cover either by dusting with ground paprika, crumbled cracker crumbs, finely chopped fresh herbs or crushed walnuts. Transport on a small cake board in a tub, nestled next to ice packs. And remember to grab plenty of crackers and bread for serving.

Sandwich fillings to make you smile

If you're bored of egg mayo, give one of these tasty combinations a try.

- Mortadella, pesto, rocket, Mozzarella and grated Parmesan in focaccia
- Salami, Emmental and mango chutney on rye bread
- Crayfish and Thermidor mayo (mayonnaise, Dijon mustard, fresh chopped tarragon, grated Parmesan, finely chopped shallots) in brioche rolls
- Sliced falafels, hummus, roasted onions, tomatoes and aubergines, and za'atar in a wrap
- Pigs in blankets, gravy powder mixed with mayo and cranberry relish in crusty baps



Layered dip: Anyone who partied in America in the 70s will remember layered dips.

They're awesome picnic fodder as they can be made in the Tupperware they're being served in. Just layer up seasoned refried beans, guacamole, sour cream, grated cheese, chopped tomatoes, chopped olives and chopped white onion. Delicious for dunking tortilla chips.

Prawn cocktail pots: The epitome of retro, surely? And easy to assemble at your picnic. Take a pot or cup per person, a box of washed iceberg lettuce leaves, enough cooked, peeled prawns for everyone, and a cocktail sauce made by mixing the juice of half a lemon, a generous splash of Worcestershire sauce, a drop or two of hot sauce, a few pinches of smoked paprika, 5 tbsps of ketchup, 5 tbsps of mayonnaise, a touch of salt and cracked black pepper to taste. Once at your location, shred the lettuce into the pots, and top with the prawns and sauce. Done.

Coronation chicken potato salad: Mixed together, these two picnic champions become a force to be reckoned with. Simply stir cooked shredded chicken and curried mayonnaise with boiled new potatoes. Finely chopped spring onions will bring freshness. A swirl of mango chutney at the end livens the whole thing up.



Quiche: You can't have a nostalgic picnic without a slice of quiche, can you? Lorraine style (with bacon, herbs, cheese and caramelised onions) is universally loved. But also try flaked smoked salmon with dill, feta with mint and peas, or good old broccoli and Cheddar.

Pudding time: Impress with your baking skills by making a Battenberg cake, Victoria sponge, mini trifles, or pineapple upside down cake. Or take a trip down memory lane by conjuring individual pots of simple strawberry blancmange. Whisk a packet of strawberry jelly with 140ml boiling water to dissolve, then add 420ml of whole milk. Pour into individual plastic pots of glasses and chill in the fridge overnight to set. Take clotted cream or cans of squirty cream and plenty of strawberries with you to serve.



5 picnic survival tips

- 1.** Pack plenty of bug spray, lightweight food covers and citronella scented candles to keep insects at bay.
- 2.** Freeze your drinking water bottles and use them as ice packs in your picnic bag to save space.
- 3.** Fitted sheets make excellent table covers for picnic tables (they won't blow away in the wind).
- 4.** Avoid paper plates unless you're serving lots of salady bits. Invest in lightweight enamel or melamine crockery and pack a carrier bag to take dirty dishes home.
- 5.** Always keep your dressings separate until you're ready to eat. No one likes soggy salad.

7 of the UK's loveliest picnic spots

Furzey Gardens, Hampshire
 Aldeburgh Beach, Suffolk
 Llyn Padarn, Wales
 Otter's Pool, Scotland
 Buttermere Lake, Cumbria
 Treliassick Gardens, Cornwall
 Cave Hill, Belfast





PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT:

SMOKED GARLIC BALSAMIC VINEGAR

The Garlic Farm's Smoked Garlic Balsamic Vinegar is a truly unique infusion of hot, oak-smoked garlic and rich balsamic flavours.

Drizzled over salad, served as a dipping sauce or used in a marinade, the distinctive smoked garlic taste makes this balsamic vinegar totally moreish.

A firm customer favourite, Smoked Garlic Balsamic Vinegar is The Garlic Farm's creative solution to food waste. Their imperfect oak-smoked cloves are steeped in balsamic over a period of weeks for an intense, smokey flavour.

The Garlic Farm's Smoked Garlic Balsamic Vinegar is available from thegarlicfarm.co.uk RRP £13.95

The Garlic Farm

Give your summer dishes a boost with this flavour-packed storecupboard staple from the Isle of Wight

Nestled in the heart of the Isle of Wight, The Garlic Farm have been growing garlic on the island for over 50 years. Since the first cloves of garlic were planted in the fertile Arreton Valley all those years ago, the farm has become renowned for its garlic varieties and evolving range of garlic - infused products.

They produce a vast collection of garlicky products, including chutneys, condiments, butters, beer and ice cream, as well as the Wild Island collection of fine oils, dressings and vinegars, which is handmade in small batches on the farm.

The Garlic Farm is a B Corporation with a values - driven approach. They are committed to treading lightly, with low impact. Their farmland is certified organic by the Soil Association and they use nature - friendly farming practices.

Smoked Garlic & Tomato Bruschetta

Sweet garlic, juicy tomatoes, creamy whipped feta and crusty sourdough – this dish is a hit for all the senses. Loaded with incredible flavours, it makes a wonderful sharing plate when friends come over, but works equally well as a lunch or brunch.

Prepare: 20 minutes

Cook: 20 minutes

Serves: 4

1 block of feta, broken into pieces
100g Greek yoghurt
1 heaped tbsp Black Garlic Ketchup
400g piccolo vine tomatoes
3 cloves of garlic, sliced
4 slices of artisan sourdough
Salt and pepper
Baby basil to garnish
A healthy drizzle of Smoked Garlic Balsamic Vinegar

1. Preheat the oven to 190C.
2. In a food processor add the feta, Greek yoghurt and Black Garlic Ketchup and blitz (or whisk) together until creamy, then set aside.
3. Add the tomatoes to a baking dish, add the garlic and drizzle over Smoked Garlic Balsamic Vinegar. Use a spoon to coat the tomatoes, then place in the oven for 20 minutes until the tomatoes are blistered and bubbling.
4. Lightly toast the sourdough slices, then smother them with the whipped black garlic feta, top with the juicy tomatoes and finish with some salt, pepper, baby basil and another drizzle of Smoked Garlic Balsamic Vinegar.

For more information, visit thegarlicfarm.co.uk or follow The Garlic Farm on Instagram or Facebook.



From plot to plate

Not much can beat eating your own home-grown produce. Fresh, flavoursome and packed full of nutrients, fruit and veg picked straight from your garden can elevate your cooking into something extraordinary

Here at GBF, we've long championed the importance of using good quality produce in your cooking. After all, how can you expect to create something delicious if you're not using the very best ingredients? And, that's why we're big fans of growing your own. Picking fruit and veg from the beds in your garden to use in your kitchen is a brilliant way to strengthen your connection with food and the results speak for themselves.

It's something that experienced chefs across the country know well, too. As Will Hickton, the head chef at The Club House in West Bexington (theclubhousewestbexington.co.uk), explains: "The

real magic of home - grown produce lies in its freshness. When you grow something yourself, it's picked at its peak and you can harvest and cook it right away, which guarantees maximum flavour," he says. "Plus, there's something incredibly special about nurturing a plant from seed to plate. When you've invested time and care into growing your own, you develop a connection with it that drives you to get the very best out of it in the kitchen. It's not just an ingredient; it's a labour of love that will shine through in every bite."

To help you on your way, we've spoken to the experts about how to get the most out of your home - grown produce and what to grow right now...

JUNE'S VEG PLOT CHECKLIST

Whether you're looking to start your own vegetable patch this month or are focusing on a well-established plot, there's plenty to do in June. Here are just a few jobs to have on your radar...



Sow and plant

- Salad crops such as radishes, lettuces, beetroot and pak choi can be sown throughout the summer months, so have fun experimenting with different varieties. Try to opt for sites in partial shade, as hot and dry weather can result in leaves that taste bitter (read more about growing salads on the right).
- Most autumn/winter crops need to have been sown by now, but if you've not had the chance, you can still sow some turnips and broccoli for an autumn harvest.
- If you get in quick, you can also sow sweetcorn at the beginning of this month, as well as peas, squash, courgettes and French and runner beans.
- If you've already been busy sowing indoors, June is a great month to plant out those crops you've started, such as brassicas, artichokes, celeriac, celery and peppers.



Ongoing care

- As the weather continues to warm up, keeping on top of watering is key. Try to ensure the soil around plants stays evenly moist, rather than letting it dry out before soaking it – this can lead to splitting. Use fresh tap water for new seedlings, as that from water butts may contain bacteria that could impact young growth. You can also use mulch as a way to keep moisture locked in around crops such as beans and courgettes, which like to be kept well-watered.
- Snails and slugs can be a problem at this time of year. You could opt to use a deterrent to stop them ruining crops (rings of copper tape are a good option, or a barrier of crushed egg shells), try biological controls such as nematodes, or use sweet traps (with something like beer or jam as bait).
- For bumper harvests, keep applying feed to fruiting vegetable plants, such as tomatoes, squash, chillies and tomatoes.



Harvest

- The first peas of the season should be ready to harvest now, so get ready to enjoy their beautiful sweetness. Eat them as soon as you can after picking for maximum flavour.
- First early varieties of potatoes will be ready to dig up around mid-June. Wait until the flowers on the plant have opened and gently scrape away some soil to check their size before properly harvesting – they should be egg-sized.
- Tennis fans are gearing up for Wimbledon, so you can be sure that strawberries will be ready to harvest soon. Remember to only pick fruits once fully ripe, as they won't ripen further once removed from the plant.



In the kitchen

June's harvests are calling out to be eaten, and with so many fresh and tasty salad ingredients, it's easy to whip up a light lunch from the garden. Combine finely sliced sugar snap peas with radish, coriander, slices of chicken and pistachios and pomegranate, then drizzle over an Asian-inspired dressing for a bright and flavoursome bite to eat. Or serve boiled or roasted new potatoes with foraged wild garlic, parsley, mustard, oil, white wine vinegar and capers.

YOUR GUIDE TO GROWING SALADS

Looking for something you can do right now? Start sowing salads and reap the rewards in the height of summer...

Part of the joy of growing salads is the huge variety of different leaves available to try. There are all sorts to cultivate which taste divine when freshly harvested and topped with a drizzle of dressing.

Plus, the speed and ease with which they mature means that salad seeds really do give you a quick return. In fact, the fastest can be picked within just three weeks of sowing! This means that if you start sowing now, you'll be able to enjoy home-grown salads before summer really kicks in.

Many people grow them as cut-and-come-again crops too, where one sowing can give rise to several harvests through repeat cuttings of the same plants.

Sowing

Different varieties of lettuce and salad leaves will have slightly different sowing instructions, so always check the back of a packet to see the best advice. Mostly of the time, though, salads can be sown undercover from March (either in a greenhouse, or under

a cloche or cold-frame), and then outside from mid-April to autumn. They can be grown in the ground or in pots.

In the ground, they are best sown in rows, 20-30cm apart. If you sow them sparingly, they shouldn't need thinning when they come up, but if the seedlings look like they might become overcrowded, pull some out to give the others room to grow. Also bear in mind that any summer sowings should be done in partial shade, as too much sun can result in bitter leaves.

Caring for your crops

Keep the soil moist as the plants grow – this will help them grow quickly and ensure they don't go to seed. It's also a good idea to keep feeding them throughout the growing months, particularly if you're hoping for cut-and-come-again leaves, and also if they're in pots as they can quickly use up nutrients in the soil.

Harvesting

To encourage repeat harvests from a cut-and-come-again crop you will need to ensure you preserve the central growing point of the plant. There are two ways to do this: you can either snip along the row or simply select one or two of the biggest leaves from each lettuce plant.

3 of the best salad varieties to try

'Lambs Lettuce'

Picked when they're young, lambs lettuce leaves have a slightly nutty and tangy flavour. Its spoon-shaped leaves look striking in any fresh dish.

Spinach 'Fiorano' F1

These smooth baby spinach leaves are perfect for a lively summer salad. Plus, this variety is resistant to downy mildew, and slow to bolt.

'Mizuna'

This Japanese green has serrated bright green leaves and a slightly spicy and mild peppery flavour, making it a great addition to salads.



Marvellous microgreens

Looking for a different kind of leaf for your dish? Why not elevate your creations into something spectacular with the help of freshly harvested microgreens, which can be grown quickly and easily on your kitchen windowsill? "Microgreens are young vegetable greens that are harvested just after the first true leaves have developed, packed with nutrients and intense flavours," says Luke Dejahang, gardening expert and CEO of garden building company Crown Pavilions (crownpavilions.com). "Growing microgreens is relatively easy and can be done indoors. Simply scatter these seeds on a shallow tray filled with soil, keep them moist, and place them in a sunny spot. Within a couple of weeks, you'll have a fresh supply of microgreens to add a burst of flavour and nutrition to your meals." Good crops to use as microgreens include salad leaves, beetroot, thyme, broccoli, mustard, pea and radish.

WHAT'S REALLY WORTH GROWING?

Don't have room to grow loads of homegrown veg? You're not alone! We've spoken to the experts to get their take on which crops are really deserving of a spot in your plot...

There's nothing quite like eating fruit and veg you've grown yourself, but let's face it: very few of us have the time or space to cultivate all the fresh produce we eat at home. And with local farm shops and supermarkets now offering a huge choice of different varieties, it can be hard to decide which to grow at home and which to simply buy. So, what really is worth spending the time and effort on?

Packing a flavour punch

First of all, it's worth looking at flavour profiles. With some crops, you can easily tell they've been grown on a huge scale. The flavour might be lacking, the colour less vivid and they might not ever truly ripen properly at home. With others, though, there's not always a huge difference between what you can grow in your garden and what you can buy.

"There's no such thing as a waste of time when it comes to growing your own vegetables but that said, some crops are just more rewarding than others," explains Will Hickton, the head chef at The Club House in West Bexington (theclubhousewestbexington.co.uk), "For instance, I've found that root vegetables like carrots or celeriac, and tubers such as potatoes, don't always offer a huge difference in flavour when home-grown compared to high quality store-bought ones. But when it comes to softer, more delicate produce – like tomatoes, courgettes and strawberries – you'll often notice a remarkable improvement. These crops can be more susceptible to losing flavour in transit and handling, so when you grow them yourself, you get to enjoy their true, untainted taste."

Too little time?

Also, consider what takes time and effort to cultivate. Some crops look after themselves, while others are very delicate and can easily



“Heirloom veg are wildly diverse, bursting with rich colours, quirky shapes, and stunning patterns. Think black tomatoes, deep purple beans, neon - streaked chard, and fiery sunset - coloured chillies”

bolt or fail to germinate. Celery, for instance, needs a long growing season and lots of water – and even then it’s tricky to get the crunch we all associate with the veg.

Space can be an issue too. You usually need a fair amount of space to grow sweetcorn, for example, whereas tumbling tomatoes or strawberries can be grown in hanging baskets, and herbs and chilli peppers can be easily grown in pots.

“When it comes to root vegetables I struggle for space, and I also find it takes long for the rewards to kick in,” says Vanessa Marx, executive chef at Bingham Riverhouse in Richmond (binghamriverhouse.com). “I personally love anything that is self-seeding and these crops are the gift that keeps giving. It’s good to look for crops that offer a steady harvest too, throughout the season, like spinach or sorrel.”

Go for the weird and wonderful

Consider also what you can’t find in the supermarket. There are some incredible varieties available to grow that are a feast for both your tastebuds and your eyes – and many of these never make their way into stores.

“If you’re growing your own, heirloom veg seeds give you the most jaw-droppingly beautiful vegetables you’ll ever grow,” explains Kate Cotterill, co-founder at heirloom seed company She Grows Veg (shegrowsveg.com). “Unlike supermarket veg, which is bred for uniformity, heirlooms are wildly diverse, bursting with rich colours, quirky shapes, and stunning patterns. Think black tomatoes, deep purple beans, neon-streaked chard, and fiery sunset-coloured chillies.”

Kate recommends trying the likes of Chicory ‘Rose of Venice’ which looks like a giant rose and makes a great addition to salads, Cauliflower ‘Sicilian Violet’ which has a vivid purple head when growing and a sweet, nutty flavour that’s hard to beat, and Tomato ‘Atomic Fusion’, which produces lots of plum shaped black fruit streaked with green, orange and red.



Hero herbs

Fresh herbs can really make a difference to your dishes and it’s well worth making space for a small herb garden if you can

“Say goodbye to soggy shop-bought herbs left in a plastic packet in the fridge,” encourages chef Liam Dillon from The Boat, a micro-farm and restaurant in Staffordshire (theboat.restaurant). “Whether they’re grown on a big veg plot or simply a windowsill or a front step, hearty herbs can really pack a punch in your food. Sage, thyme, rosemary or oregano are all mega and will grow like wildfire given good soil, water and light.”

Other great herbs we love to grow are:

Basil: This is Britain’s most widely bought herb, and for good reason. Super versatile and delicious in salads and pasta dishes, it’s packed full of flavour. Try ‘Purple Basil’ for something a little different.

Mint: Great for use in cooking and in herbal teas, mint is another popular choice. Just remember, it can be quite invasive, so it’s best kept in a pot. We love ‘Grapefruit Mint’ – its sharp citrus flavour makes it ideal for desserts.

Parsley: Another key herb in cooking, parsley has multiple uses in the kitchen. To add a touch of visual flair to your dishes, opt for a curly variety.

Indian Summer

These aromatic recipes from **Cyrus Todiwala** are sure to wow your guests



Prepare: 15 minutes plus chilling time

Cook: 30 minutes

Serves: 4

4 mackerel fillets, pin boned
 Fine sea salt, to taste
 Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
 100ml olive oil
 1 medium-large carrot, peeled and thinly sliced into 3mm rounds
 ½ fennel bulb, thinly sliced
 2 small red onions, finely chopped
 2 garlic cloves, sliced
 2 long green chillies, slit
 5 coriander sprigs, chopped
 2 Kashmiri or dried red chillies, deseeded and chopped
 1 tsp coriander seeds, lightly crushed
 8 peppercorns
 2 bay leaves, cracked but not broken
 300ml white wine
 1 ½ limes, juiced
 100ml white wine vinegar

1. Wash the mackerel, pat dry with kitchen towel and season with salt and pepper to taste. Place in a baking dish, large enough to contain the fillets in one layer, and pour over the olive oil. Chill in the fridge.

2. Add all the remaining ingredients along with 250ml of water to a saucepan over a medium-high heat. Bring to the boil, turn down the heat and simmer for 20 minutes.

3. Strain the liquid into a bowl but do not discard the ingredients in the sieve. Pour the liquid back into the pan and bring it to a simmer over a medium-low heat.

4. Sprinkle the strained aromatics over the chilled mackerel fillets and when the pickling liquid has come back to a simmer, pour it gently over the fish so as not to disperse the vegetables and spices. Cover, allow to cool, then chill in the fridge. The sikbaj is now ready to use, though it gets better the longer it marinates. Serve as is, flaked in a salad (the strained liquid, when reduced, makes a great addition to a salad dressing), or mixed with cooked and cooled rice, chopped coriander and tomato.

Cyrus's Tip

Consume the chilled sikbaj within 2–3 days, or drain, flake and freeze the fish for up to 3 months.

“Mackerel is extensively preserved on the west coast of India, using various techniques from sun drying to pickling in vinegar”

Gently Pickled Mackerel Fillets (Sikbaj)

Originally a Persian word, which eventually became escabeche in Spain, sikbaj literally means cooking in an acidic mixture, namely vinegar. Mackerel is extensively preserved on the west coast of India, using various techniques from sun drying to pickling in vinegar, and the most commonly used vinegars are palm and sugar cane. Spicing varies but here we are sticking closer to the Persian tradition, adding an Indian twist to it of course.

Pan-tossed Chickpeas & Spinach (Sukha Chana Palakh)

Simply tossed spinach and other accompanying ingredients is regularly enjoyed across India. This is an easy one to bring together and one that you can play around with and add other flavours and textures (mushrooms and whey cheese work great, for example) to make it your own. Finish it off with a drizzle of double (heavy) cream or a spoonful of thick, drained yoghurt and see the difference it makes.

Prepare: 10 minutes

Cook: 25 minutes

Serves: 6 as a side

2 tbsp butter
1 tsp cumin seeds
5 garlic cloves, crushed
2 large dried red chillies, broken into pieces and deseeded
2 long green chillies, chopped
2 onions, finely chopped
2 x 400g tins of chickpeas, drained and liquid reserved
250g (9oz) spinach, finely sliced (see tip)
1 tbsp finely chopped fresh coriander (optional)

1. In a large saucepan over a medium heat, melt the butter. Once the butter is foaming, add the cumin seeds and fry for 1 minute.
2. Add the garlic and two types of chillies and fry together for another 1-2 minutes. Add the onions and fry for 4-5 minutes then add the tinned chickpea liquid. Cook, stirring regularly, for 10 minutes until the liquid has reduced and the onions have softened but not browned.
3. Add the chickpeas, stir and leave to warm through.
4. Turn the heat to high and add the sliced spinach and cook for 2-3 minutes until fully wilted. Check for seasoning, stir in the coriander (if using) and serve.

Cyrus's Tip

The best way to slice spinach leaves is to layer the leaves one over the other, six leaves at a time. Holding them down tight, shred as thinly as you can. If you want to make your sukha chana palakh in advance, prepare according to the recipe but once you've added the chickpeas, cool, transfer to an airtight container and chill in the fridge for up to three days. To serve, reheat and wilt in the spinach.

“Simply tossed spinach and other accompanying ingredients is regularly enjoyed across India”

Cyrus's Tip

To enhance the flavour of this kulfi, make your own ground green cardamom. Toast 1 tablespoon of whole green cardamom in a preheated 110°C fan/130°C/250°F Gas 1 oven for 20 minutes. Cool, deseed and grind the seeds to a fine powder using a pestle and mortar or coffee grinder. Leftover spice can be kept in a small airtight container in the fridge. For even more flavour, toast the whole, shelled pistachios at the same time before cooling and chopping.

Saffron & Pistachio Iced Cream (Kesar Pista Kulfi)

Kulfi, for me, is Indian iced cream rather than ice cream, as when it was originally developed in the 16th-century, it was hard to aerate the mixture, so instead it was left to set solid. Aerating is much easier at home now avoid ice crystals. This recipe celebrates India's most popular kulfi flavour, best known as kesar pista, or saffron and pistachio. You will need to wait overnight for the kulfi to set, but your patience will reward you.

Prepare: 20 minutes

Cook: 15 minutes

Serves: 6-8

500ml double cream

1 x 400ml tin of evaporated milk

100g caster sugar

1 tsp saffron (ideally Iranian)

250ml clotted cream

1 tsp vanilla extract (optional)

180g pistachios, chopped

5 baby rose buds, petals only (ideally Iranian)

1 tsp ground green cardamom

Wafer biscuits, to serve (optional)

1. Pour the double cream into a large bowl, cover and chill in the fridge, along with a 23cm (9in) cake tin (if using springform, line it with cling film/plastic wrap).

2. Pour the evaporated milk and sugar into a small saucepan and place it over a medium heat. Bring to the boil, stirring regularly with a spatula, ensuring you scrape every corner of the pan (as the contents will catch quickly). Reduce the heat to a simmer, continuing to stir, and cook until the sugar has dissolved and the milk has reduced by a third.

3. Gently rub the saffron between your thumb and your middle and index

fingers to break up the strands and crumble them into the simmering milk. Continuing to stir, let the mixture thicken and reduce slightly. Transfer the mixture to a bowl and allow it to cool completely. Whisk in the clotted cream until smooth.

4. Remove the chilled double cream from the fridge and whisk to thick, soft peaks. You can use a hand whisk or electric beaters but be sure not to over whip, as it will split.

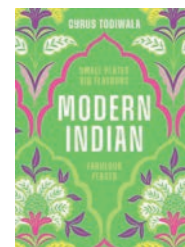
5. Pour the saffron-infused milk and clotted cream into the whipped

cream, along with the vanilla (if using) three quarters of the pistachios and all the rose petals. Beat to combine, adding a little cardamom powder at a time, to taste.

6. Pour the mixture into the chilled cake tin and sprinkle with the remaining pistachios. Cover and freeze overnight until completely set. Five minutes before serving, remove the kulfi from the freezer. Scoop it or cut it into thick slices and serve it wedged between wafer biscuits, if you'd like.



"This recipe celebrates India's most popular kulfi flavour"



Recipes extracted from *Modern Indian* by Cyrus Todiwala. Published by White Lion Publishing. Photography by Haarala Hamilton

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Food For All

These vegan recipes will tempt the tastebuds of all of your summer guests



Cashew and avocado pesto pasta with griddled courgettes and sun-dried tomatoes

Prepare: 10 minutes

Cook: 10 minutes

Serves: 2

60g cashews
1 courgette
200g rigatoni or penne pasta
1 avocado
Handful basil
1 tbsp nutritional yeast
3 garlic cloves

1 lemon
100g sun-dried tomatoes in oil
Handful rocket

1. Tip the cashews into a large saucepan of boiling water and simmer for 5 minutes. Meanwhile, slice the courgette into 1cm rounds and set aside for later. Using a slotted spoon, remove the cashews from the saucepan and set aside in a bowl. Bring the pan of water back to the boil, add the pasta and simmer for 10 minutes.

2. To make the pesto, peel and stone

the avocado and add the flesh to a blender, along with the basil, cashew nuts, nutritional yeast, garlic, 2 tablespoons of olive oil and 150ml water. Squeeze in half the lemon and blitz until smooth.

3. Heat a good drizzle of olive oil in a deep-sided frying pan over a high heat. Add the courgette slices and cook for 2–3 minutes on each side until charred, then take off the heat.

4. Once the pasta is cooked, loosely drain and return to the saucepan over a low heat, stirring through the pesto, courgette slices and sun-dried tomatoes. Warm through for 2 minutes.

5. Spoon the pesto pasta into serving bowls and top with a handful of fresh rocket, and a good squeeze of the remaining lemon.

Crispy oyster mushroom burgers with pesto mayo and Parmentier potatoes

Prepare: 15 minutes

Cook: 35 minutes

Serves: 2

2 potatoes
3 garlic cloves
1 tsp dried oregano
250g cherry tomatoes
300g oyster mushrooms
1 tbsp soy sauce
3 tbsp cornflour
1 tbsp nutritional yeast
2 tbsp plant-based mayo
1 tbsp plant-based green pesto
Handful rocket
1 tsp balsamic vinegar
2 ciabatta rolls

1. Preheat the oven to 220°C/200°C fan/gas mark 7.

2. Cut the potatoes into small bite-sized pieces and roughly chop the garlic. Combine them on a baking tray, and drizzle with vegetable oil. Sprinkle over the oregano and a pinch of salt and pepper. Roast for 25–30 minutes until golden brown, adding the cherry tomatoes to the tray for the final 10 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, tip the mushrooms into a large bowl (tear any larger ones in



half) and pour over the soy sauce. Leave to soak for 2–3 minutes while you heat a generous drizzle of vegetable oil in a large frying pan over a medium–high heat. Once the mushrooms have soaked, add the cornflour and nutritional yeast to the bowl and mix well. Once the oil is hot, carefully add the mushrooms to the pan. Fry for 3–4 minutes on each side until golden brown and crispy. Once cooked, set aside.

4. For the pesto mayo, mix together the mayo, pesto and a pinch of pepper in a small bowl, then set aside. In a separate large bowl, combine the rocket and balsamic vinegar and toss well.

5. Halve the ciabatta rolls and place them in the oven for 2–3 minutes until warmed through and starting to crisp.

6. To serve, spread the base of each roll with the pesto mayo, then stack the crispy mushrooms on top, followed by the oven-roasted tomatoes and some of the rocket. Serve with the crispy potatoes and the remaining rocket and tomatoes.

Smoky pulled aubergine and black bean-loaded fries with green goddess sauce

Prepare: 10 minutes

Cook: 25 minutes

Serves: 2

1 aubergine
3 potatoes
1 red onion
2 garlic cloves
1 tbsp tomato puree
1 tbsp ancho chilli powder (or smoked paprika)
1 tsp dried oregano
400g tin black beans
1 vegetable stock cube
150g cherry tomatoes
1 avocado
Handful coriander
1 lime

1. Preheat the oven to 220°C/200°C fan/gas mark 7.

2. Halve the aubergine lengthways and score the flesh in a criss-cross pattern about 1cm deep. Place on a baking tray

with a drizzle of vegetable oil and roast for 20–25 minutes, until soft and melty.

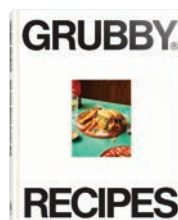
3. Meanwhile, chop the potatoes into 1cm-thick fries and toss on a second baking tray with a drizzle of vegetable oil and a pinch of salt. Roast for 20–25 minutes until golden.

4. Meanwhile, finely dice the red onion and crush 1 garlic clove. Heat a drizzle of vegetable oil in a deep-sided pan over a medium-high heat. Add the onion and fry for 3–4 minutes until soft, then add the crushed garlic, tomato puree, ancho chilli powder and oregano. Fry for 1–2 minutes more, then drain and rinse the black beans and add to the pan. Crumble in the stock cube and pour over 200ml boiling water. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and leave to simmer for 15 minutes.

5. Once the aubergine is ready, remove from the oven and remove and discard the skin. Pull apart the flesh and add this to the black bean mix. Roughly chop the cherry tomatoes and add to the pan. Stir and leave to simmer while you wait for the fries to finish cooking.

6. Peel and stone the avocado and peel the remaining garlic clove. Add to a blender with two-thirds of the coriander and 3 tablespoons water. Squeeze in the lime juice and blend until smooth. Chop the remaining coriander.

7. Serve the fries covered in the pulled aubergine mix, topped with the avocado sauce. Finish with the remaining coriander.



Extracted from
Grubby Recipes by
GRUBBY (Ebury
Press). Photography
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SMOKED SALMON SOUFFLE

Ingredients

450g smoked salmon trimmings
½ pt milk
1oz butter
4 egg yolks
6 egg whites

Method

1. Melt butter in pan and add flour to make a roux.
2. Season with pepper or paprika/cayenne if preferred.
3. Add yolks beating them in one at a time and then the trimmings.
4. Whisk the egg whites until stiff (important) and fold them into the mix a little at a time.
5. Butter a soufflé dish or 4 individual ramekins and spoon in the mixture - make sure mixture fills approximately half of the dish to ensure proper rise.
6. Place dish or ramekins in hot - gas mark 6/200°C - for approximately 25/30 minutes. For ramekins reduce cooking time to approximately 12/15 minutes. Remember - oven must be hot when dishes go in - also place dishes on top shelf of oven for maximum temperature.



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THEO RANDALL

at The Intercontinental, Park Lane

As one of the most familiar faces on the British food and drink scene, Theo Randall is loved by many – not least for his take on the classic dishes of Italy. His signature brand of classy yet relaxed dining makes this restaurant a must-visit for all food lovers



Food lovers across the UK will be familiar with – and most likely fans of – Theo Randall. His stints on television, including on BBC1 favourite *Saturday Kitchen*, have introduced his unique brand of laid-back Italian classics to the nation, and his moreish recipes have had mouths watering for decades. We visited his eponymous restaurant at The Intercontinental, Park Lane for a special birthday supper, and are already excited to visit again.

Theo is one of the British food scene's best-loved chefs, and within five minutes of

arriving at his eponymous restaurant at the InterContinental on Park Lane, it's easy to see why. The welcome was as warm as if we were entering someone's home for a laid back supper, and upon first glance at the menu our shoulders dropped – we were in for an indulgent yet deliciously relaxed treat.

The dining room was classy yet supremely comfortable, and within moments of being ushered in we were relishing our first glance at the drinks menu. My partner settled on a perfectly-paired, full bodied red wine while I indulged in a signature fruity non-alcoholic cocktail – complete with rainbow lace atop the glass!

The food was as delicious as we expected. We started with dangerously moreish zucchini fritti and they were undoubtedly the best I've had yet. Light and crisp with deliciously soft and fresh courgette within, they were the ultimate pre-dinner snack. These were partnered with soft-as-a-cloud focaccia and tomato-topped bread, and the quality of the ingredients was clear to see; with dishes this simple there's nowhere to hide, and they all were utterly delightful.

Beautifully tender beef tartare with a salty hit from plentiful capers was to follow, and supremely rich fontina souffles with wilted spinach and a creamy parmesan sauce. Next up was the most flavour-packed yet elegant slow cooked beef I've ever eaten. Positioned atop expertly crafted fresh pasta with just the right amount of bite, the texture and taste was sublime. Next, we opted for a dish which sounded simple and humble, but when it arrived was anything but. Simultaneously soft and crunchy toasted bread topped with dark, iron-rich greens and umami-packed mushrooms was crowned by perfectly seared and caramelised guinea fowl stuffed with salty prosciutto di Parma. A modern classic that has proven popular at the restaurant, and it's easy to see why.

We left luxuriously yet comfortably full, and the goodbye was as warm and familial as the welcome as we set off home. This is a restaurant to rave about – and we can't wait to return very soon.

You can find Theo Randall at The Intercontinental on Park Lane. For more information visit theorandall.com



SIMPLY SEASONAL

Relish the best British seafood with this collection of recipes from **Jack Stein**



Pollock Fillet with Tartare Sauce, New Potatoes and Spinach

If I'm ever asked what my all-time favourite meal was, I plump for this. Some friends and I went pollock fishing one summer and returned successful to a friend's house to make lunch. With simple and cheap ingredients, we settled down at my friend Munch's table and enjoyed the most delicious meal imaginable.

Prepare: 5 minutes

Cook: 2-3 minutes, plus resting time

Serves: 4

800g pollock fillets
1 tbsp vegetable oil
500g spinach, washed
1 tsp butter
400g new potatoes, boiled
Salt and pepper

For the tartare sauce:

150g miso mayonnaise
½ shallot, finely chopped
25g capers, chopped
25g gherkins, chopped
½ tbsp chopped tarragon
½ tbsp chopped chives

1. First make the tartare sauce. Place the miso mayonnaise in a bowl and add the shallots, capers and gherkins. Mix them until well incorporated, then stir in the tarragon and chives. Refrigerate until needed.

2. Season the flesh side of the pollock fillets, and oil lightly. Grill, skin side up, under a hot grill for 2-3 minutes, depending on the thickness of the fillets. Set aside and allow to rest for 2-3 minutes.

3. Sauté the spinach in the butter until wilted.

4. Serve the pollock fillets with a large dollop of tartare sauce and with the potatoes and spinach alongside.

Clam Po' boys

A perfect dish for a sunny summer afternoon helped along with a glass of good beer.

Prepare: 15 minutes

Cook: 10 minutes

Serves: 4

2 baguettes cut in half, or 4 individual baguettes
1kg clams
25g seasoned flour
2 eggs, beaten
150g panko breadcrumbs
Vegetable oil for deep frying
150g miso mayonnaise
½ medium-sized lettuce, finely sliced
1 red onion, sliced and pickled
Salt and pepper

1. Slice each baguette lengthways and toast the slices face down in a griddle pan.

2. Steam the clams in a little bit of water until just open, then remove the clams from their shells and pat dry.

3. Place the flour, beaten egg and breadcrumbs on separate plates; dredge the clams in flour, then the egg, and finally the breadcrumbs.

4. Heat the oil to 180°C then drop the clams into the oil in small batches and fry until golden brown. Transfer the clams to kitchen paper and season with sea salt.

5. Spread the mayonnaise on the baguette slices and top with lettuce and then the crispy clams.

6. Top with pickled onions and enjoy.

Crispy Soft-Shell Crab Salad with Peanut Chilli Sauce

We get soft-shell crabs for just a few glorious weeks in the summer, brought in to us by a great local forager called Taff. We have had them on the menu for years. One of the joys of the soft-shelled crab is that you can eat the whole thing, shell and all. But the good news is that you don't have to have a Taff to hand as these crabby delights can be ordered online all the year round. They can be expensive, however, so if you cannot source them just use some white crab meat to top the salad instead, as it works just as well with this delicious peanut chilli sauce.

Prepare: 20 minutes

Cook: 3-4 minutes

Serves: 4

For the peanut chilli sauce:

50g tamarind pulp
3 medium-heat red chillies
50g ginger, peeled
75g peanuts, roasted
½ head of garlic, cloves peeled
35ml rice wine vinegar
25ml ponzu or lime juice
2 tbsp vegetable oil

For the salad:

3 lemongrass stalks
2 kaffir lime leaves
A bunch of coriander, leaves only
4 spring onions, thinly sliced
1 red chilli (mild, medium or hot, according to taste), sliced
1 tbsp sesame oil
1 tsp lemon juice
100g cornflour
100g plain flour
A good pinch of sea salt
Soda water, ice cold
12 soft-shell crabs



“A perfect dish for a sunny summer afternoon helped along with a glass of good beer”



- 1.** First make the peanut chilli sauce. Extract the juice from the tamarind pulp by soaking it in a little warm water, then mix it with your hands and push it through a sieve. If it is too solid to push through the sieve, add a little more water. Place the extracted tamarind juice in a blender or food processor along with the remaining sauce ingredients and blitz until well combined. (Discard the leftover tamarind pulp.)
- 2.** For the salad, remove and discard the outer layers of each lemongrass stalk to reveal the heart; slice this thinly. Then chiffonade the kaffir lime leaves by placing one on top of the other and roll them up tightly. Hold the roll on a cutting board and, using a sharp knife, slice the roll at an angle to produce thin ribbons. Add these to the lemongrass slices, then add the coriander leaves, spring onions and chilli. Dress with the sesame oil and lemon juice.
- 3.** Stir together the cornflour and plain flour and add the salt. Whisk in enough soda water to make a thick, lumpy batter. Coat the soft-shell crabs with the batter and deep-fry at 180°C until golden brown (3-4 minutes). Drain on kitchen paper.
- 4.** Serve the salad with the crabs on top and peanut chilli sauce on the side.

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THE ULTIMATE *taste of summer*

With British produce at its peak this season, six leading women chefs tell
Antonia Lloyd the favourite ingredients exciting them right now



© Rebecca Dickson



© Rebecca Dickson



© Rebecca Dickson



© Amelia Claudia

ROBERTA HALL-MCCARRON

Edinburgh born Roberta is the executive chef and owner of three restaurants currently underpinning the city's thriving restaurant scene. At The Little Chartroom, Eleanore and Ardfarn – new recipient of a Michelin Bib Gourmand – she champions hyper-seasonal Scottish produce.

Meat: *St. Brides poultry is a family run business in Strathaven. They have incredible chickens and ducks – we buy them in whole and use every part; the quality and flavour is on another level. I love working with them, the respect and pride they have for what they do is wonderful.*

Coast: *For me, cooking food on a barbecue is one of the best ways to eat. I particularly love cooking langoustines, lobster, and mackerel.*

Dairy: *Paddy's Milestone from Dunlop Dairy is a beautiful soft fresh cow's milk cheese with a creamy texture and delicate flavour. Shaped like a rock, it's the local name for Ailsa Craig, a volcanic rock that sits out in the Firth of Clyde.*

Vegetables: *Peas and broad beans! So versatile, perfect for finishing off dishes, can be eaten hot or cold, turned into purees, soups... The list is endless, and one of my favourite things to prep!*

Wild: *I love elderflower – I use it in so many different ways: cordials, sauces, desserts, vinegars, cocktails, and it's really accessible. I also love mushrooms, in particular pheasant backs and hen of the woods.*



NOKX MAJOZI

South African born Nokx is the head pie maker at The Pie Room in London's Holborn Dining Room, creating handcrafted works of art in pastry latticed form with sumptuous fillings.

"Home cooks should look for tomato, beetroot, lettuce, peas, broad beans, fennel, broccoli and Swiss chard that make the most delicious seasonal dishes. Wild blackberries are wonderful in homemade jam"

Meat: HG Walter is my preferred supplier. I especially enjoy their lamb, pork, beef and wood pigeon in the summer. Their meat has exceptional flavour thanks to traditional British breeds raised naturally on the land.

Dairy: Sharp, creamy and rich Devon Blue cheese is essential for our signature steak and ale pies. Somerset brie is a must - have that showcases the quality of traditional British dairy. And good British lard is essential for creating our signature flaky pastry.

Vegetables: British asparagus and heritage courgettes are my summer essentials. I love that they're fresh, good value, and buying them supports local farmers and sustainable practices. Home cooks should also look for tomatoes, beetroot, lettuce, peas, broad beans, fennel, broccoli and Swiss chard that make the most delicious seasonal dishes.

Wild: Wild blackberries are wonderful in fruit salads, breakfast dishes and homemade jam. I also enjoy using wild dandelion leaves in summer salads.

SALLY ABÉ

Nottinghamshire born Sally is one of the UK's top fine dining chefs who has been at the helm of celebrated London restaurants including The Ledbury and Michelin - starred Harwood Arms, and is now the new head of food at Cotswold pub, The Bull, Charlbury.

Meat: I like lighter meats in the summer like quail and poussin from H G Walter that can be spatchcocked and barbecued. I also like little bantam eggs and pheasant eggs that go hand in hand with British asparagus.

Coast: Lemon sole starts in late spring. I like to cook it on the bone and just slather it in loads of butter with some capers and lemon segments. London based Moxon's is the best for quality fish sourced from all around the British coast.



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LORNA MCNEE

Lorna is the executive chef at Cail Bruich in Glasgow and the only female chef in Scotland with a Michelin star. In 2025 she joined Tom Kerridge as the new judge of BBC Two's Great British Menu, now in its 20th anniversary year. Lorna is committed to showcasing Scottish produce in a refined, fine dining style.



Meat: I love shh'annu lamb from Kirkwood - Real Farm in Dumfriesshire. It's hogget so they aren't killed until they're over a year old and you can tell

- the meat is better, the flavours are better, it's very tender. The animals are grass fed, it's very organic, and they rear the animals with care.

Coast: Scallops and lobsters are best in

the summer. Lobster comes down in price and the quality is better, as in winter they shed. Fish wise, red mullet is always very good and great for grilling with summer vegetables. I use John Vallance based in Glasgow who calls at 4am to tell us what's in.

Dairy: The very best dairy producer is Katy Rodgers at Knockraich Farm in Stirlingshire - a family run dairy with a herd of 60 British Friesian cattle. I do a dessert of Scottish berries with crème fraiche mousse with white chocolate and basil. She also has great yoghurt and butter.

Fruit: Scottish berries are the best you'll ever get.

I use Seahills Farm in Dundee who produce big, flavourful strawberries and raspberries. Also, Isle of Wight heritage tomatoes that actually taste like a tomato and you can buy online.



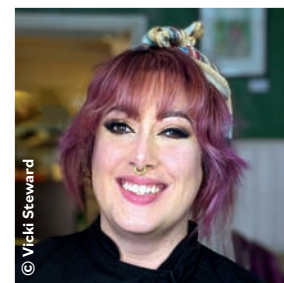
“Elderflower is probably my favourite. It’s so versatile – I make an elderflower vinegar honey that’s great with pork dishes. I like it so much I have an elderflower tattoo!”

Dairy: Yorkshire pecorino is made with sheep’s milk in Yorkshire.

It is soft and has a subtle flavour and is lovely in salads, made into mousses and stirred in soups.

Fruit: British berries are underrated – get down to a PYO or your local farmer’s market and seek out heritage varieties like mulberries, loganberries, golden raspberries and 10 different types of strawberries. Brogdale Farm in Kent has an incredible orchard and run events.

Wild: Elderflower is probably my favourite. It’s so versatile – I make an elderflower vinegar honey that’s great with pork dishes. I like it so much I have an elderflower tattoo!



AYESHA KALAJI

British Jordanian Ayesha grew up in north Wales and is a classically French trained chef specialising in modern Middle Eastern cuisine. She is Chef Patron of her restaurant The Queen of Cups in Glastonbury, in the West country, which has a Michelin Bib Gourmand.

“I love mackerel. It is incredibly versatile to work with. Grilled, torched, cured, its uses are multitudinous”

Meat: It would have to be my local, Stephen’s Butchers. Summer begs for meat cooked on the grill, and my favourite is hogget. Charred hogget skewers that have been licked by flame, rubbed with kamounh spice and served simply with a drizzle of good oil. Transcendental!

Coast: I love mackerel. It is incredibly versatile to work with. Grilled, torched, cured, served raw, its uses are multitudinous.

Dairy: Live, laugh, labneh (strained yoghurt)! I love to make mine using Brown Cow Organic yogurt, who are a stone’s throw from me near Pilton. You can almost taste the grass that the cows graze on and it has the perfect balance of sour to creaminess.

Fruit: I have to praise my local fruit, the Cheddar Vale strawberry – their sweetness, texture and flavour are unrivalled by any other strawberry in the UK. Also, the humble tomato! I work with a local farmer, Useful Beyond Buildings, who grows over 40 types. There are sweet but tangy evil olive, green zebras that are wonderful in salads or sweet and fruity pineapple tomatoes.

Wild: Summer brings forth an abundance of wood sorrel. It has this beautiful sharp, citric flavour. I use the larger leaves in salads, salsa verde and sorbets, and use the smaller leaves and flowers as garnish – but be careful not to eat too much as it has a high oxalic acid content.



KYU JEONG JEON

Seoul born Kyu was awarded ‘Chef to Watch’ at the Good Food Awards 2025 and is currently delighting locals in Bristol with her Korean dishes at neighbourhood restaurants Bokman and Dongnae with her partner Duncan Robertson.

Meat: Our favourite supplier is Beast Butcher in Bristol. They’re known for their high - quality, ethically sourced, local meats. We especially love the middle white pork raised in the Quantock hills. Early summer is great for these free - range pigs as they have a healthy range of grass and herbs to feed on.

Coast: Cornish mackerel and octopus. We age the mackerel in a very light salt cure for at least 4 days then grill over charcoal. The octopus (which have become more common in UK waters due to climate change), we



blanch for 15 - 20 minutes and eat with sesame.

Dairy: Clotted cream! I love to add some richness to traditional Korean injeolmi in a rhubarb and clotted cream fool. We also use

it in cold vanilla rice pudding which we dress over a layer of red bean puree.

Vegetables: In summer, I love cooking with Wye Valley asparagus and wet garlic. Asparagus has a delicate sweetness with a slight nuttiness, which pairs beautifully with fermented soybean paste (doenjang) in a light dressing or grilled with sesame oil. Wet garlic

is garlic that’s harvested young before it dries into traditional garlic bulbs, it has a milder, sweeter flavour with a fresh, almost grassy aroma.

Fruit: Being so close to Cheddar, it has to be Cheddar strawberries. I also seek out Cambridge Favourites where possible.



WOW-WORTHY BAKES

Paul Hollywood shares a delicious trio of celebration cakes sure to get the party started

From his best-selling books to star stints on television shows –

including, of course, iconic show *The Great British Bake Off* – Paul Hollywood is a familiar face in homes up and down the country. We caught up with him to find out why baking is such a vital part of his life, what he loves to create for loved ones at home, and how we can all level-up our cakes for special occasions!

When and how did your love of baking begin?

My dad was a baker and I grew up in and around bakeries. Living above a bakery as a kid means that it really is in my DNA and that baking is an integral part of my family and my heritage.

What do you love so much about baking?

For me baking relates to the family and a sense of home. The smell of baking bread is so evocative and immediately takes me back to being a child growing up in the bakery. I'm lucky that I took to it fairly easily, it's something that I love doing and creating something delicious that can be enjoyed by friends and family is a very special feeling.

What's your favourite thing to bake and why?

I think that it still has to be bread. I really enjoy the process of making a dough and then watching nature take over and do its thing. In the book I've included a Shokupan which is made using an unusual method where you put boiling water onto the flour. It creates an



“Baked treats really do what they say on the tin – they’re a treat! They are the perfect way to celebrate with friends and family”

incredibly soft dough which is great for toast in the morning or sandwiches

What role does baking play in your life these days - do you still have time to regularly bake?

I am and always will be a baker in my heart and baking plays a massive part in my life. Aside from judging all the great bakes we get in the tent at *Bake Off*, I still bake all the time. I make bread to have at breakfast and really enjoy baking great cakes. There are a couple of chocolate cakes in the book that are absolutely top

notch – a chocolate fudge cake and a bake off-style cake. I also make a lot of meringues which are easy to make and really versatile.

What makes baked treats such an integral part of celebrations (and daily life)?

Baked treats really do what they say on the tin – they're a treat! They are the perfect way to celebrate with friends and family. Whether that's a simple cake with a cuppa or something more elaborate for a bigger family get together, a reunion or a festival – making food memories is really special. I also think it's important to know what goes into your treats and to know what you're eating. If you make something yourself you know that there are no nasties included.

Is there anything you'd love *Great British Food* readers to know about baking impressive cakes?

This book is full of amazing recipes. Even if you're a bit nervous when you look at the pictures... don't be! I hold your hand throughout all of the stages, breaking it down into easy, accessible stages that will result in your very own showstopper to reward you for your hard work.

What are your favourite summertime recipes from the book?

I'm a big fan of easy throw it all in the mix recipes. The Mojito cupcakes are fantastic, as are both chocolate cakes (I've given them two shout outs!).

The *Frasier* cake also looks really impressive – you carefully line the tin with strawberries and when you release the ring and show off the cake it looks almost professional. Your guests will definitely be impressed.

“Traybakes remind me of village fetes and bake sales as a kid. I remember making them when I was a cub scout!”

Coconut & Passionfruit Traybake

Traybakes remind me of village fetes and bake sales as a kid. I remember making them when I was a cub scout! They're a great way to get into baking, and you can play around with different flavours and toppings. One thing to remember is to leave them to cool before you slice up – don't rush it.

Prepare: 20 minutes plus

chilling time

Cook: 30 minutes

Serves: 12

200g unsalted butter, softened, plus extra to grease

200g caster sugar

Finely grated zest of 2 limes

3 large eggs, at room temperature, beaten

200g self-raising flour

1 tsp vanilla extract

100g desiccated coconut

3 tbsp milk

Topping:

250g mascarpone

1 tbsp icing sugar

Finely grated zest and juice of 2 limes

3 passion fruit

25g toasted coconut flakes

1. Heat your oven to 180°C/160°C Fan/ Gas 4. Grease a 30 x 23cm baking tin, 5cm deep, and line with baking paper.

2. In a large bowl, beat the butter, sugar and lime zest together, using a hand-held electric whisk, until light and fluffy. Gradually add the beaten eggs, beating well after each addition and adding a spoonful of flour halfway through. Add the vanilla extract and stir in.

3. Using a spatula or large metal spoon, carefully fold in the rest of the flour and the desiccated coconut. Finally, incorporate the milk until smoothly combined.

4. Transfer the mixture to the prepared tin and gently smooth the surface to level. Bake in the oven for



25–30 minutes until risen and springy to the touch.

5. Leave the sponge to cool in the tin for 10 minutes then carefully turn out onto a wire rack and leave to cool completely.

6. For the topping, in a bowl, mix the mascarpone with the icing sugar and lime juice. Cut each passion fruit in half and scoop out the seeds and juice into

a small bowl. Add half of the passion fruit pulp to the mascarpone and stir to mix; save the rest for decoration.

7. Spread the mascarpone over the top of the cooled sponge, using a palette knife. Trickle over the remaining passion fruit pulp and sprinkle with the toasted coconut flakes and grated lime zest to finish. Cut into squares to serve.



Drip Cake

The 'drip' decorating technique is now really popular and I think it looks incredible. You can use it with ganache, icing or melted chocolate, on all kinds of cakes. The trick is to get the consistency just right.

Prepare: 30 minutes plus chilling time

Cook: 1 ¼ hours

Serves: 10-12

Madeira cake:

340g self-raising flour

230g caster sugar

230g soft margarine, plus extra to grease

4 medium eggs, at room temperature

2 tbsp milk

Vanilla buttercream:

200g unsalted butter, softened

400g icing sugar, sifted

1 tsp vanilla extract

To assemble:

8 tbsp raspberry jam

To decorate:

125g white chocolate, broken into small pieces

½ tsp vegetable oil

Red food gel colouring

Red summer fruits (raspberries, redcurrants, cherries etc)

1. Heat your oven to 150°C/130°C Fan/ Gas 2. Grease 2 deep 18cm loose-bottomed round cake tins and line with baking paper.

2. To make the cake, put all the cake ingredients into a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Mix on low speed until smoothly combined then increase the speed to medium and beat for 1 minute.

3. Divide the mixture evenly between the prepared cake tins and gently smooth the tops to level. Place on the middle shelf of the oven and bake for 1–1¼ hours until the cakes are golden brown and a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean.

4. Leave the cakes to cool in the tins for 10 minutes, then remove and transfer to a wire rack. Leave to cool completely.

5. To make the vanilla buttercream, in a bowl using a hand-held electric whisk, beat the butter until very soft. Add the icing sugar a heaped spoonful at a time, whisking until fully incorporated after each addition. Continue to beat until the buttercream is light and fluffy. Finally, beat in the vanilla extract.

6. To assemble, trim a fine slice off the top of each cake to level if necessary. Slice each cake in half horizontally so you have 4 layers in total. Place one base layer in the centre of a thin cake board.

7. Spread half of the raspberry jam on the bottom layer, being careful not to go right to the edge, then cover with another cake layer. Spread with about a third of the vanilla buttercream and place another cake layer on top. Spread with the remaining jam and cover with the final cake layer. Trim the outside edge of the cakes so they are level.

8. Transfer the cake to an icing turntable. Spread a thin layer of vanilla buttercream around the side of the cake, then hold a plain cake scraper against the side of the cake and revolve the turntable with the other hand to create an even finish. Spread a thin layer of buttercream on top of the cake and level it, using a palette knife.

9. Place the cake in the fridge to allow the buttercream covering to firm up for at least 30 minutes.

10. For the drip topping, put the white chocolate and vegetable oil into a small heatproof bowl and melt over a pan of simmering water (or carefully in short bursts in the microwave, stirring well in between). Remove from the heat and stir until smooth then stir through a little red gel colouring to achieve the desired colour.

11. Leave the red drip topping to cool slightly and thicken to the required consistency: it needs to have some substance so it cools and sets as it drips down the side of your cake. If too thin it will run straight down.

12. Transfer the cake to a cake stand or flat serving plate. Spoon a third of the red drip topping into a paper piping bag and snip off the tip. Pipe around the edge of the cake and allow it to slowly trickle over the side to create a drip pattern. Carefully spread the rest of the red topping on top of the cake.

13. Place the cake in the fridge for another 30 minutes to allow the drip topping to set.

14. Decorate the top of the cake with fresh red fruits just before serving.

Decorating tip

To get a really smooth finish to the buttercream around the side of the cake, you need to use an icing turntable (easily obtainable and inexpensive). I suggest you leave the cake on the cake board when you transfer it to your serving plate or cake stand, unless you have a cake lifter to help you move it to and from the turntable.

Rainbow Cake

If you're looking to make an impact, this is the cake for you! The vibrant icing is already very impressive, and then you slice the cake open to reveal all the different coloured layers inside. It's a great one to practice your piping and palette knife skills too.

Prepare: 45 minutes plus chilling time

Cook: 25 minutes

Serves: 24

450g soft margarine, plus extra to grease
450g caster sugar
8 medium eggs, at room temperature
450g self-raising flour
2 tsp baking power
2 tsp vanilla extract
3 tbsp milk
5 different food gel colourings (purple, green, orange, yellow and pink)

Buttercream:

570g unsalted butter, softened
1kg plus 150g icing sugar
8 tbsp milk

To finish:

2 tbsp rainbow sprinkles

1. Heat your oven to 180°C/160°C Fan/Gas 4. Grease 5 x 20cm sandwich tins and line the bases with baking paper (or you can use 2 or 3 tins and bake in batches, re-greasing and lining the tins between bakes).

2. Using a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the margarine and sugar together on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, mixing until just incorporated and adding a spoonful of flour with each egg.

3. Sift the remaining flour and baking powder together over the mixture and then fold in on a low speed. Finally, add the vanilla extract and milk and mix for 2 minutes.

4. Divide the cake mixture evenly between 5 bowls – to ensure they are

equal you can weigh the mixture into the bowls. (Simply weigh the mixture and divide the quantity by 5, then weigh out each portion.) Colour each portion a different hue of the rainbow, adding a small amount of colouring on the end of a cocktail stick (once baked the colour will become more intense).

5. Spoon the cake mixture into the prepared tins and gently level the surface. Bake in the oven for 20–25 minutes until risen and golden. Leave in the tins to cool for 10 minutes then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

6. Meanwhile, make the buttercream. Using a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat the butter until very soft, then add the icing sugar a little at a time until it is all incorporated. Add the milk and mix for a couple of minutes until light and fluffy.

7. If necessary, trim a fine slice off the top of the each cake to level it, and trim the sides so there are no crisp edges. Place the first layer (ideally purple) on a 25cm round cake board. Spread a thin layer of buttercream on top, keeping it level. Repeat to sandwich all the cake layers together with a thin layer of buttercream in between. Carefully transfer the cake to a turntable.

8. Spread a thin layer of buttercream around the sides, using a plain cake scraper to smooth it and remove any excess. Spread a thin layer of buttercream on top of the cake and smooth out evenly with a wet palette knife. Now, keeping the scraper vertical against the side of the cake, revolve the turntable with the other hand to even the thin buttercream layer. Place the cake in the fridge for at least 10 minutes.

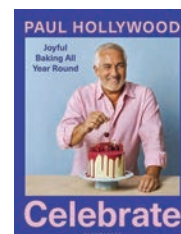
9. Divide the remaining buttercream between 5 bowls. Using a cocktail stick, add a gel colouring sparingly to each bowl to achieve the desired shade and beat well until evenly incorporated.

10. Put the coloured buttercream into



5 separate paper piping bags. Snip the end off each bag so that when you come to pipe the opening is almost half the depth of each cake layer. Pipe 2 bands of the base layer colour (I used purple) around the bottom layer. Repeat around the other layers using the corresponding coloured buttercream, working from bottom to top.

11. Hold the cleaned scraper vertically against the side and turn the turntable with the other hand to neaten the sides. Repeat until smooth. On the final turn, dampen the scraper with water to achieve a very smooth finish. Carefully transfer the cake to a cake stand or flat serving plate. Decorate the top edge of the cake with a border of rainbow sprinkles.



Extract taken from *Celebrate* by Paul Hollywood (Bloomsbury Publishing). Photography by Haarala Hamilton.





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FRUIT & VEG

Vivek Singh - executive chef and CEO of the Cinnamon Collection

"Roasting fruit on a barbecue like bananas or pineapple really brings out their sweet, smoky flavours. The caramelisation and char add depth so even if they get a little black, it all adds to the flavour! Peel off the skins to reveal soft, steaming fruit, then serve hot with caramel sauce and a scoop of ice cream. It's a simple, yet brilliant combo."



Pavel Baranovs - head chef of UBA

"Have you considered trying grilled pink grapefruit? It pairs wonderfully with a drizzle of Greek yogurt, honey, and a sprinkle of tajin for added flavour. Alternatively, grilled pineapple with a red miso glaze and caramelised hazelnuts is a great option to explore as well."



Alistair Craig - executive head chef at The Montagu Arms

"Brassicas are great cooked over coals! Cut broccoli into six chunky pieces and grill before dressing with gremolata; or cut cauliflower into eight, BBQ and finish with a Ras El Hanout, garlic and extra virgin olive oil drizzle. Grilled hispi cabbage is another winner - finish with anchovies, lemon, chilli and olive oil for a kick."

MASTER THE GRILL

Become a BBQ pro with these hints and tips from top chefs

BARBECUE FUEL & TOOLS



Mike Lewis - group executive chef at Sticks'n'Sushi

"Invest in some Japanese Binchō-tan charcoal as it burns hotter, cleaner and longer than other charcoals. If using skewers, you can pre-soak them before using or lay tin foil across the grill where the handles will lie - this protects the wooden skewer and your hand from the heat."



Alessandra Malacarne - development chef at Mildreds & Mallow

"I love using a cast iron pan directly on the grill, it's perfect for caramelising potatoes or cooking smaller items that might fall through the grates. If you're cooking indoors, a good-quality griddle pan is a great alternative. Adding a pinch of smoked salt can help replicate that BBQ flavour."



Luca Mastrantoni - head chef at Ekstedt of The Yard

"Try grilling with hay - it might sound unusual, but at Ekstedt at The Yard, we use it to lightly smoke dishes, and it adds a subtle, grassy aroma that works beautifully with lamb and also vegetables. I also love making dessert on the BBQ - try some grilled peaches with smoked cream and a sprinkle of spruce."

MEAT & MARINADES



Eran Tibi - founder and executive chef of Bala Baya & Kapara

"Don't be afraid to experiment with bold spices, citrus and a touch of sweetness, and always let your protein marinate for at least a few hours, if not overnight. I love using coffee in my marinades as it adds a great depth."



Jack Godik - executive chef at Sucre
"If I'm strapped for time, my go to marinade is miso. Just rub miso paste all over a chicken an hour or so in advance and it will come out amazingly. It also works so well should you decide to do a BBQ last minute and are in need of a full proof, easy way to elevate the flavours of your protein or veg of choice."



Kerth Gumbs - chef de cuisine at Fenchurch Restaurant

"Try something a little different on the grill this summer. I recently barbecued pig's tail - an underrated cut that caramelises beautifully and chars to perfection thanks to it's a fatty gelatinous texture. It can take on a heavy dose of seasoning and loves heat, making it ideal to BBQ."



EAT YOUR holiday

Bring the sights and smells of those European travels home ... with ingredients made right on your doorstep

Even when the skies are clear and the evenings balmy and lingering, many of us will have a longing in summertime to skip overseas.

The biggest draw (other than uninterrupted sunshine)? Food. It's often what and where we ate that's most evocative. That glistening bowl of spaghetti tangled with briny clams, devoured by a pebbly fishing cove in Italy – the air perfumed by salt and rock herbs.

Tiny plates of runny-centred tortilla and chorizo steeped in cider, precariously balanced in one hand at a thronging bar in Spain.

Or the simple act of shopping. Losing ourselves in a tapestry of stalls, squeezing tomatoes for ripeness, and burying our noses into peaches, inhaling their sweet, heady aroma.

Thankfully, it's easier than ever to bring some of those almost tangible memories home. Britain is a multicultural culinary melting pot, and there's a bevy of European-inspired ingredients, made right here, to choose from.

Escape to Italy

Naturally, the first food that comes to mind when thinking about Italy is pasta. The country produces more than 300 shapes – from slender spaghetti to pudgy little orecchiette and more complex, intricate doughy masterpieces. We haven't quite reached hundreds of varieties yet in the UK, but there are some superb British-made types to try. Northern Pasta Co's solar powered pasta factory, for example, transforms regeneratively grown spelt into fusilli, radiatori (like a radiator) and other shapes – all passed through a bronze die to impart every piece with a rugged texture sauce can cling to perfectly.

Galloway Scottish Pasta is an interesting artisanal option too. Made with Scottish wheat, organic Scottish oat flour and Blackthorn sea salt, it's dried slowly over 24 hours and also bronze die extruded.

Cook like the Italians: Switch up your saucing this summer by dressing British pasta in pesto Calabrese. To make it, char 2 red peppers under a grill or over a naked flame. Allow to cool until easy to handle, remove the skins and seeds and set aside. In a small frying pan, sauté 1 small finely diced onion slowly until translucent. Add 1 clove finely chopped garlic and 1 tbsp finely chopped sundried tomatoes. Cook for a further minute. Cool, then add to a food processor with the peppers, 75g blanched almonds, 100g ricotta, 50g pecorino (try Yorkshire Pecorino), and a pinch of chilli flakes. Blitz until smooth.

Season, and toss into just-cooked pasta. Finish with a grating of pecorino.



Follow your nose to France

One of the great gastronomic pleasures of France is its confits. Thought to originate in Gascony, this method of slowly cooking meat in its own fat with herbs and spices has long been a traditional way to preserve and store the season's bounty. French chef Patrice Bonnargent has brought the practice to Northern Ireland, launching Lecale Harvest with his family.

As well as rillettes and pâtés, he uses time-honoured methods and all-natural ingredients in his confits. All you need to do is take them out of their packaging and finish in the oven for instant culinary gratification.

Cook like the French: French home cooks and chefs are whizzes at crafting amazing salads from the most basic of ingredients. A decadent plate can be made in minutes using prepared confit duck. For two people simply crisp two duck legs in the oven (according to instructions). When cool enough to handle, shred the skin and meat from the bones.

Prepare a dressing by whisking 3 tbsps olive oil, 1 tbsp red wine or fruit vinegar, ½ tsp Dijon mustard, a pinch of sugar, 1 tbsp finely chopped fresh tarragon and seasoning to taste.

Prepare a large bowl of interesting salad leaves, toss with the dressing, tumble over 100g pitted, halved cherries, and finish with the duck meat and skin. Serve with crusty bread and a bottle of juicy red wine.



Get your spice on with Spanish flavours

Chorizo is the charcuterie most associated with Spain, but have you heard of sobrasada? The Balearic delicacy (hailing from Mallorca) is thought to have evolved from France's Andouille sausage – eaten by poorer folk, while the nobility and upper echelons of society tucked into roasting joints and chops. Today, this spreadable, spicy sausage (similar to Italian nduja) is made with good quality minced pork and fat, paprika, spices and salt, and can be found in many dishes across the Spanish islands.

Trealy Farm Charcuterie in Wales makes its own natural version using ethically sourced, traditional pork breeds. It's a delicious British-made alternative.

Cook like the Spanish: Sobrasada is best enjoyed smeared over crusty white bread. Mallorcans will then top it with a creamy cow's milk cheese, and perhaps a drizzle of honey. Try crumbling a generous amount into a tray of roast potatoes for the last 10 minutes of cooking with some freshly chopped herbs. It's the most amazing side dish for white fish or chicken.



Go Greek

Tangy, salty, crumbly – feta is a gorgeous cheese that us Brits can't get enough of. The Greek variety will be made with any combination of sheep, goats' and cow's milk, with Greek salad cheese largely cow's milk based.

It's this type (and the softer, melting curds of Persian fetta) that inspired Kent-based Blackwoods Cheese Company to make Graceburn. You'll find it in delis and specialist cheese shops – the crisp, white, irregular chunks (they're broken by hand) of organic, brined cow's milk cheese bobbing in British rapeseed oil infused with thyme, garlic, bay and pepper. It's a treat eaten as part of a mezze platter or used in cooking.

Cook like the Greek: The melt-in-the-mouth texture of Graceburn makes it exquisite in dips. Drain a jar, retaining around 2 tbsps of the oil, add some natural, unflavoured Greek yoghurt, a handful of pistachio nuts, the zest of a lemon, a small bunch each of fresh dill and mint, and blend into a whipped feta concoction for dipping bread, crackers and crudites.

Graceburn is also beautiful crumbled with chopped olives, red onion and oregano, tucked into puff pastry parcels, and baked until golden. Perfect picnic fodder.



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VIETNAMESE STREET FOOD, MADE EASY

Love the bright and bold flavours of Vietnam? **Thuy Hoang** explains how to make three of her favourite street food dishes

One thing that comes to mind for anyone who has travelled to Vietnam are the sights, sounds and wonderful aromas emanating from street food vendors. Street food is synonymous with Asian countries, not least Vietnam. Many of these landmark dishes are delicious recipes put together at fast pace and at affordable prices to satisfy the appetites of a throng of people in a bustling street or market.

Vietnam's cuisine is unique in Asia, with influences from its bordering countries as well as India and its French colonial past. This has shaped the country's cuisine overall, but also its street foods. A notable example is the *bánh mì*, or Vietnamese sandwich, which makes fine use of France's baguette. *Bánh xèo*, or sizzling pancakes, are another case in point. 'Xèo' means 'sizzle'. These are crispy, rice and cornflour pancakes inspired by India's *dosa*, but with a delightful Vietnamese twist.

On the next few pages, I'll show you how to prepare three of my treasured street food dishes. The first is a refreshing, citrusy mango salad with prawns (*gỏi xoài tôm*). The second recipe is the renowned Vietnamese sandwich (*bánh mì*). All three are perfect for the summer. I hope they transport you to the streets of Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City.



Mango salad with prawns (*gỏi xoài tôm*)

Serves: 2 or 4 as starters

Prepare: 30 minutes

For the salad:

2 large, hard green mangoes
150g of cooked and peeled large king prawns
Small handful of chopped mixed herbs, e.g. coriander, mint and Thai basil

For the dressing:

1 garlic clove
1 red bird's eye chilli (use less and remove the seeds for less heat)
2 tbsp of caster sugar or 1 tbsp of good-quality honey
4 tbsp of fish sauce
Juice of one lime

To serve:

1 tbsp crushed roasted peanuts

1 tbsp shop-bought crispy fried shallots

Prawn crackers (optional)

1. Peel the mangoes and use a julienne peeler (or knife) to cut the mango into thin strips.

2. Grind the garlic, chilli, and sugar in a pestle and mortar (or blitz in a small food processor). Place in a bowl and add the fish sauce and lime juice. Give a good stir. Adjust to your taste.

3. When you are ready to serve, add the chopped mixed herbs to the shredded mango in a large bowl. Add about four tablespoons of the dressing and lightly toss. Taste and add more dressing if needed.

4. Divide on serving plates. Place the prawns on the salad, top with crushed peanuts and fried shallots, and serve immediately.

Vietnamese sandwich (bánh mì thịt heo quay)

Serves: 2, or 4 as a snack

Prepare: 45 minutes (plus two days to dry the pork in fridge)

Cook: 50 minutes (plus resting time)

1 baguette

For the roast belly pork (thịt heo quay):

1kg belly pork (skin on)

½ tbsp salt

For the pork's marinade:

½ tsp five spice powder

½ tsp garlic powder

¼ tsp salt

½ tsp sugar

For the quick carrot and daikon pickle (dồ chua):

150g carrots

150g daikon (if unavailable, use carrot)

2 tsp salt

30g caster sugar

50ml white wine vinegar

100ml water

For the garlic mayonnaise:

2 egg yolks (good-quality eggs at room temperature to avoid splitting)

200ml vegetable oil

1 large garlic clove (minced)

Pinch of salt

For the garnish:

30g coriander

2 red chillies, sliced diagonally (optional)

1. Score the belly pork skin evenly or use the pointed end of a knife to prick holes across it. Ensure you do not pierce the fat or meat layer. A good butcher will do this for you.

2. Place the belly pork on a large plate before sprinkling half a tablespoon of salt over its skin. Leave this in the fridge for about two hours. Remove from the fridge and wipe off any moisture from the skin with kitchen towel. Place back in the fridge and leave uncovered for the skin to dry for a minimum of two days (until firm). Remove the pork from the fridge when you're ready to start cooking.

3. In a small bowl, mix the five spice, garlic powder, salt and sugar.

4. Line a shallow baking tray with foil and then non-stick baking paper, and pre-heat the oven to 240C/220C fan/gas 9.

5. Turn the pork over and score the meat but avoid cutting through to the skin. Rub the marinade over the meat but avoid the skin.

6. Place the pork on the baking tray and, again, dry the skin using kitchen towel. Sprinkle a little salt over the skin. Place in the oven on the middle shelf for 20 minutes.

7. For the quick pickle, wash, peel and finely julienne the carrots and daikon using a julienne peeler. Add the salt and mix well in a bowl. Leave for a minute then place the carrots and

daikon in a colander. Rinse under cold water until it runs clear. In another bowl, dissolve the sugar in vinegar and cold water. Add the carrots and daikon, cover, and leave for a minimum of an hour.

8. Continuing with the pork belly, reduce the oven temperature to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Cook the pork for another 15–20 minutes depending on the pork's thickness. Its juice must run clear.

9. For the garlic mayonnaise, place the egg yolks into a medium bowl. Using an electric whisk, whisk until smooth. Drizzle the oil bit-by-bit and keep whisking until the mixture emulsifies. The mayonnaise will be thick and smooth by the time you add all the oil. Add a pinch of salt and the minced garlic and stir. Adjust the seasoning and place in the fridge.

10. Place the pork under a medium grill to finish the crackling (for 5 to 10 minutes). If one part is crisping or darkening faster than another, cover it with foil to prevent burning.

11. Remove the pork and leave to rest for at least 30 minutes. Then cut the pork into 3cm wide strips and slice each one into 5mm pieces.

12. Slice the baguette lengthways and remove most of its inside. Spread mayonnaise on one side then place the roast belly pork, pickled carrot and daikon, coriander, and red chillies (if using) inside. Cut into four sandwiches to serve.



About Thuy

Thuy Hoang is a chef and food writer specialising in Vietnamese food culture, who was a quarter finalist on MasterChef in 2023. She regularly presents at food festivals, is a guest teacher at cookery schools including at School of Wok and is also a judge for the Great British Food Awards. Find out more at thuycooks.com





Vietnamese pancakes with belly pork and prawns (bánh xèo)

Serves: 2, or 4 as starters

Prep: 40 minutes (plus an hour to rest the batter)

Cook: 6 minutes per pancake

For the batter:

75g cornflour
75g rice flour
400g carbonated water
½ tsp salt
½ tsp turmeric powder
2 spring onions, green parts only
8 tbsp vegetable oil

For the filling:

160g pork belly, thinly sliced
160g raw, peeled king prawns, deveined and halved lengthways
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
250g beansprouts

For the fish dipping sauce (nước mắm chấm):

60g water
60g caster sugar
40g fish sauce
30g lime juice (about one lime)
2 garlic cloves, ground or finely chopped
1 red bird's eye chilli, ground or finely chopped (use less and remove the seeds for less heat)

To serve:

2 cos lettuces (or little gems) or 1 round lettuce
½ medium-size cucumber
20g coriander
20g mint
20g Thai basil
Pickled carrot and daikon (see recipe above)

1. Whisk the corn and rice flour, turmeric, salt and water in a bowl to a smooth batter. Leave to rest for an hour or overnight in the fridge.

2. In a bowl, dissolve the sugar in hot water and leave to cool. Add the fish sauce and lime juice. Grind the garlic and chilli in a pestle and mortar (or blitz in a small food processor or finely chop). Add this to the bowl and stir well. Adjust to your taste. Put into small serving bowls for dipping.

3. Wash the lettuce leaves and herbs. Thinly slice the cucumber. Place these in a large bowl or on a serving plate so everyone can help themselves.

4. Prepare the filling by thinly slicing the onion and belly pork. Halve the prawns lengthways and de-vein.

5. Whisk the batter before adding thinly sliced spring onions. Remember to stir the mixture before you fry each pancake.

6. Heat a 24cm non-stick frying pan

on medium high heat. Add 1 tablespoon of oil, 5–6 slices of pork belly and some onion slices. The pan should sizzle when you add the meat. Fry for about 30 seconds (or when both sides are cooked). Add a similar amount of prawns. Give everything a quick stir for about 15 seconds.

7. Stir the batter before ladling one portion over the filling (roughly 50ml). Quickly swirl the pan to form a thin layer covering its base.

8. Add a small handful of beansprouts (30g) on one side of the pancake and immediately place the lid on. Cook for two minutes.

9. Remove the lid ensuring any condensation does not fall back onto the pancake. Lower the heat slightly and cook for three minutes or until the pancake is crispy and golden. Fold the pancake in half. Transfer to a plate and serve straight away.

10. Repeat for the next seven pancakes.

11. To serve, tear a piece of pancake and place it on a lettuce leaf with your choice of fresh herbs, cucumber, and pickled carrot and daikon. Fold the lettuce into a roll and dip it into the fish dipping sauce.

WOODLAND MOMENTS

Wrendale Designs by Hannah Dale and The Lincoln Tea & Coffee Company have teamed up to create a special box of tea, featuring a illustration of woodland creatures, playfully gathering around a forest themed tiered cake stand of afternoon tea treats. Great British Food Awards Bronze-winning Woodland Tea Blend is a delicate yet full bodied tea, to be enjoyed any time of day. Each box of 40 compostable tea bags is sustainably sourced from responsibly managed forests. RRP £4.15

lincolnteacoffeecompany.



GREAT BRITISH FOOD AWARDS: REVISITED

Indulge this summer with our selection of Great British Food Award-winning food and drink

PREMIUM PANTRY INGREDIENTS

Burren Balsamics crafts premium pantry products using the finest local Irish ingredients. Using artisan expertise and carefully crafted Italian Balsamic Vinegar Of Modena, they create unique award-winning flavour combinations for home cooks and chefs alike. Based in Armagh Northern Ireland, their range is handcrafted to be full of essential summer flavours for adding depth to dressings, marinades, spritzes and desserts.

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burrenbalsamics.com



CORNISH INDULGENCE

Callestick Farm is a third-generation dairy farm located in the heart of Cornwall, and the team is proud to only use milk from their grass-fed herd, the finest ingredients and Cornish cream to create a brilliant range of award-winning flavours. Creamy Coconut with its naturally smooth base thanks to top quality Cornish milk makes a great addition to any dessert menu.

5 litre tub RRP £27.43 **callestickfarm.co.uk**

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Cola Kombucha is a unique beverage that combines the familiar taste of cola with the signature tartness and effervescence of kombucha, resulting in a refreshing and invigorating drink experience. Fizzy, tangy and totally refreshing, it is bursting with a billion cultures, craft-brewed and traditionally fermented using natural ingredients. It's also organic, 100% vegan, low in calories and contains no artificial sweeteners.

RRP £1.79 **suma.coop**



PREMIXED PERFECTION

Delight in the tropical elegance of this Award-Winning Lychee Martini, a sophisticated cocktail that combines the delicate sweetness of lychee with the crispness of premium vodka. Bottle Bar and Shop believe that luxury should be simple, and this premixed martini delivers just that. Beautifully bottled and ready to serve, the Lychee Martini brings effortless sophistication to any occasion.

RRP £24 **bottlebarandshop.com**

EXPERTLY CRAFTED

La Barceloneta is a London-based ice cream business with international inspiration. With a unique blend of an East Asian background plus influences from Spanish and Latin American culture, the team at La Barceloneta believe that ice cream can be churned beyond borders. They strictly follow the science to make sure every scoop is mathematically calculated to deliver delicacy and stability. There's a vast array of delicious options on offer; they have churned over 70 dairy flavours and are thrilled to have got 17 award-winning products in 2 years since 2023 from Great Taste Awards and Great British Food Awards. Apart from the dairy and alcoholic ice cream, the next target is to start vegan and a special line for gym rats.

RRP £3.90 **labarcelonetaicecream.co.uk**



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Get ready for a burst of joy with Walker's Nonsuch Banana Split Éclairs! These irresistible toffees are filled with real white chocolate and a luscious banana flavour, bringing a fruity twist to a beloved British favourite. Made in England by family toffee makers since 1894, they're gluten free, vegetarian friendly and full of feel-good indulgence. Whether you're treating yourself or someone special, they're great for giving, perfect for sharing. A truly delightful bite of tradition.

walkers-nonsuch.co.uk



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Bring bold, natural flavour to your kitchen with Gorilla Vanilla Organic Vanilla Extract. Made in the UK using organic Ugandan vanilla beans, this rich, earthy extract is perfect for baking, desserts, and drinks. It's free from added sugar and suitable for vegan, gluten-free, and kosher diets. Grown by select farmers in Uganda—home to mountain gorilla. Taste the difference and make every recipe unforgettable with Gorilla Vanilla.

RRP £14.99 available from
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HUNI NA

Huni Natural Coffee Syrups from Foodie Flavours offer a delightful blend of acacia honey and natural flavourings, providing a refined sweetness without refined sugars or artificial additives. Available in Caramel, Hazelnut, and Vanilla, each syrup gives approx 40 servings and adds a unique twist to your beverages and breakfast treats. Crafted in the UK, Huni syrups are perfect for those seeking a natural, flavourful enhancement to their daily routine. Discover your favourite flavour and transform your coffee moments with Huni.

RRP £7.99, available from
foodieflavours.com,
amazon.co.uk

SIMPLE FLAVOUR BOOSTS

Enhance your culinary creations with Foodie Flavours' 15ml High Strength Natural Flavourings – the perfect choice for passionate home bakers and professional chefs alike. Made with high-strength, all-natural ingredients, these flavourings deliver bold, authentic taste in just a few drops. Whether you're crafting cakes, chocolates, or cocktails, there's a flavour to inspire every recipe. From classic vanilla to exotic mango, Foodie Flavours offers exceptional variety and quality. Add depth and creativity to your dishes with these professional products.

RRP £3.99 to £6.99 available from
foodieflavours.com or amazon.co.uk



CHARLES MACLEOD

Charles Macleod Ltd is a family business that stretches back over seven decades – and their ongoing success has been built on two firmly established principles: top quality meat with excellent customer service and attention to detail. Multi award winning, Charles Macleod Stornoway Black Pudding is made with Scottish oatmeal to give a unique texture and the moist deep flavour is a result of high-quality ingredients and fine balance of seasoning. Essential in a traditional breakfast or perfect accompaniment to a range of savoury ingredients such as scallops, chicken, beef and pork.

RRP £7.50 - £12.00 available from
charlesmacleod.co.uk





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www.BeltonFarm.co.uk

OUR BEST EVER SUMMER *cheese pairings*

Entertaining is easy when you've got a few perfect partners lined up in the fridge and store cupboard

Cheeseboards are the ultimate lazy meal solution – especially in summer. When you've spent the day at the beach, just arrived back from holiday, or have spent the weekend barbecuing up a storm, sometimes the last thing you want to do is cook – no matter how much you love being in the kitchen.

Stocking up on a few of your favourite cheeses, with drinks, snacks and sides to match alongside, means a 'picky tea' or lunch can be ready in a flash, leaving you free to slip into your sandals and sunnies, and put your feet up.

A single, perfectly ripe, carefully chosen cheese you love will do the trick if it's just one or two of you for tea. If you're catering for a crowd, go for five to six different cheeses including a hard style (like Cheddar), something soft and bloomy, a washed rind, a blue, and a sheep or goats' milk variety.

Here's just a few suggestions to get you started.

ALL A-BOARD

The most distinctive way to present cheese is on a rustic wooden board – ideally walnut, maple, cherry or oak. Ensure it's food safe. And remember, these will split over time if you immerse them in water, so clean with a cloth and food safe antibacterial spray rather than dunking in the sink or dishwasher. And 'season' regularly by rubbing down with oil or beeswax.

If you're worried about germs, slate and marble are perfect options.

Top tip: Keep your display cool by chilling your cheeseboard in the fridge overnight (without cheese). This works best with slate, marble, china and porcelain.



Farmhouse Cheddar

There are so many types of Cheddar to choose from (from mild up to vintage) but at this time of year we like to roll out farmhouse versions. They tend to be a touch juicier inside, with a piquant, almost fruity flavour running through.

PERFECT PAIRINGS: It sounds strange, but hear us out – match farmhouse Cheddar with mango chutney. This clings onto the almost tropical fruit notes in the cheese, taking the flavour to the next level. Pieces of dried mango will do the trick too, as will chunks of fresh pineapple – there's a reason pineapple and cheese on sticks have been a party favourite for decades, you know!

WHAT TO DRINK: Cold, crisp cider. The two go hand in hand. For this type of Cheddar steer yourself towards the sweeter end of the scale.



SUMMER CHEESEBOARD ESSENTIALS

- 1 Always include ripe, seasonal fruit – from the first early strawberries to late summer's plums and peaches. Build your board around the season's bounty to make it truly special.
- 2 Switch up your sides – replace darker, richer chutneys with fruitier, lighter options – from mango to apricot.
- 3 Ferments are your friends – kimchi, cucumber pickles, sauerkraut and other fermented foods are magical with cheese and bring a crisp, bright crunch to the cheeseboard.
- 4 Create a seasonal fondue centrepiece. Left at room temperature for a few hours (out of the sun) many soft cheeses will naturally transform into gooey dips for dunking crudites and bread. We're talking soft blues, bries and camembert styles. Also look out for the Spanish torta del casar, which is gorgeously spreadable after just 45 minutes to an hour out of the fridge.
- 5 Unless you're eating it immediately, bread will dry out very quickly alongside a summer cheeseboard. Resolve this by either keeping bread whole until eating, or by covering cut bread with a damp (but wringed out) tea towel.

Manchego

Bring the tapas experience home with this cheese, ubiquitous across Spain. The best is made purely with sheep's milk, and it's available soft (15 days matured) to aged 12 months or more, which will be supple in texture, but with a sweet, savoury bite.

PERFECT PAIRINGS: For simplicity, toasted almonds (traditionally Marcona) sprinkled with sea salt are heavenly with Manchego, as is quince paste (membrillo). Across Spain manchego will be served with a wide range of typically fruity preserves – usually marmalades made with oranges, apricots, plums and figs. Look for a variety made locally to you.

WHAT TO DRINK: Lightly chilled Rioja or Garnacha are great fits if you like red wine. Otherwise, try a delicate fino sherry, oaked chardonnay, or verdejo.

Aged Gouda or Old Winchester

The powerful, spicy bite of matured Dutch gouda (or its British equivalent), has made it a must have for cheese lovers. It delivers a real punch.

PERFECT PAIRINGS: This style of gouda lingers, and has remarkable complexity that switches between fruit, spice and nuttiness. It's a superb partner in crime alongside chunks of smoked ham, or slivers of Alpine style ham (such as speck), and goes very well with walnuts. We also love it with a feisty chilli jam.

WHAT TO DRINK: Robust red wines like barolo suit this cheese style very well, otherwise choose beer. Trappiste varieties and darker ales rather than lager. Sharp apple juice fits the bill too.

CHEESE ON THE MOVE

Taking cheese out on a picnic? Make sure it's wrapped in either double-lined cheese paper (available online and from specialist cheese shops) or foil. Clingfilm should be a last resort – it will make all those lovely cheeses sweat, and nobody wants that!

Carry cheese in an insulated bag with an ice pack, wrapping this in a tea towel so it doesn't directly touch any of your goodies.

The most portable cheeses: Waxed truckles, cheddar, parmesan, pecorino, gouda, Alpine styles (beaufort, comté, emmenthal, gruyère), smaller washed-rind cheeses (langres), individually boxed soft cheeses (camembert, brie).

Brie & Bloomy Rinded

Many Bries and Brie-type cheeses share similar characteristics, being squidgy and melting under the rind, with a slightly chalky, firmer heart. They'll be earthy, mushroomy and sometimes a touch meaty. Give them two hours at room temperature to come to life in summer.

PERFECT PAIRINGS: Ripe strawberries, and even a dollop of strawberry conserve play well with these cheeses in summer, as do dark cherries and plums. They are also magnificent with warm, crusty, yeasty white bread, so head to your local bakery for baguettes, or serve with a heat-at-home version.

WHAT TO DRINK: Crack open the cava, prosecco, Champagne or sparkling English wine. These plump, fatty cheeses need something sharp and bubbly to cut through each bite.

Cream Cheese

Butter boards were all the rage last year, but the same visual impact can be made with cream cheeses, scooped straight from the pot.

PERFECT PAIRINGS: Smear cream cheese across a section of your board, creating a little dip or 'pool' in the middle for your seasonings. Edible flowers (violas, marigolds and chive flowers) with honey look stunning and are sensational with sheep's milk or lighter goats' cream cheeses. Or snip in fresh chives and soft herbs, or chopped red chillies and coriander. Serve with baby carrots, mange tout and summer radishes.

Milder, unsalted cream cheeses can come out for dessert too, stirred with a little cooled, melted chocolate and topped with fresh berries.

WHAT TO DRINK: Like Brie, cream cheese favours bubbles, or go for a mineral, flinty, well chilled white wine such as chablis or saumur.

Crumbly

Feta, cheshire and other crumbly textured cheeses have a fresh, lactic sharpness that makes them central to summer eating, and they can be treated in much the same way across the cheeseboard.

PERFECT PAIRINGS: Watermelon and feta are innately good together, marrying sweet, sharp and salty. Cheshire and white stilton will enjoy sidling up to melon on the cheeseboard too. Throw over a few toasted, salted pumpkin seeds to up the ante. These cheeses adore tomatoes as well – but they must be ripe! Warm your finest toms in the sun, slice, season, dress with oil and vinegar, and serve on a platter topped with chunks of crumbly cheese and a few leaves of oregano.

WHAT TO DRINK: Greek assyrtiko or xinomavro wines are a joy with these cheeses, bringing much-needed acidity.

Washed Rind

Epoisses, Langres, Stinking Bishop, Oxford Isis – all these cheeses have one thing in common – they're on the pongier end of the spectrum. Their bark is (usually) bigger than their bite, though, so don't be put off!

PERFECT PAIRINGS: If washed rinds are your 'thing' you might just like to let the cheese do the talking, serving it simply over a neutral sourdough cracker. But we prefer to funk things up. Here is where those ferments come into play. Bread and butter pickles and dill pickles are a dream with any washed rind, as is kimchi. Experiment! The meatiness around the edges of these types of cheeses calls for charcuterie too – making them a powerhouse on the summer grazing board.

WHAT TO DRINK: Naturally fermented and sour beers are epic with these cheeses. Langres calls for Champagne or sparkling wine to be poured into its concave middle. Or invest in a really good bottle of kombucha.

Blue

We've got a few suggestions when it comes to summer blues. If you can get hold of it, a pot of Gorgonzola Dolce, scooped directly from the wheel by a cheesemonger, is a thing of beauty. Failing this, Germany's award-winning soft, dreamy montagnolo, with its thick ribbons of blue veining, also has the lighter touch. Or for bite, it has to be English stilton, or one of the fabulous Italian ubriaco blues, soaked in wine or spirits.

PERFECT PAIRINGS: Orchard fruits and figs are a classic match for blue cheese, but summer has plenty to offer too. The tannic sweetness of fresh blueberries or blueberry preserve brings loads to the party with stronger blue cheeses. Chilled cherries or cherry jam are superb with scooping Gorgonzola. And have you tried blue cheese and chocolate? You can make a surprisingly delicious summer canape by topping a digestive biscuit with a slice of blue, a grating of the darkest chocolate and a small spoonful of dark fruit jam.

We also highly recommend seeking out some local honey. A spoonful glistening over a wedge of blue cheese is absolutely heavenly.

WHAT TO DRINK: If you've never tried mead before, perhaps now's the time to try it. Made by fermenting honey, without any added sugars, it's an aromatic, heady accompaniment to blue cheeses served chilled in summer, or warm in the cooler months. Red wine can muddy the flavour of a decent blue, so stick to lighter bottles such as pinot noir, or go for sparkling English wine or sticky, sweet dessert wines like Hungarian tokaji.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Serving cheese involves a bit of theatre – and beyond the cheeses and garnishes themselves, this should extend to how you present and cut it.

Ever bought a cheeseboard set and wondered what on Earth those weird and wonderful knives are for? Let us explain.

- 1 **Sharp with holes:** This is intended for soft, creamy cheeses like Brie and Camembert. Less surface area on the knife means it'll glide through these varieties like butter.
- 2 **Cleaver:** To cut through harder cheeses like cheddar and gouda
- 3 **Round edged:** For spreading soft, triple cream cheeses.
- 4 **Pick - edged:** These almost triangular - looking knives with a sharp point are for picking into flaky hard cheeses such as parmesan and pecorino.

We recommend investing in a set of beautiful, dinky - sized butter knives as well, for the 'wow' factor. And if you love to enjoy cheeseboards on the go, there's nothing more satisfying than slicing with an investment piece, such as a single - bladed folding Laguiole or Opinel knife.

NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

Looking for something a bit different to include on your board this summer? Why not try one of these new cheeses?

- 1 **Bidlea Blue, Burt's Cheese:** Wrapped in vine leaves and soaked in Gwatkins Cider, this is matured for 10 to 12 weeks. It's moist, crumbly and fresh with a boozy fruitiness.
- 2 **Benville Organic Brie, Hollis Mead Dairy:** A lusciously textured organic triple cream Brie. Also available in a truffled version.
- 3 **Pyghtle, Broughton Hall Dairy:** A delicately soft, herbaceous spreadable sheep's milk cheese that becomes meatier (like roast lamb) as it ages.





THE Perfect SPREAD

Lay out the blanket and sharpen your cheese knives – this cheeseboard is ripe for enjoyment this season

1. Hawkshead Relish Beetroot & Horseradish Chutney, £4.85, hawksheadrelish.com

A bold twist on a classic, this Beetroot & Horseradish Chutney blends earthy beetroot with a gentle horseradish warmth for a rich, vibrant flavour. Perfect with salads, sandwiches or cheese, this much-loved original adds depth and colour to any plate. Unchanged since the 2000s because it's simply perfect.

2. Belton Farm Red Fox, £2.65, available in Waitrose and Tesco

Red Fox is a modern British Red Leicester, expertly handcrafted at Belton Farm. Aged to perfection, it delivers a bold blend of sweet, savoury and nutty flavours with a signature crunchy texture. Its russet hue, rugged mouthfeel and lingering finish make it an irresistibly moreish cheese worth discovering.

3. Belton Farm Silver Fox, £3.00, available in Waitrose and Tesco

Silver Fox Vintage Cheddar is expertly crafted and matured for 18 months to deliver a bold, complex flavour with a signature crunchy texture from natural calcium crystals.

Suitable for vegetarians and taste-tested by experts, it's a rugged, full-bodied cheese that guarantees a rich, satisfying bite every time.

4. Burren Balsamics Balsamic Vinegar of Modena, £12, burrenbalsamics.com

This flavour-packed vinegar is ideal as a fat-free dressing for salads. It adds a rich luscious flavour to casseroles and stews. A few drops of this beautifully balanced aged balsamic will transform tomatoes, parma ham and aged Parmesan.

5. Aldi UK Specially Selected Long Clawson Mature Blue Stilton, £2.75, aldi.co.uk

This is a rich, creamy cheese with a bold, tangy flavour. Expertly crafted in the heart of England,

its crumbly texture and distinct blue veins make it a standout choice for cheese lovers. Perfect for pairing with crackers, fruits, or in recipes.

6. Lidl's Deluxe Somerset Crunchy Extra Mature Cheddar, £3.29, lidl.co.uk

This cheddar is a bold, full-flavoured cheese matured for a minimum of 14 months. Ideal for cheese boards, sandwiches, or melted over dishes, this cheddar provides a distinctive taste experience without breaking the bank.

7. Peters Yard Original Sourdough Crackers, £2.50, available in most major stores

An essential for any cheeseboard or great as a snack. Peter's Yard combines Swedish tradition with British craft ingredients and to make delicious sourdough products to pair with your favourite cheeses, dips and other toppings. The distinctive crisp, crunchy texture and flavour are achieved by small batch baking using a sourdough starter, fermented for 16 hours.

8. Sharpham Smoky Red Pepper & Tomato Relish, £4.50, sharphamcheese.co.uk

This smoky red pepper and tomato relish is packed full of juicy tomatoes and sweet red peppers. A hint of chipotle chilli gives the jam a lovely warming finish and punchy flavour. Why not try this delicious smoky red pepper and tomato relish spread on a Sharpham Savour cheese toastie for a tasty treat?

9. Cricket St Thomas Capricorn Goats Cheese, £2.60, available in Waitrose and Tesco

A goats cheese with a particularly mild, clean and slightly nutty flavour which can be enjoyed at different stages of maturity. Suitable for vegetarians and VegSoc approved.

10. Butlers Stratford Blue, £4.00, available in Waitrose and at butlerscheeses.co.uk

Something of a dark horse (not literally!), Stratford Blue is really delicate, really creamy and perfectly rich. The blue bite develops with warmth but soon mellows in a sea of creaminess making Stratford Blue cheese truly unique and unbelievably moreish.

A Fresh Take

Phil Howard proves that soups aren't just for the colder months...
They can be a celebration of summer produce, too



Gazpacho

Prepare: 15 minutes plus marinating time
Serves: 4

1/2 small red onion
125g cucumber peeled
125g de seeded red peppers, chopped
250g ripe tomatoes
150g watermelon flesh
250ml fresh tomato juice
1 clove garlic
1/4 large red chilli
75g white sourdough, no crust
25ml Cabernet Sauvignon vinegar
25ml extra virgin olive oil
5 basil leaves
20g salt
15g demerara sugar

1. Roughly chop the vegetables, bread and watermelon.
2. Add the remaining ingredients and leave to marinate overnight in the fridge.
3. The following day blend in a high-speed blender until smooth.
4. Serve chilled with a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil.

Chilled Cucumber Soup

Prepare: 15 minutes
Cook: 15 minutes
Serves: 4

2 cucumbers, peeled, de-seeded and chopped
1 large onion, finely sliced
2 Jersey Royal potatoes
2 large sprigs of mint
800ml chicken stock
100ml double cream
Pinch celery salt
50g butter
Crème fraiche to finish

1. Cook the new potatoes in salted water until tender. Add a sprig of the mint and set aside to cool. Gently peel off the skin and cut into a dice.
2. Sweat the onion in the butter with a generous pinch or two of salt. Once translucent add the cucumber, a further pinch or two of salt, and sweat for 5 minutes. Add the chicken stock and cream, bring to the boil, cook for 5 minutes, add the leaves off the

second mint sprig and blend in a high-speed blender. Check the seasoning and chill over ice.

3. Whisk the cream fraiche with a pinch of celery salt to loosen it – add a splash of water if necessary. It should be drizzling consistency.

4. Place the soup into bowls, add the diced potato and finish with a drizzle of crème fraiche.

Ajo Blanco

Prepare: 10 minutes plus marinating time
Serves: 6

150g white almonds
2 cloves garlic
300g peeled and chopped cucumbers
75g fresh white breadcrumbs
650ml almond milk
125ml apple juice
75ml extra virgin olive oil
10g sugar
15g salt
10ml Chardonnay vinegar
50ml white balsamic vinegar



**To garnish:**

12 pitted nocellara olives
 1/4 cucumber
 25g roasted marcona almonds
 25g pitted cherries

1. Marinate all ingredients except the almond milk overnight. The following day add the almond milk and blend in a high-speed blender until completely

smooth. Pass through a fine sieve if necessary. Chill.

2. Cut the nocellara olives in half. Peel the cucumber, cut lengthways into quarters and cut into 1/2 cm lengths. Cut the cherries and almonds in half. Mix together, add a pinch of salt and cover with olive oil.

3. Serve chilled and add a spoonful of garnish at the last minute.

Shopping Basket



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 Chicken Stock
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Relight your fire

Strap in for grilling greatness this summer as we share the season's best tips from **Christian Stevenson** (DJ BBQ), and barbecuing expert, author and co-organiser of Gatcombe Food Festival, **Ben Bartlett** (BBQ Ben)



Nothing beats the thrill of barbecuing and eating outside – especially in the UK, where bright days and warm spells seem like gold dust some years.

Whether we're searing off a simple piece of salmon or steak after work to go alongside a dressed salad for the ultimate easy supper, or dedicating hours to making our own rubs and marinades, allowing them to sink into slow-roasted briskets and pork shoulders, us food lovers tend to feel an affinity with this 'wild' way of getting food on the table.

Working the grill in the sun, a bottle or drink in hand, the sound of birds chirping and friends and family chattering, is one of the great joys of summer.

Over the next few pages we reveal recipe ideas, expert advice and intel to help you make the most of cooking in the great outdoors this year.



BEN BARTLETT



CHRISTIAN STEVENSON

2025's BBQ trends – What's hot this summer?

Ben: We do get influenced a lot by America – no doubt about it – and American and South American-style cuts are taking off here, especially the picanha part of the top of the sirloin. That's really flavourful.

I'm also seeing more people are making their own sauces and butters. Cowboy butter, with garlic, herbs, paprika and a bit of cayenne, is all over Tiktok and appeals to everyone. Put it on vegetables, fish or steak.

Desserts and cocktails made using the grill are becoming popular too.

Christian: One thing I'm starting to see is everyone wants that holy grail of brisket on the barbecue, but if you're a family of four, that's a lot of meat, so there's a thing now called a brisketta. It's a kind of mini brisket that has all the fat content, so you still get the same results.

People are getting more adventurous cooking head meat, like beef cheeks and pork cheeks, and using other cheaper cuts. The price of beef has gone up 23% in the last year, so cooks are having to turn to these more affordable options, also things like bavette, onglet or rump instead of sirloin.

And what's really exciting is we're seeing more people flat topping using Blackstone grills and planchas. I think grill marks are the dumbest thing in the world – I don't understand why people are so fascinated with them. Why would I only want to season my steak on a grill when I can put it on a flat top and get a good crust on it? I think people notice over live fire they lose a lot of fat and stuff, but in a pan on a flat top that sticks, and you can make sauces. I do want to kiss my meat with fat – when it renders and the flames come up, that is a beautiful thing – but I'll get a much better cook with a flat top.

Cooking for a crowd

Pork shoulder is the ultimate crowd pleaser, says Christian. "Ask your butcher for a classic American cut – the Boston butt or pork butt, here they might call it the spare rib. Get them to take out the chine bone and remove the rind to leave a thin layer of fat."

He recommends showing it the flames of a barbecue to get a crust and some flavour going, before covering and cooking in a low oven (around 105°C) overnight until it falls apart. "That's our festival protein for serving the masses. Or I like to do tonnes of chicken thighs. Chicken breast is easy to mess up (if you go over 74°C they get dry), but thighs don't mind being taken a bit further. A lot of people don't do ribs or meat with bones because they think there's too much wastage, so go for deboned chicken thighs."

His go-to side? "I make a big pot of basmati or long grain rice and run through some coal roasted veg, add seasoning and olive oil, and then I've got a really flavoursome dish."



"Cowboy butter, with garlic, herbs, paprika and a bit of cayenne, is all over Tiktok and appeals to everyone. Put it on vegetables, fish or steak"
– Ben Bartlett (BBQ Ben)



How to: Make Cowboy Butter

This is dreamy melted over roasted fish, meat, vegetables and even tofu.

Simply mash together 115g unsalted butter, 3 cloves grated garlic, 2 tablespoons fresh herbs of your choice, 1 teaspoon smoked paprika, zest of half a lemon, 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard, ¼ teaspoon ground cayenne pepper, 1 teaspoon fine sea salt, ½ teaspoon ground black pepper. Combine and wrap in foil or film, storing in the fridge for up to five days.

Ultimate BBQ tips

- 1.** Give yourself ‘zones’ on the barbecue, says Christian. “It’s a game changer once people realise it’s like being indoors, having the stove top and the oven and different heat sources. Normally I set my grill up one third charcoal to one side for direct heat, leaving the other side empty. If I’m cooking for more people I’ll go half and half. Having these zones is the key to cooking. If you’re doing a belly of pork or chicken and fill the charcoal all the way, you’ve got nowhere to go. Always have an area for dynamic, direct heat, and indirect heat for resting. When you’ve got a big steak, you can move it around, then rest it, cook it, and rest it.”
- 2.** Ben’s favourite tip is to fill a (clean and unused) plant sprayer with unsweetened apple juice to spritz over meat as it cooks. “It does two things – it keeps the meat moist, and gives a lovely caramelised finish,” he says.

3. Christian says if you’re serious about being a home barbecue pro, you’ve got to invest in a meat thermometer or probe to prevent both over and undercooking. “I’ll cook a steak to the lower 40s and let it rest for the same amount of time if I want a good medium finish,” he says. “If I want it rare, I’ll go late 30s, pulling it off at, like, 38°C. You don’t want to go over – it’s sacrilege.”

4. Pay attention to your glazes and marinades, says Ben. Chicken, ribs, lamb chops and steaks will be ready in a few minutes, but bigger cuts should go in for several hours. Also, warm up your glazes before brushing over meat in the last minute or two before serving. “A lot of people apply these too early, and supermarkets sell packs with the glaze already on. You put them on the barbecue and they burn on the outside. Don’t use them until the end of cooking.”

5. “Use your hood,” Christian adds. “You can turn your barbecue into an outdoor oven. Don’t be afraid to do big cuts and whole meats. You can indirect roast a whole chicken outdoors with all the fixings.”

6. You shouldn’t forget to remove the back membrane from your ribs according to Ben. “Take that inedible layer of skin off, apply your rub and barbecue, brushing on layers of warm sauce towards the end of cooking every five minutes.”

7. Wrap a load of potatoes and throw them directly into the embers to cook, advises Christian. “Then the next day you can make the best hash browns and chips.”

8. Christian also loves to put halved lemons directly into the flames. “You can get that caramelisation going. When you want to flavour stuff, you’ve got this amazing grilled



lemon ready to go. Just make sure you wait a bit before using because those things conduct heat!”

9. Ben like to use the residual heat after cooking the main event to prep easy puddings. “Wrap some bananas in foil and stick them right into the embers. When they’re soft to the touch, slice open and pour in a nice chocolate cream liqueur. It’s simple but delicious.”

10. Cocktails are enhanced by some barbecue magic too, Ben adds. “Make a





“Wrap a load of potatoes and throw them directly into the embers to cook. The next day you can make the best hash browns and chips
– Christian Stevenson (DJ BBQ)

strawberry jam by boiling strawberries on the grill in a foil tray. Cool down and shake with some ice and strawberry vodka, finishing with strawberry lemonade so you keep that core ingredient all the way through. It just tastes amazing!”

Core Kit

Invest in the best: If you’re in the market for a new barbecue, Christian recommends buying the best you can afford – ideally one with a lid so you can switch between open grilling and roasting. “Always try to have a Weber 57 Master-Touch in your arsenal. And if you want to scale up, get a ceramic grill. A monolith like a Kamado Joe or Green Egg. They’re more efficient, and hold heat for a long time. If you’re doing a brisket or shoulder in a regular barbecue you’ll have to keep refuelling that, whereas a ceramic barbecue will hold its heat for longer and you don’t have to keep feeding it.”

Support British charcoal producers: Using sustainable British charcoal is one of the most important investments you can make when you’re cooking outdoors, says Ben. “In Britain we make the best lump wood

charcoal in the world. I get mine from Westonbirt Arboretum – it’s sustainable wood, naturally felled. They put it into the oven for 15 hours at 450°C and it comes out beautifully light – much better than something that’s travelled halfway across the world and been sprayed with chemicals. You can also get ethanol firelighters now and they’re great because they’re also eco-friendly. They don’t give off any nasty chemicals or taint the food.”

Seafood success

Cooking fish on the barbecue is something that can strike fear into the hearts of even the most able of cooks – but we shouldn’t be scared, say our grilling pros.

Christian recommends removing all the packaging well before cooking, patting the fish dry, and placing it on a roasting trivet where it can further dry out before you’re ready to get that fire going. “Dry skin is key,” he says.

Fish is Ben’s favourite thing to cook on the barbecue, and he recommends wrapping whole fish in vine leaves, seaweed or foil for protection. “If you have a fillet, use a flat top

grill, get it really hot and oil the skin of the fish. Cook it skin side down. You want to get it super-hot to seal and to put a crust on it. You won’t even need to turn it, it will cook all the way through like that.”

Don’t forget the veggies!

Discerning vegetarians and vegans won’t appreciate being fobbed off with faux burgers and sausages. The bounty of summer springs forth from the garden and in shops at this time of year, and it’s your chance to help these ingredients shine.

Christian’s favourite plant-based dish involves roasting whole onions and garlic bulbs (in their skins) and peppers in the flames until soft, charring off a few plump tomatoes, and bringing them together into a salad. “Live fire changes their dynamics,” he smiles.

“Get a cauliflower, slice it up, grill it and throw on some tahini, or make a shawarma butter, rubbing that on before cooking. I also have a great recipe for grilled broccoli with sesame oil and soy sauce.”

Ben’s best vegetarian dish is a little bit out there, but keeps everyone coming back for more – watermelon pizza. Yes, you read that right. “Watermelon is the only melon that keeps its shape when you barbecue it,” he explains. “And this is an amazing way to cook it. Slice it to pizza thickness. Slice red onions really thinly and pickle them in a bit of red wine vinegar. Put those on top with a lively cheese (I like Shropshire Blue). Finish with fresh basil, and barbecue for eight to 10 minutes, then slice like a pizza. It’s delicious. You can make it in advance too.”

Key cooking temperatures

If you’re using a probe, here are the need-to-know temperatures for the barbecue

Chicken Whole, thighs and drumsticks: 74°C at the thickest part Breast: 71-74°C	Pork Chops, roasts, tenderloin: 63°C Fish 60-63°C	Beef and lamb Rare: 49-52°C Medium-rare: 54-57°C Medium: 60-63°C Medium-well: 66-68°C Well done: 71°C and above
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BALA BAYA

Southwark, London

This central London restaurant is a must-visit destination for anyone on the hunt for aromatic and flavour-packed fare



Tucked away in a courtyard in central London, Bala Baya (headed up by renowned chef Eran Tibi) is a flavour-packed must-visit for anyone seeking a twist on traditional Mediterranean and Middle Eastern food. We visited for a midweek lunch, and the vibe was buzzing but chilled – just perfect for a casual yet luxurious lunch with friends.

Welcomed warmly and taken to the upstairs space – chefs were busily but calmly preparing food downstairs, adding to the foodie atmosphere – we sat down on a comfy banquette and took a look at the drinks

menu... As a non-drinker, I was pleasantly surprised by the options on offer. We opted for the house-made sodas – gazoz – in the punchy orange, chilli and coriander, and fruity and fragrant blackberry and lavender; both supremely refreshing and perfectly balanced.

Everything on the menu was hugely tempting, so it was hard not to over-order (in fact that's just what we did – no regrets)! The comforting soft pita was the perfect partner for hummus topped with meltingly tender braised beef, with the richness of the meat balanced with a fresh and aromatic coriander and chilli relish and a zesty sprinkle of sumac. The prawn baklava was a recommendation from the waitress, and I couldn't have been more glad of her suggestion – crisp, crunchy and succulent all at once, with an indulgent sweetness complementing the perfectly cooked prawn, it is a must-try. As is the brisket doughnut – a light but flavour-packed bite stuffed with beef brisket and levelled up with earthy tahini and notes of tomato, orange and chilli.

It was nigh on impossible to choose just one dish from the dessert menu, so we opted for two: the indulgent yet light burnt baklava with its comforting bread and butter pudding vibes and aromas of rose and citrusy vanilla, and the tahini and cherry-loaded chocolate delight. Rich, aromatic, and utterly moreish.

You can find Bala Baya in Southwark, London. For more information visit balabaya.co.uk



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SUMMER *Sips*

The time for relaxing in the garden with a refreshing tipple has arrived. Here are our picks of the best thirst quenchers on the market right now



When you have a hankering for a fruity cocktail but are desperate to get out into the sunshine, nothing is more satisfying than a great quality pre-mixed cocktail, and we love this Cherry Margarita from FINK (**£36, delli. market**). Made with a blend of tequila, cherry bitters, maraschino and lime rantcho, it's bold and bright – and soon to be a popular addition to your drinks cabinet. Top with a vibrant maraschino cherry and lime zest.



Sometimes only a beer will do, and we're big fans of the super refreshing new Blancie brew from Small Beer Co (**£30 for 12 cans, theoriginalsmallbeer.com**). Created in partnership with Sorted Food, it's made with prime Herefordshire wheat and boasts the refreshing aromatics of Spanish orange and Sussex-grown coriander seeds – making it the perfect pairing for all sorts of summery dishes. Plus, it's only 2.5% ABV!



For clean, green refreshment, you can't beat cucumber – and the new Cucumber Liqueur from FAIR (**£25.95, fair-drinks.com**) is the perfect way to add it to your cocktail repertoire. Its flavour is rounded out with notes of citrus and spice so it would be a great addition to your seasonal spritzes, and it's relatively low 18% ABV means that it can be partnered with other spirits for a full-flavoured and luxurious summer cocktail.



Al fresco celebrations demand pink fizz, and no there's no reason why non-drinkers should miss out. Wednesday's Domaine (**£49.99 for a half case of three, wednesdaysdomaine.com**) have partnered with an English winemaker to create Cuvee: a tipple worthy of any occasion and primed to be enjoyed by everyone at the party. Totally alcohol-free, it presents a vibrant and fruity acidity with biscuity, savoury notes.



Picture the scene: a family picnic, children running around while adults tend to the barbecue (and bar)... Traditionally, it can be tricky to find a drink that all guests, young and old, will enjoy... Enter Pip Organic's Fizz range (**£1.50-£1.65, piporganic.com**). A lot healthier than other soft drinks on the market and made using organic 'perfectly imperfect' fruit, these single serve cans contain no added sugar or nasties.



Everybody loves Aperitivo time, and this ready-to-drink bottled Spritz from Black Lines (**£19, blacklinesdrinks.com**) is just the ticket for those early evening lounges in the sun. Its striking bright orange colour and iconic bittersweet taste are perfectly balanced, and as it's already topped up with sparkling wine and soda this tipple is totally faff-free. The perfect partner for a glass filled with clinking ice cubes.

Drink the Season

Cindy-Marie Harvey highlights the English wines at their very brightest this season

Summer in Britain – be it heavenly sunny days or the traditional bank holiday rain, there is an English wine for each occasion! So, for that al fresco eating, a selection of vinous temptation for you to try whilst the sun still shines (or even when you're watching the raindrops from inside!)

CELEBRATING SEASONAL PRODUCE

A cornucopia of locally grown produce flaunts its presence at our local markets – strawberries, redcurrant, raspberries, apricots and cherries. A classic dessert, summer pudding showcasing the wonderful red fruits is ideal with a glass of Sussex Reserve from Nutbourne Vineyards (nutbournevineyards.com) – a crisp white field blend from their picturesque estate in West Sussex. As British asparagus season draws to a close, (hopefully you've frozen some of these verdant spears for enjoying later during the summer months), it is a perfect match for Sauv Blanc, but forget NZ and head instead to the Cotswolds, home to the award-winning Woodchester Valley Sauvignon Blanc (woodchestervalleyvineyard.com).

Or from East Sussex, dynamic producers Henners (hennersvineyard.co.uk) have created a zingy Sauv Blanc, busting with herbal and green notes.

AL FRESCO MOMENTS

Ideal for just relaxing in the garden, a still white from the Madeleine Angevine grape variety from Danebury Vineyard in Hampshire (danebury.com) is spot on with its crisp apple notes. Another great contender as a "hammock wine" is Pinot Blanc from Stopham Vineyards in Sussex (stophamvineyard.co.uk), which is vibrant with appealing notes of pink grapefruit.

BBQs are on repeat throughout the summer, and we've come a long way from burnt sausages, with tables groaning with Ottolenghi-esque salads, with marinated kebabs, aubergines, and cedar planked salmon awaiting their turn over the coals! Sparkling wines are not just for aperitif time, but also pair brilliantly with food – so for multi-use and great at parties, why not an impressive magnum of Sparkling Rosé from Coates & Seely (coatesandseeley.com): heaven with strawberries, tuna and all types of shellfish. Or for a still Rosé, look no further than Chapel Down's Rosé for sheer drinkability in the sun (chapeldown.com)!

Whites need to have good level of complexity to not be overcome by the panoply of flavours at a BBQ, so seek out

Chardonnay Guinevere from Gusbourne Estate in Kent (gusbourne.com), with its charming minerality and texture.

Or the exquisite Chardonnay from Danbury Ridge in Essex (danburyridge.com), which is truly seductive (do pop a bottle of their amazing Pinot Noir into your order as well!).

Choose a super food friendly red such as silky Sharpham Pinot Noir from Sandridge Barton in Devon (sandridgebarton.com), which pairs so well with grilled meats and salmon alike. Or hailing from the North Downs in Kent, Pinot Noir from Simpsons (simpsonswine.com) is brilliant with lamb kebabs. If you are planning an elegant Afternoon Tea Garden Party, Watercress scones must be on the menu – and perfect when paired with a glass of Sparkling from Exton Park (extonparkvineyard.com), who offer a brilliant set of four half bottles of their delicious Reserve Blends. Cute for individual servings or a lovely gift or for riverside picnics!

THE PERFECT PAIRINGS

Seasonality is cheese is sadly often overlooked in Britain, but it's worth chatting to your local deli about cheeses that are only made in spring/summer – seek out Hidcote from King Stone Dairy in Gloucestershire (kingstonedairy.com), an irresistible mousse-like sheep's cheese, which is perfect with a glass of the wonderfully named Bonkers Chardonnay from Sugrue South Downs (sugruesouthdowns.com): an impressive white that's had wine journals in raptures.

Summer would not be summer without ice cream but take it to the next level with ice cream biscuit sandwiches, which simply scream out for a glass of English Reserve from Ambriel in West Sussex (ambrielsparkling.com), a Pinot Noir led Demi Sec – heaven!

If strawberries are on the menu, pour a glass (or two!) of Dancer in Pink still Rosé from Black Chalk (blackchalkwine.co.uk). The fragrant notes of strawberries in the wine make it a perfect pairing – but it's also very flexible, as its balanced acidity makes friends even with fatty dishes such as barbecued belly pork.

SEASIDE TREATS

Finally, for an evening jaunt to the beach for a fix of Vitamin Sea whilst you count down the days to the summer hols, it must be fish and chips on the beach, for which simply the BEST match is fizz! So many cracking English Sparklings to choose from, but look out for High Clandon Vintage Brut (highclandon.co.uk), for complexity in the glass, or try the unusually 100% Pinot Meunier Sparkler from Marlow's Harrow & Hope (harrowandhope.com), with its lovely saline finish, or for something a bit different, seek out Norfolk's Flint Vineyard's Charmat Rosé for easy drinkability (flintvineyard.com).



Cindy-Marie is author of *Watercress, Willow and Wines, A Celebration of English Vineyards and matching recipes*, and owner of Love Wine Food Ltd. (lovewinefood.com). Follow her on Instagram @lovewinefood for more wine and food suggestions.

THE GLOBE INN: A CULINARY AND CULTURAL GEM IN THE HEART OF DUMFRIES

Where history, hospitality, and haute cuisine collide

In the historic town of Dumfries, nestled amidst cobbled streets and a rich tapestry of history, lies The Globe Inn – a culinary haven where the spirit of Robert Burns intertwines with modern gastronomic artistry. More than just a pub, The Globe Inn is a destination, an experience, and a testament to the power of passion, quality, and a commitment to showcasing the best of Scotland's larder.

A YEAR OF TRIUMPH: CELEBRATING CULINARY EXCELLENCE

May 2025 will mark the first-anniversary of Fraser Cameron being named Head Chef of The Globe Inn. During 2024 The Globe Inn experienced a remarkable year, garnering accolades and recognition that solidify its position as a culinary force to be reckoned with.

"It's been an incredible journey," says Chef Cameron, reflecting on the past year. "To

receive a third Michelin listing, be named Dumfries & Galloway Life Restaurant of the Year, and win the title of Scotland's Best Eating Experience at the VisitScotland Thistle Awards is a true honour and a testament to the hard work and dedication of our entire team."

Chef Cameron's passion for his craft is palpable in every dish he creates. His innovative approach to cooking, combined with a deep respect for local ingredients, has resulted in a menu that is both exciting and refined.



A GASTRONOMIC ADVENTURE: THE GLOBE INN TASTING MENU

One of the highlights of The Globe Inn is its renowned tasting menu. Available every night without the need for pre-booking, this culinary adventure takes diners on a journey through the finest seasonal produce that Scotland has to offer.

"We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to experience the best of our cuisine," explains Chef Cameron. "Our tasting menu is designed to showcase the diversity and quality of local ingredients, prepared with creativity and precision."

Each dish on the tasting menu is a work of art, meticulously crafted and bursting with flavour. From delicate seafood starters to succulent meat courses, the menu is a symphony of textures and tastes that will leave you wanting more.

"We are incredibly proud of our connection to Robert Burns. His legacy is woven into the fabric of this place, and we strive to honour his memory through our hospitality and our commitment to showcasing the best of Scottish culture"



A CELEBRATION OF LOCAL PRODUCE

At the heart of The Globe Inn's culinary philosophy is a deep respect for local produce. Chef Cameron works closely with local farmers, fishermen, and producers to source the finest ingredients, ensuring that every dish is a celebration of the region's bounty.

"We believe that quality ingredients are the foundation of great cooking," says Chef Cameron. "By supporting local producers, we not only ensure the freshness and quality of our ingredients but also contribute to the sustainability of our community."

MONTHLY EXTRAVAGANZAS: THEMED EVENTS AND IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES

The Globe Inn goes beyond the ordinary with its monthly special themed events. These culinary extravaganzas offer a unique opportunity to indulge in some of Chef Cameron's most innovative creations, perfectly paired with a wide range of drinks.

"Our themed events are a chance for us to

push the boundaries of culinary creativity," says Chef Cameron. "We love to experiment with new flavours and techniques, and our monthly events allow us to share these experiences with our guests."

From whisky and cheese pairings to immersive dining experiences that transport you to another world, perhaps a Burns supper with traditional music and poetry readings, The Globe Inn's monthly events are not to be missed.

A TOAST TO TRADITION: BURNS, COCKTAILS, AND WHISKY

Steeped in history, The Globe Inn is more than just a restaurant; it's a living monument to Scotland's national poet, Robert Burns. Only at The Globe Inn can you sit in Burns' chair and eat at his table, immersing yourself in the atmosphere that inspired some of his greatest works.

"We are incredibly proud of our connection to Robert Burns," says Chef Cameron. "His legacy is woven into the fabric of this place, and we strive to honour his memory through

our hospitality and our commitment to showcasing the best of Scottish culture."

PRIVATE DINING: EXCLUSIVE AND INTIMATE GATHERINGS

For those seeking a more intimate setting, The Globe Inn offers a range of private dining options. Whether you're planning a special celebration, a corporate event, or a family gathering, there's a space to suit your needs.

- **The Private Dining Room:**

Accommodating up to 30 guests, this elegant space is perfect for larger gatherings.

- **Mrs Hyslop's Kitchen:** This cosy and historic room, named after the Globe Inn's former landlady, can host up to 6 guests for a truly unique dining experience.
- **Burns Room:** For a truly intimate occasion, dine in the very room where Burns himself once sat. This exclusive space allows up to 4 guests to dine at the bard's table, surrounded by history and literary significance.

Complementing the exceptional cuisine, The Globe Inn boasts an extensive cocktail list, featuring classic concoctions and innovative creations. For whisky enthusiasts, the South of Scotland's largest collection of Single Cask Single Malt Scotch whiskies awaits, offering a journey through the rich and diverse world of Scottish whisky.

THE GLOBE INN: AN UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE

Whether you're seeking a romantic dinner for two, a celebratory gathering with friends, a unique culinary adventure The Globe Inn offers an unforgettable experience. With its rich history, exceptional cuisine, and warm hospitality, The Globe Inn is a true gem in the heart of Dumfries.

**The Globe Inn, 56 High Street,
Dumfries, DG1 2JA
globeinndumfries.co.uk
01387 323010**

SIP INTO Summer

It's the year of the spritz – and we're here to help you cause a stir

Cocktail-making is still 'in' (after all, loads of us invested in home bars and armfuls of spirits in lockdown), but on the drinks scene, there's a cool new cat in town – the spritz.

Not only are they easy as pie to make (most of them require just a few ingredients), but there's usually no fussing about shaking, they can be largely pre-mixed, and, let's be honest, they look effortlessly chic. When we mean spritz, we're talking about those elegant pre-prandial glasses you might enjoy during early evening in Europe. Floral, botanical, citrusy digestifs, stirred into ice, and topped up with fizz, to be sipped as the sun sets with a tray of fried almonds, olives and breadsticks on the side – all while wearing your finest threads, of course. We can't promise the sunshine, or the piazza and ocean vistas, however we can give you inspiration to make your very own, sophisticated spritzes to share with friends and family this summer. They're perfect for barbecues and lingering, early evening gatherings.



HOW TO MASTER THE SPRITZ

- 1** Make sure you have loads and loads of ice in the freezer, and enough highball or large wine glasses for the number of people you plan to serve.
- 2** Pre-mix the still ingredients in advance, noting how much of this base drink you need to serve per person.
- 3** Take time to think about garnishing. Presentation is everything. As well as berries and wheels of citrus, play with sprigs of woody herbs like rosemary and lavender and edible flowers. You might even want to infuse complementary ingredients in ice.

THE SPRITZES YOU NEED TO KNOW

Think beyond the classic Aperol this year. Each recipe serves one person.

NEGRONI SBAGLIATO

Bubbles replace gin in this bittersweet creation. Fill a wine glass with one measure each of Campari and red Vermouth. Stir gently, add a slice of orange to garnish, and pour over one measure of Prosecco or sparkling wine.

HUGO SPRITZ

The 'it' spritz across Europe and growing in popularity in Britain. We love the sweet floral, tangy nature of this drink. To make it, fill a wine glass with ice. In a cocktail shaker muddle a few mint leaves with one measure of elderflower liqueur and half a lime. Add the mint and lime juice (discard the fruit) to the wine glass with two measures of sparkling water, then top up with sparkling wine or Prosecco. Garnish with slices of lime. Fresh elderflowers (if you can forage near your home in season) look stunning draped over the top too.

AMERICANO SPRITZ

A bold drink for those who like their spritzes rich and intricate-tasting. Fill a wine glass with ice and pour over one and a half measures each of Campari and white Vermouth, and two measures of soda water. Do not stir. Garnish with orange slices.

BICICLETTA SPRITZ

We adore the charming name of this spritz, and we think this, combined with its fresh taste, will make it a winner with your guests. Fill a highball glass with ice and pour over, in the following order, two measures each of soda, dry white wine and Campari. Garnish with fresh orange.

LIMONCELLO SPRITZ

Super zesty. We suggest dipping the rims of your wine glasses in beaten egg white, then caster sugar mixed with lemon zest and a touch of sherbet (from the sweet shop) as a fun extra garnish for this. Stir two measures of limoncello in a glass filled with ice, and top up with three measures of prosecco and one measure of soda. Top with fresh mint and lemon or lime.



5 ways to serve up summer like a pro

Want to know how to up your game in your home bar? Read on...

1 INTRODUCE BITTERS:

Bring a new dimension to your drinks with just a drop or two of bitters... which is a bit of a misnomer, because bitters aren't always bitter. They were originally designed (with their distilled array of botanicals) to aid digestion, but nowadays bartenders use them to bring verve to their serves. Filled with flavours stretching from classic Angostura drops to orange, banana, cola, chocolate, liquorice, and even celery. A splash of yuzu bitters in a berry or citrus-based gin mix or cocktail this summer will brighten every sip.

2 MAKE CRYSTAL CLEAR ICE CUBES:

Being able to make faultless, clear ice cubes (and spheres) has almost become a competitive sport in bartending. But it's not all good looks and perfection – there's a practical reason to consider too. Ice made without bubbles or faults is less prone to break, meaning it should last longer in drinks. To start, buy a directional ice cube tray, which freezes water from one way only, minimising risk of bubbles forming. Then, when you're ready to freeze, boil water twice, allow to cool, and pour carefully into your tray.

3 SHAKE IT... BUT NOT FOR LONG:

One of the biggest mistakes most of us make at home when whipping up cocktails is to shake those mixers till our arms ache. This just waters down the drink! The maximum time to shake for is 30 seconds – no longer.

4 MAKE YOUR OWN SHRUBS:

These elixirs from the past have hit high fashion in bars again. Crafted using fruits, botanicals, sugar and vinegar, they're used to flavour up mixed drinks, or can be drunk alone over ice with still or sparkling water. Experiment with creating your own versions this summer, making the most of the season's fresh fruits and herbs. Strawberry and basil is a real winner! To make a bottle, crush 500g of fruit of your choice with 500g caster sugar in a bowl. Cover and place in the fridge for two days, stirring regularly. Strain the syrup into 500ml of cider vinegar and store in a sterilised bottle or jar.

5 EXPERIMENT WITH A FAT WASH:

Fat washing involves combining a fat or oil with a spirit to impart a new flavour. From coconut oil to butter and even cheese, it's a fun little project to try at home. For those summer vibes, how about fat washing a raspberry or strawberry-based vodka, gin or liqueur with white chocolate? Melt 240g white chocolate, pour into a large glass jar and add 750cl of your chosen spirit. Put on the lid and shake vigorously. Leave to settle for four hours, then freeze overnight. The next day, make a hole in the fat layer at the top, and strain the liquid through a fine muslin over a funnel. Voila – you've created a creamy-tasting new berry and chocolate spirit!



DELICIOUSLY DIFFERENT

So many food trends skip across to Britain from the USA – and one we think will catch on here in future is whipped pink lemonade.

Sounds amazing, right?

It's made by whisking cream with pink lemonade powder, stirred into pink lemonade over ice. The powder isn't easy to get your hands on over here (yet) but you CAN make a boozy version! Add three measures of raspberry or strawberry spirit, one measure of lemon juice, one measure of double cream, half a measure of sugar syrup, and a few drops of pink food colouring to a blender with a cup of ice. Blend for 10 to 15 seconds until creamy, and serve in a cocktail glass.



COCKTAIL O'CLOCK

Thinking about your next round of drinks? The most popular shakes for 2025 are: Hugo, Paloma, Mojito, Espresso Martini, Negroni, Pina Colada and Bloody Mary

TIME TO Shine

Celebrate the season with our picks of summer's most delicious tipples

1. Orkney Gin Skule Skerry Gin, from £39.90, orkneygincompany.com

This hand-crafted New-Western style gin features a unique blend of botanicals inspired by the perfect balance of ingredients in traditional craft cola. Its innovative recipe showcases familiar flavours such as orange zest, nutmeg, cardamom, and cinnamon, with a gently caramelised finish that evokes nostalgia, while still preserving the traditional juniper-forward flavour of gin.

2. Highclere Castle Gin, £39.20, highclerecastleshop.co.uk

Made with 10 botanicals from Highclere Castle's estate, this award-winning London Dry gin elevates your cocktail experience. Whether you're sipping a martini or creating your own signature cocktail, Highclere Castle Gin is the perfect spirit.

3. Annandale Distillery Man O'Words Ex-Fino Sherry Butt Whisky, £85, annandaledistillery.com

This 2017 vintage whisky from Annandale Distillery has been matured in a STR (Shaved, Toasted, Recharred) cask, a process that enhances both richness and complexity. Cask #322 has imparted a vibrant and multi-layered profile, where fresh green orchard fruits meet a creamy, floral elegance. Subtle herbal and spicy notes weave through the palate, complemented by delicate hints of Parma violets and red berries. The whisky's mouthfeel is beautifully rich and smooth, delivering a refined yet expressive dram.

4. Aber Falls Pistachio Liqueur, £15, aberfallsdistillery

Aber Falls' new Pistachio Cream Liqueur is a luxurious blend of pistachio and white chocolate. This indulgent liqueur combines the earthy richness of roasted pistachios with the creamy sweetness of white chocolate, offering a unique taste experience.

5. Tippy Wight Elderflower Vodka Liqueur, £29.99, tipsywight.com

Tippy Wight vodka liqueurs are made entirely by hand from ingredients the team either grows on their Victorian farm or forages for locally. Tippy Wight's award-winning Elderflower Vodka Liqueur is made from the shimmering masses of white flowers that appear on the Elder tree in late May, hanging in sprays that will develop into purple elderberries in late summer. Elderflower Vodka makes a perfect long summer



drink served with lemonade, but for that special occasion try combining Elderflower Vodka with Prosecco.

6. Wicked Wolf Blood Orange Gin, £32.99, thecheeseandwineshop.co.uk

A small batch artisan gin made in the wilds of Exmoor National Park by husband and wife team Pat Patel and Julie Heap. Made from 11 botanicals producing complex layers of citrus and pepper notes finely balanced with the distinct flavours of juniper and coriander. Blood oranges are added to complete this special gin.

7. Sandford Orchards Devon Red Cider, £2.25, available in Morrisons and at sandfordorchards.co.uk

A crisp and fruity medium cider. Made with fresh juice from Devon apples. Award-winning but easygoing, best-selling but

uncompromising, and so delicious you'll wonder why all cider doesn't taste like this. Refreshing, balanced and packed with whole-juice flavour and a welcome hint of sweetness. A real apple cider, for everyone.

8. Wild Life Botanicals Sparkling Blush, £16, wildlifebotanicals.co.uk

This is a luxurious, ultra-low alcohol (0.5% ABV) sparkling wine bursting with botanicals, vitamins, and mood-boosting herbs. With 60% fewer calories than Champagne, it's vegan, refreshing, and wellness-focused – #BubblesWithBenefits. Backed by critics, it's the perfect choice for guilt-free indulgence and feel-good celebrations.

9. Wild Life Botanicals Sparkling Nude, £16, wildlifebotanicals.co.uk

Wild Life Botanicals Nude is a sophisticated, non-alcoholic (0.5% ABV) sparkling wine packed with botanicals, vitamins, and mood-boosting herbs. With 60% fewer calories than Champagne and bursting with

zesty fruit and fine bubbles, it's the perfect guilt-free, feel-good choice for wellness-minded celebrations.

10. The English Distillery The Norfolk Bramble, £26, englishwhisky.co.uk

An abundance of jammy, juicy English berries and The English Distillery's award-winning whisky make The Norfolk Bramble an unmatched ruby-red aperitif. Try it on its own over ice, lengthen it with sparkling water, or pour a measure into a flute and top it with champagne for a banging berry bellini.

11. The English Distillery The Norfolk Nog, £26 englishwhisky.co.uk

Made with The English Distillery's English Single Malt Whisky and lashings of cream, The Norfolk Nog is delicately flavoured yet decadently rich. Best served on ice, but equally at home poured over ice cream, this is a drink made to be shared with friends who love the finer things (and a little something sweet after dinner).

12. Royal Mash British Vodka, £59, royalmash.com

Royal Mash Vodka is hand-distilled from Jersey Royal potatoes and spring water, nothing else. Unfiltered and single-distilled in copper stills, it delivers exceptional smoothness, clarity, and a creamy mouthfeel. A premium, sustainable spirit with real character, it's the perfect base for cocktails or a standout martini. Liquid gold for your bar.





CHEERS TO *English wine*

Buying a bottle for the weekend? Here's why English wine needs to be your new go-to tipples...

English wine is certainly having its moment. Recent years have seen the market steadily grow, and now England boasts nearly 600 vineyards, with more and more people discovering the bounty of bottles being produced on their doorstep. And as proof of their quality, English wines are winning top awards around the world, with both English sparkling wine and still varieties making their mark. Keen to know more? We've got the lowdown for you...

Sip, sip, hooray!

First things first, let's address the key question everyone's asking: does the quality of English wine match that of other countries? The answer to this is simple – yes! We may be used to buying our wine from further afield, but the truth is there's a real treasure trove of delights being produced on English soil. The vineyards here in England are dedicated to producing the very best from English-grown grapes and English sparkling wine in particular has emerged as a real standout variety. In fact, some of the best

“We may be used to buying our wine from further afield, but there's a real treasure trove of delights being produced on English soil”

English sparkling wines have beaten traditional French-produced Champagne in tasting events, and French wine and Champagne houses are even buying up land in southern England in an attempt to get in on the action.

Location, location

Most English vineyards are located in the south of the country – in Surrey, Kent, Hampshire and Sussex, Devon, Dorset and Cornwall. That's because the conditions here are just right for the classic Champagne grapes – Chardonnay, Pinot Meunier and Pinot Noir – as well as the favoured Bacchus grape. It's not just the climate that's spot-on either – interestingly, several parts of southern England share a similar soil topography to the growing regions in northern France.

Saying that though, there are also notable examples in East Anglia and north of the country – and in Scotland and Wales too.





Glorious grapes

The main grapes grown in England used in English wines are those used for sparkling wine (Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier), but Bacchus is also a popular grape, as is Seyval Blanc, Pinot Gris and Rondo.

Each of these different grapes bring a different flavour to wine, and Charlie Stein, director at Rick Stein Restaurants and GBF Awards judge, says it's well worth understanding the different flavour profiles.

"**Chardonnay** makes for some of the world's greatest wines," he says. "It works beautifully with oak ageing which creates wines with a rich and rounded texture and is used in good English sparkling wine. I love a Chardonnay-dominated English fizz.

"**Pinot Meunier** is one of the holy trinity of grape varieties to make up Champagne Brut and also good English sparkling white, giving a lovely red fruit and depth.

"And, **Bacchus** is THE grape for the English climate," Charlie adds. "It has a flavour profile a bit like Sauvignon so very herbaceous and grassy with a refreshing zing.

"Finally, **Pinot Noir** is a really interesting one in England. In especially ripe years like 2018, it can produce some excellent wines that are light, fresh and with juicy red fruit."

Fantastic fizz

As we've said above, one of the most notable types of wine to come from English vineyards is sparkling. With their crisp and refined bubbles, well-balanced flavour and common notes of citrus, pear and fresh apple, English sparkling wines showcase complex and classic flavours that are simply delicious.

Anjali Douglas, a wine educator at WSET (The Wine Spirit Education Trust) is enthusiastic about how far English sparkling wine has come in recent years and the different methods being used.

"Bacchus has a flavour profile a bit like Sauvignon - so it's very herbaceous and grassy with a refreshing zing"

"English sparkling wine now has a firm place on the world stage," she says. "Wines made via the traditional method (the same way as Champagne) still account for the vast majority and are becoming more elegant, sought after and (sadly) expensive each year. But there is also a small but fascinating emergence of a more affordable style of sparkling wine from England, made in methods that take less time to produce.

"More and more of us are drinking English Pétillant Naturel (pét nat) or Col Fondo wines - both of these styles don't require the labour-intensive process of removing the yeast sediment that is used to give them their 'sparkle'. These wines are often light in alcohol, fruity with a mouth puckering tang from the yeast."

Still good

With all the talk about English sparkling wine, English still wines can sometimes be overlooked, but there's a whole host of exceptional options here to discover too, as Anjali tells us.

"Still versions of the key Champagne grapes - Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Meunier are all made to high quality levels, and wines made from Meunier are gaining a reputation for being an English 'signature'," she says.

As well as this, Bacchus is an oft-favoured choice (with the resulting wine similar to those featuring Sauvignon Blanc grapes), and Pinot Blanc and Pinot Gris grapes are grown across England.

Crimson charm

Although English red wines aren't quite as well-known as English still or sparkling wines, there are some brilliant options emerging on the scene. Pinot Noir is a popular grape to use and many vineyards have also had success with the likes of Rondo, Regent and Dornfelder grapes. Due to our climate, English red wine is usually fairly light-bodied and fruity, but medium-bodied wines can be found too.

Pretty in pink (and beyond)

And there's more too, including tempting rosé bottles. As you'd expect from a good rosé wine, English rosés are fresh, crisp and super refreshing. Typically, they're made from a blend of red and white grapes such as Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Meunier and the result tends to be a pale wine (either still or sparkling) with lots of fruity notes.

Anjali also points out that there's a whole range of more experimental wines being created, too. "One of the lovely sides to English wine is the left-field, experimental, slightly eccentric makers that are out there," she explains. "These aren't trends as such, as they're often made on a small scale by individual producers, and they aren't comparable to classic French wines, but tasting these styles can be joyful. From wines aged in amphora, quirky aromatic blends, orange wine and beyond - winemakers across England are fast developing their own identity."

PARTNER CONTENT

Experience the magic of British wine

Here's our pick of the best British wine estates giving wine lovers an opportunity to connect, learn and indulge in the bounty of Britain's vineyards

**White Heron Estate**

A new vineyard adventure launched last month in North Herefordshire – and it is, put simply, great fun! Explore White Heron Estate on a guided e-Bike tour, taking in its lockdown-project vineyard, cider apple orchards, woodlands and blackcurrant plantations. Taste White Heron Estate Sparkling Wine and more. There's an optional Off Grid dining overlooking the vineyard with spectacular far-reaching views.
whiteheronestate.com

**Wythall Estate Wine Garden**

On summer Sunday afternoons from 12 noon-6pm, Wythall Estate opens its private garden at Wythall Estate Manor House to visitors who can enjoy drinking award-winning English wines and choose from a menu of locally produced cheese and charcuterie platters.
wythallestate.co.uk

**Knotfield Vines**

Knotfield Vines is a female founded, boutique vineyard nestled in the heart of West Yorkshire. Established in 2022 over two acres, Knotfield has already made its mark on the county's food and drink scene with two sell-out, award-winning vintages. The vineyard specialises in premium, traditional method sparkling wine – both rosé and classic.
knotfieldvines.com

**Louma Vineyards**

Nestled in the heart of Dorset's Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Louma Vineyard offers a truly immersive wine experience. Guests can enjoy guided walks through 30 acres of hand-harvested vines, followed by bespoke tastings in the wine cellar. With five exquisite English wines to explore, the tour blends education, conversation, and stunning scenery into a memorable, personal journey through winemaking.
loumafarmandretreat.co.uk

“English vineyards are certainly thriving at the moment, producing delicious, award-winning wines and making a real name for themselves. Many now offer a variety of open events too – from tastings to tours – making them a must-visit for any wine lover”

**Carr-Taylor**

Since being founded in Kent in 1971, the Carr-Taylor vineyard has produced award-winning wines using its estate-grown and hand-picked grapes – and wine lovers can experience the magic for themselves thanks to the winemaker's exclusive vineyard tours. Choose from self-guided or private group tours, or make it into even more of an occasion with the cream tea and tour or tour, tasting and lunch options.
carr-taylor.co.uk

Louma Vineyard

Crafted to be shared with loved ones, Louma wines are elegant, fresh, and full of character. Grown in Dorset's coastal hills with care for the land, each bottle reflects the team's passion for nature and delivers unforgettable, perfectly balanced flavour.

Available from Louma Farm and Retreat, still wines RRP £25, sparkling wines £40, loumafarmandretreat.co.uk

Carr Taylor Brut

Pale golden with subtle aromas of fresh apple and elderflower, this Brut Sparkling Wine is racy and fresh. Bottle maturation provides hints of biscuit on the nose, and butter on the palate. As with all Carr Taylor's sparkling wines, it is made using the same traditional method found on the continent, with a secondary fermentation in the bottle.

However, using different grape varieties to those found in the traditional areas of France results in, more aromatic, fruity flavours. Available from Jempson's Supermarkets, RRP £23.99, carr-taylor.co.uk

Raise a GLASS

Impress your friends and family with one of these fine bottles

Wythall Estate Estate Red 2023

This trophy-winning wine displays a stunning deep garnet tone fading to purple at the rim.

Notes of black cherry, red fruits and vanilla on the nose before a smooth palate of stone fruits, chocolate, and a hint of spice lead to a long juicy finish. Available from Wythall Estate, Cellar Door, Ludlow Farm Shop, Annwn Restaurant Pembrokeshire, RRP £28, wythallestate.co.uk

Knotfield Vines Rawdon Rosé 2023

Following in the footsteps of its award-winning predecessor, Rawdon Rosé 2023 is an impactful celebration vintage. Delicate pale pink in colour with red berry aromas and a ripe cherry palate, this is a creamy and light sparkling wine to elevate any occasion. Available at Cellar Door, RRP £30, knotfieldvines.com

White Heron Sparkling Wine

The White Heron estate has been growing fruit for years and years, but excitement has come with new vineyards. The finest grapes – Reichensteiner, Seyval Blanc and Madeleine Angevine – are delicately balanced, using the Charmat method to make a sparkling wine that enhances the easy-drinking floral elderflower and an essence of Herefordshire hedgerow. It has a gentle fizz and notes of peach and apple that are refreshing and harmonious. RRP £28, whiteherondrinks.co.uk



British FOOD HEROES



White Heron Estate in North West Herefordshire is a well-diversified estate run by 4th generation farmer Jo Hilditch. She explains where she found her entrepreneurship and innovation, her appearance on *Dragons' Den* and her foray into viticulture

When did you come back to the farm and what have you been doing over the last 30 years?

I came back unexpectedly (after my brother died), and like a rabbit in the headlights I slowly managed to get my head around the business. It was a challenge, but it gave my entrepreneurship free rein and with a career in PR and marketing and no real experience in agriculture, it was an opportunity to use my skills and nous to develop the business. And develop we did – we planted a considerable acreage of blackcurrants for Ribena; we started a cider orchard for Bulmers and then Aspalls; we entered a joint arable venture with some local farmers; we increased the size of the poultry business; we developed our tourism offering turning old estate buildings into holiday lets; we started our journey on renewables (large scale solar and biomass) and we invested in all the environmental schemes available. And there's more to come!

What's your latest project?

In lockdown whilst others were making sourdough bread and having quizzes, I decided that we should plant a vineyard. Not doing things by halves, we decided to plant 35 acres. At a consumer show, I had met a man who produced a charmat method wine, with big visions but nobody to grow his grapes. I said I knew just the woman! So, with my farm manager on board and our long

experience in fruit, we set about planting 3 suitable varieties – Seyval Blanc, Reichensteiner and Madeline Angevine – which are now in their 3rd and 4th growing seasons, and this year are looking good. Whilst we understand fruit, vineyards are not quite as straightforward as apples and blackcurrants, but our expertise is getting better every season.

What's your best claim to fame?

There are a few – but probably the one which people seem to be most interested in was my appearance on *Dragons' Den* with my British Cassis. The waivers you sign, the promises you make about future commitments, the way the lift works, your time in the spotlight, the others you meet in the green room – it all makes for an interesting experience to say the least! And, I got 3 offers, all turned down (Series 13 Episode 8 for interest!).

“We always have the environment at heart, and we always have an eye to ensuring that we improve the natural world around us”

What's your attitude to tourism?

I co-chair Visit Herefordshire so I am really “plugged-in”! Our own tourism offering now uses many of the estate buildings to provide up to 60 beds for luxury self-catering, so we love attracting tourists to our small (and beautiful) corner of Herefordshire. Excitingly this summer we have also added e-bike tours to our tourism portfolio. As well as walking tours, we also now host e-bike tours (both long and short, on-farm and off-farm around scenic Herefordshire) and often ending with a sampling in our vineyards and even an al fresco feast. These tours are becoming very popular and are unique in Herefordshire, and even in the UK. A good balance of education and adventure along with a bit of exercise and a chance for a glass of fizz or two. What's not to like?

How do you address sustainability at White Heron Estate?

In a variety of different ways, not least having a culture of environmental consciousness across the business. Whatever we do, we have the environment at heart, and although we are a conventional farming business we always have an eye to ensuring that we improve the natural world around us, whether it's in developing our alternative energy sources, planting trees, or developing habitat for local species. Our latest farmland bird count numbered at least 60 different birds.

Packed with GOODNESS

These vibrant recipes from **Emma Peterson** show that crowd-pleasing healthy food can be flavourful and faff-free

Substitutions:

No feta? Sub for any other cheese.
Dairy-free? Omit the feta or substitute for dairy-free cheese.

Future you:

Cool and place in an airtight container, storing in the fridge for up to 3 days.
Cool and freeze for up to 1 month.
Thaw in fridge overnight, or on low power in the microwave.
Eat cold or microwave each portion for 60–90 seconds to reheat.



Sweet potato and feta frittata

Frittatas are a fool-proof way to use up leftover veggies. Try swapping sweet potato for white potato, peppers for broccoli, or parsley for coriander. My only tip: include some bold flavours and a cheese. I've streamlined this into a quick, stovetop-only version. It's a winner.

Prepare: 15 minutes

Cook: 20 minutes

Serves: 4

250g sweet potatoes
8 large eggs
50ml milk
1 red onion, finely diced
2 garlic cloves, minced
180g roughly chopped jarred roasted red pepper
50g sun-dried tomatoes, roughly chopped
1 tsp dried oregano
100g spinach, roughly chopped
100g crumbled feta
1 tbsp chopped parsley
Salt and pepper
Olive oil, for cooking
Salad leaves, to serve

1. Cooking potatoes in the microwave is my favourite way to save time and washing up. To microwave: pierce the sweet potato(es) with a fork or knife in a few places, then wrap in a damp paper towel. Place in the microwave and cook on full power for 2 minutes. Turn over and microwave for another 2 minutes. The potato(es) should be knifetender, so continue microwaving in 1-minute intervals if not quite there. Carefully remove, unwrap and set aside to cool.

2. Crack the eggs into a large mixing bowl. Add the milk, with a generous pinch each of salt and pepper, and whisk well until combined.

3. Roughly chop the cooked potato, skin on, into 2.5-cm/1-in chunks. Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a lidded frying pan/skillet over medium heat, cook the onion and garlic for 2 minutes, then add the sweet potato and stir. Increase the heat, cook for 3 minutes until the potato is lightly browned, then add the peppers, sun-dried tomatoes, oregano, and a pinch of salt and pepper. Cook for 1 minute, then stir in the spinach until wilted.

4. Reduce the heat to low. Scoop three-quarters of the potato mixture out of the pan and into a clean bowl. Pour half of the egg mixture into the pan. Return the reserved potato mixture to the pan, a spoonful at a time, then pour the remaining egg mixture over the top. If you're wondering why this step is necessary, creating a layer of egg on the bottom of the pan ensures it cooks through quickly and evenly, without burning.
5. Return the pan to medium heat and sprinkle over the feta and parsley. Cover the pan with the lid and leave everything to cook for around 8 minutes, or until the eggs are set in the middle.

6. Slide the frittata onto a plate, slice it into wedges, and serve with your favourite side salad.

Couscous Salad with Harissa Tofu

Whilst tofu often gets a bad rap for being bland and boring, when it's coated in cornflour and cooked like this, it truly takes on the most amazing texture that clings to any sauce you send its way. Here, that's a sticky harissa glaze, as sweet as it is spicy, and the perfect pairing with this tangy couscous salad.

Prepare: 10 minutes

Cook: 20 minutes

Serves: 2

1 x 300g block extra-firm tofu
1 tbsp cornflour
1 red pepper, cut into chunks
1 courgette, sliced and quartered
½ red onion, cut into chunks
100g giant couscous
50g spinach, roughly chopped
1 tbsp zhoug
Salt and pepper
Olive oil, for cooking

For the tofu glaze:

1 tbsp rose harissa paste
1 tbsp maple syrup
Juice of ½ lemon
½ tbsp cornflour

For the minted yogurt:

4 tbsp runny yogurt
1½ tbsp roughly chopped mint

1. Preheat the air fryer or oven to 200°C fan/220°C/425°F/gas mark 7.
2. Press out any water from the tofu (this will vary depending on the brand you use), tear it into bite-sized chunks, and toss in a mixing bowl with the cornflour and a good pinch of salt and pepper until coated.
3. If using an oven, spread the tofu chunks, pepper, courgette and onion onto the prepared tray. Drizzle with oil, season with salt and pepper, and bake for 20 minutes. If air frying, combine the tofu and vegetables in the basket, drizzle with oil, season, and cook for 15 minutes.
4. While the tofu and veggies are cooking, grab a small jar. Into it, add the tofu glaze ingredients with 3 tbsp water. Shake until well combined.
5. In a separate bowl, stir together the yogurt and mint. Set aside for later.
6. When the tofu and vegetables have 10 minutes of cooking time remaining, cook the couscous according to the packet instructions.

“Whilst tofu often gets a bad rap for being bland and boring, when it's coated in cornflour and cooked like this, it truly takes on the most amazing texture that clings to any sauce you send its way”



7. Heat a frying pan/skillet over low-medium heat and pour in the glaze. Once it starts to bubble and thicken, stir in the tofu to coat in the glaze. Once everything is beautifully combined, take the pan off the heat.
8. With all the components ready, it's time to assemble the salad. Grab a large bowl and add in the cooked couscous, roasted vegetables, spinach and zhoug. Mix well and season with salt and pepper.
9. Plate up the couscous salad and spoon the sticky tofu on top. Finish with a generous drizzle of the minted yogurt and, if you love citrus as much as I do, a squeeze of lemon juice.

Substitutions:

Gluten-free? Sub the couscous for quinoa. No zhoug? Make a dressing for the couscous with 2 tbsp olive oil, 1 minced garlic clove, 1 tbsp lemon juice, 1 tsp maple syrup, salt and pepper.

Future you:

Cool and place in an airtight container, storing in the fridge for up to 3 days.
Cool and freeze (minus the dressing) for up to 2 months.
Thaw in the fridge overnight, or at room temperature for a few hours.
Enjoy cold or reheat in the microwave for 2 minutes, stirring halfway.



Recipes extracted from *Healthyish: All the goodness with none of the fuss* by Emma Petersen, published by Pavilion. Photography by Lizzie Mayson.

BRITAIN'S BEST Butchers

The UK is heralded as having some of the most fantastic meat in the world – here are just a few destinations to feast on the finest



REUBEN'S BUTCHER, DELI & BOTTLE SHOP

Britain's butchery and meats are revered globally. And rightly so. From Scotland's spice-laden haggis, to Wales' incomparable mountain lamb, and East Anglia's phenomenal outdoor-reared pork – there's a lot to celebrate. That's without mentioning our nation's sensational sausages, conjured in myriad flavours and proudly displayed in links, front and centre of every counter.

Let's pay homage to some of the very best you'll find on your foodie travels.



REUBEN'S BUTCHER, DELI & BOTTLE SHOP

REUBEN'S BUTCHER, DELI & BOTTLE SHOP, MELTON, SUFFOLK

Chef Harry Woolf-Evans had a hard task on his hands when he took on what was an established, traditional village butchery, changing the name, and transforming it beyond recognition.

However, not only did existing customers embrace the changes, but a whole new generation of shoppers is stopping at Reuben's, buoyed by the exciting, eclectic offering, spanning locally sourced, ethically reared meat, quirky handmade deli counter produce, and evolving shelves crammed with carefully chosen epicurean goodies.

"The first thing that separates us from most other butchers is that we're predominantly a team of cooks and chefs," says Harry. "So, we're approaching butchery from a chef's point of view, which means we leave behind the 'old school' method of thinking it's all about yield. By that we mean they wouldn't take in fatty cuts, but we think fat is flavour and we champion that. We want as much fat as possible on our beef and pork chops."

A second point of difference is that the team prepares everything from a cook's perspective. Each piece of meat is cut and

trimmed with purpose. "We prepare joints further than most butchers would," says Harry. "So lamb racks would be trimmed and prepped with garlic and rosemary, ready to pop in the oven."

Introducing a dry ager has proved a hit with home cooks too. "The first thing we put in there was some Dingley Dell pork, and we had customers saying it's like nothing they've tasted before. The crackling was incredible because it was so dry. That's become so popular because people can come in, buy a piece of meat and watch it age."

Alongside Suffolk pork, the butchery stocks free-range Sutton Hoo chickens, which forage and peck happily on the farm less than a mile away, and Reuben's is renowned for its steaks and barbecue range, with all marinades and sauces made in-house.

On the deli counter more than 1,000 sausage rolls, wrapped in flaky pastry, fly out the door each week, and a huge following's been amassed for the team's Bad Boy – pastry filled with bacon, sausage meat, cheese and sauce.

They make awesome picnic fodder with a Reuben's brownie, and other treats plucked from the fridges and shelves – be that craft beer, local cheese or gourmet crisps.

reubens.co.uk



REUBEN'S BUTCHER, DELI & BOTTLE SHOP



EDWARDS OF CONWY



EDWARDS OF CONWY, CONWY, WALES

Master butcher and director of Edwards of Conwy, Ieuan Edwards (who's just welcomed son Sion into the business), was the first generation of his family to open a butcher's shop, in 1983, at the tender age of 20.

Unlike many other butchers, whose parents and grandparents before them would have led the way, Ieuan's had to carve out his own niche in the industry. Free from the shackles of tradition, he says this has allowed him to create a business that can constantly evolve.

And evolve it has, growing in size to stock a number of supermarkets, while keeping at heart its core values of great personal service, and lavishing hungry food lovers with an array of scrumptious products.

The shop's offering, bringing in bakers and chefs from 1995, was "quite unusual at the time", Ieuan admits, but has become the norm now, with the butchery attracting foodies from far and wide.

They visit for the shop's pies (they sold 188,000 last year, he tells Great British Food), for the burgers (made with 50%

chuck steak for an unbelievably rich flavour), for the famous hot food counter (think pulled Welsh lamb shoulder and mint in a roll), and for the star of the show – bara brith sausages!

"Bara Brith (a type of Welsh tea cake) is really really famous and important in Wales. I thought, 'how can we combine it in a sausage?'. So, what we do is, we soak fruit in tea overnight, following the traditional way of doing it, and mix it with the sausagemeat and some other ingredients. And it makes a fantastic product. We're really pleased with it!"

"If you're hungry, we have something for you," Ieuan smiles, listing off a smorgasbord of wonderful things the shop has to offer. The finest local cheeses. Aged T-bone steaks. Family-sized pies made with their own meat and stocks. Meal solutions cooked with the same care and attention you'd take in your home kitchen. Exquisite Iberico pork. And, of course Welsh PGI beef and lamb – the flavour of the lamb changing throughout the season – from lowlands lamb in spring, to milk-fed lamb in summer, saline saltmarsh lamb in late summer, and mountain lamb as we drift towards autumn. Seasonality is to be celebrated in British meat, Ieuan says. "You can really taste the difference."

And that's something he's uber passionate about, alongside bringing 'real food' to the table. "Nutrition and eating good food should be a lifelong habit," he explains. "We're all busy in our lives, and as a company, we're selling 'goodness'. We want people to feel good when they eat our products."

edwardsofconwy.co.uk

LISHMAN'S BUTCHERY, ILKLEY, YORKSHIRE

This recently renovated Yorkshire shop has been designed to give customers a front seat, witnessing the skill, precision and theatre of the art of craft butchery.

Originally founded by David Lishman in 1986, it's now a family affair, as David's daughter Emma has joined him – both sharing a passion for demonstrating the



superior quality of high welfare, traditionally-reared British meat.

Lishman's has many feathers in its cap that have put it firmly on the awards map. The shop's slow-grown heritage beef (including Hereford and Aberdeen Angus reared in Cumbria), is aged for 28 days in Himalayan salt chambers to coax out its very special flavour (the steaks are incredible).

The team have a reputation for their hot roast pork sandwiches, relished by locals, and revered for pairing tender slivers of eat with oodles of crispy crackling.

Then there's Lishman's own charcuterie, made with precision and great attention to detail using carefully chosen cuts of Yorkshire pork. The Pork & Fennel Salami is a customer favourite, alongside Yorkshire Nduja, and Air-Dried York Ham, which they think rivals the finest Italian prosciutto. "Charcuterie is something we're truly passionate about," says Emma. "It not only allows us to honour the whole animal, but also showcases the incredible depth of flavour found in the Yorkshire pigs we work with."

lishmansbutchers.co.uk

And also ...

A FEW MORE FAVOURITES TO WATCH OUT FOR INCLUDE:

Churchgate Sausage Shop, Harlow & Sawbridgeworth – The sausage experts, making bangers in wild and wonderful flavours such as Chicken Curry and Pork & Marmalade, all using meat from one Essex farm. churchgatesausage.co.uk

The Wild Meat Company, online – Love experimenting? Give this butchery a look for all your leftfield purchases, from wild boar and mallard, to squirrel! wildmeat.co.uk
John Davidsons, Inverurie, Moray, Aberdeen – This butcher (with three Scottish shops) has everything. From traditional cuts, to an enormous array of American 'Pitmaster' style barbecue joints, lean protein, and imaginative pies (think All Day Breakfast or Cheese Burger). The butchery goes out of its way to source extra special products too, be that ex-dairy Wagyu, whisky beef or Iberico pork. johndavidsons.com



YOUR SUMMER KITCHEN UPDATE

Refresh your culinary tools to master this season's menus in style

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY

The Mary Berry at Home Collection brings refined elegance to the everyday table. Crafted from quality ceramic and porcelain, the range includes plates, bowls, mugs, and serving dishes in soft blue, green, and grey hues. Delicately detailed and fully microwave and dishwasher safe, it's a perfect blend of charm, durability, and convenience – for both relaxed meals and special occasions. Prices from £7.95. hartsofstur.com



A STYLISH BREW

We love a cup of tea at any time of year, but in the summer we tend to opt for slightly lighter, more elegant options – enjoyed without milk or sugar to really relish its natural taste – and this glass teapot with bamboo handle from Bodum (RRP £84.90) is a beautiful way to make teatime into an occasion. Its innovative diffuser means that you don't need to faff about with teabags and will get the perfect strength every time. bodum.com



BRING THE SUNSHINE TO YOUR TABLE

Make your summer tabletops even more vibrant with this Appolia saffron yellow rectangular ceramic baking dish from Peugeot (RRP £28.99). It's oven-safe, so you can go from oven to table with minimal fuss. Plus, it's beautiful enough to use as a serving dish for hot or cold food, indoors or out. uk.peugeot-saveurs.com



CHOP CHOP

When the sunshine is calling, time is of the essence – so this KitchenAid Top Down Chopper (RRP £99) is a helpful tool to have in your kit. Whether you're after a rough chop or a mince, this chopper has it covered, and will chop whatever's on the menu – from fruit, vegetables and nuts to garlic and herbs – with ease. Plus, its handy design means that you can store any leftovers in the same bowl, saving on washing up. kitchenaid.co.uk



LIGHT IT UP

Kitchens have long been the heart of the home, but it only relatively recently that stylish homemakers have considered adding touches to their kitchens to make them even more cosy and comfortable. We love a kitchen lit by lamps, and Pooky's Ernest lamp (RRP £100 not including a shade of your choice) is the ultimate pick – rechargeable and cable-free so you can pop it wherever you like, its simple yet traditional looks will suit any kitchen. pooky.com

5 WAYS WITH... CUCUMBER

Refreshing recipes to make the most of this versatile produce
(that's even better if it's homegrown!)

1 AGUA FRESCA

Peel and chop 3 cucumbers and add to a blender or food processor with 5 cups of water, the juice of 2-3 limes (depending how zesty you like it), and 4 tbsps of golden caster sugar. Blitz until smooth, then strain through a sieve into a large serving jug. Add extra sugar/lime to taste and garnish with long slices of cucumber, mint and ice.

2 EZME SALAD

Cut 1 medium onion in half and slice thinly. Sprinkle with a large pinch of sea salt and leave to marinate for an hour. Very finely chop it with 200g ripe tomatoes, 1 deseeded red pepper, 1 deseeded jalapeno chilli, 2 tbsps flat leaf parsley and 1 clove garlic. Don't use a food processor - hand chopping gives the best results. Combine with 1 tbsp lemon juice, 1.5 tbsps pomegranate or cherry molasses and pul biber chilli flakes, salt and pepper to taste. Serve as part of a mezze platter.

3 BREAD AND BUTTER PICKLES

Slice 3 large cucumbers and 1 large onion into 2mm pieces and layer in a deep dish or tray, sprinkling sea salt between each layer (around 40-50g in total for the whole dish) as you go. Cover with greaseproof paper or film and pop something heavy on top to weigh down. Leave for up to 4 hours. Drain, rinse well and dry on kitchen paper. In a pan, simmer 300ml cider or white wine vinegar, 200g golden caster sugar, 1 tsp cloves, 1 tsp coriander seeds and 1.5 tpsps mustard seeds. Simmer to dissolve the sugar, then bring to the boil and add the vegetables, turning the heat to low. After 2 minutes remove from the heat, cool, and pour into sterilised jars.

4 CUCUMBER COLLINS

For 1 person, muddle two 2cm thick slices of cucumber and ¼ lime in a cocktail shaker. Add 1 oz sugar syrup and 1.5 oz gin and shake vigorously for 30 seconds. Strain into a martini glass and garnish with cucumber ribbons and wheels of lime.

5 SMASHED ASIAN-STYLE CUCUMBER

Combine 1 tsp sea salt, 2 tsps caster sugar, 2 tbsps sesame oil, 2 tbsps light soy sauce, 4 crushed cloves of garlic, and 1.5 tbsps rice vinegar to make a dressing. Cut 2 large cucumbers into 1 inch pieces diagonally and place in a large bowl. Smack all over with a rolling pin to split and lightly crush. Add the prepared dressing along with a splash of chilli oil if you like. Serve garnished with a handful of chopped coriander and 2 tbsps of toasted sesame seeds.



Summer SWEETNESS

Delight your loved ones with these delicately seasonal bakes from **Bonne Maman**



Bonne Maman's Tip

Cut the strips of dough in different widths to create a more elaborate decoration

Linzer Torte With Raspberry Jam

Prepare: 15 minutes plus resting time

Bake: 30 minutes plus cooling time

Serves: 6-8

250g slightly salted butter, softened
80g icing sugar
2 egg yolks
250g plain flour plus extra for dusting
150g ground hazelnuts
Zest of 1 lemon
1 tsp ground cinnamon
¼ tsp ground cloves
185g raspberry jam or redcurrant jelly
1 tbsp demerara sugar

1. Whisk the butter, icing sugar and egg yolks in a large bowl. Add the plain flour, ground hazelnuts, lemon zest and spices and beat until it begins to clump together. Make a ball, then squash it slightly with a rolling pin. Wrap in cling film and rest in the fridge for 30 minutes.
2. Preheat the oven to 160°C fan/180°C/350°F/Gas 4. Remove one third of the dough and set aside. On a flour-dusted surface, use the rolling pin to roll out the largest piece until it is 5mm thick. Line a 25cm round pie tin with the dough. Use a knife to trim any excess from the edge. Spread the jam over the dough.
3. Use the rolling pin to roll out the rest of the dough until it is 5mm thick. Sprinkle on the demerara sugar. Cut this dough into strips about 1cm wide. Create a lattice on top of the jam with the strips of dough.
4. Bake in the oven for 30 minutes. Leave to cool completely before removing from the tin.

Lemon Squares

Prepare: 25 minutes

Cook: 40 minutes

Makes: 12 squares

Shortcrust pastry:

260g butter, softened
60g icing sugar and a little more for dusting
320g plain flour
¼ tsp salt
Lemon cream
Juice of 4-5 lemons
220g caster sugar
7 medium eggs
50g cornflour or plain flour

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C fan/200°C/400°F/Gas 6. Line a 20 x 30cm cake tin with baking parchment.
2. Make the shortcrust pastry by whisking together the butter and icing sugar in a large bowl or food processor. Then add the plain flour and salt. Mix to obtain a smooth, even dough.
3. Spread out the dough in the cake

- tin. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, whisk the lemon cream ingredients together in a large bowl to obtain a smooth, even mixture. Pour this mixture onto the baked dough. Lower the temperature of the oven to 140°C fan/160°C/320°F/Gas 3. Bake in the oven for a further 20 minutes.
5. Leave to cool before removing from the tin, then cut the pastry into squares. Sprinkle with icing sugar.



“Remember to remove the butter from the fridge 2 hours before starting”



Bonne Maman's Tip

For the best results, make sure that the batter is fully chilled before baking. This gives the madeleines their signature bump.

Perfect Madeleines

Prepare: 15 minutes plus resting time

Cook: 9-10 minutes

Makes: 12

125g butter plus a little more for the tray
 100g caster sugar
 2 eggs
 1 tsp vanilla extract
 100g plain flour
 20g ground almonds
 3/4 tsp baking powder

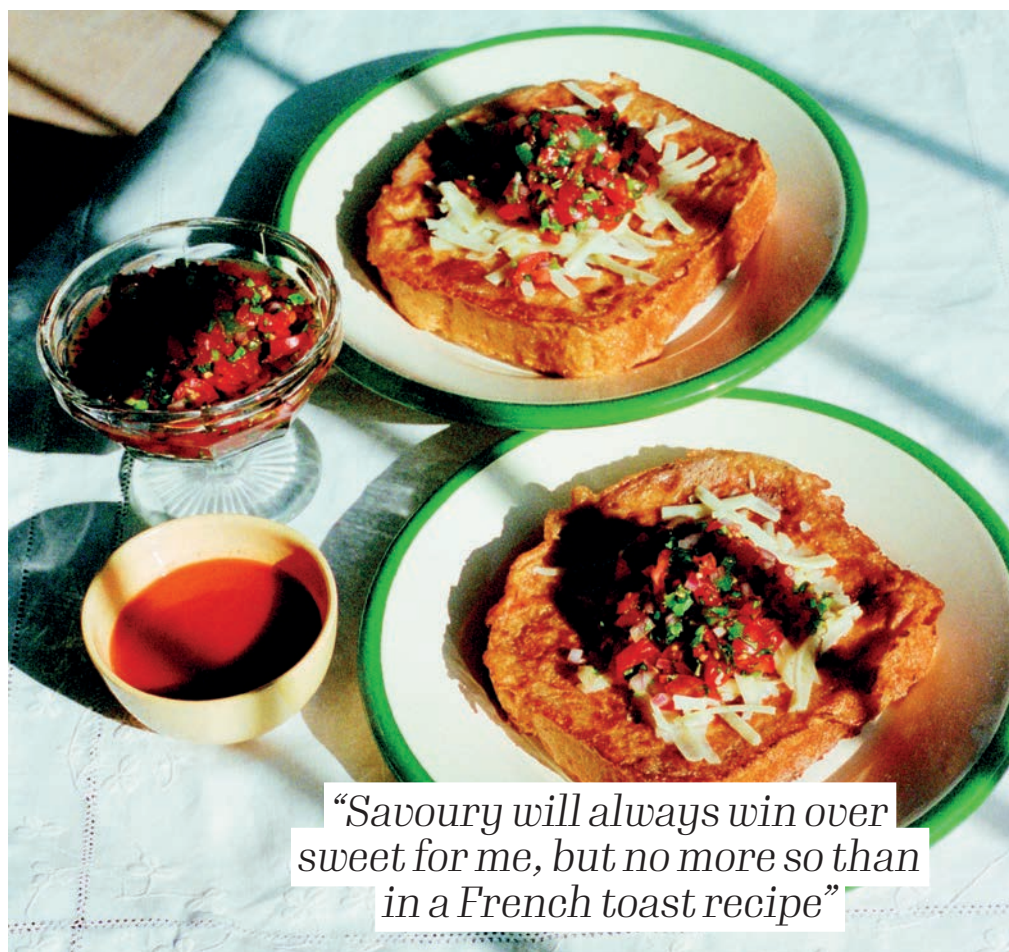
1. Melt the butter in a saucepan over a low heat.
2. In a bowl, whisk together the sugar, eggs and vanilla extract. Sift in the flour, ground almonds and baking powder and mix to obtain a very smooth batter. Add the melted butter and beat until you have an even consistency.
3. Let the batter rest in the fridge for at least 1 hour. The thermal shock will later give the madeleines their signature bump.
- 4 Preheat the oven to 210°C fan/230°C/450°F/Gas 8.
5. Grease a madeleine tray with butter and fill the individual moulds two-thirds of the way up.
6. Bake in the oven for 9-10 minutes. Leave to cool in the tray for a few minutes, then remove and transfer to a wire rack to cool down completely.



Extracted from *Sweet Treats with Bonne Maman* by Ilona Chovancova, White Lion Publishing. Photography by ©Hachette Livre (Marabout)

Share and enjoy

Feeding a crowd? We have just the recipes for you, courtesy of food writer and supper club host **Rosie Kellett**



“Savoury will always win over sweet for me, but no more so than in a French toast recipe”

Savoury Sweetcorn French Toast with Cherry Tomato Salsa

Savoury will always win over sweet for me, but no more so than in a French toast recipe. This version is creamy, substantial, has an acidic hit from the salsa and – like all the best things – is topped with a shower of grated cheese. This is one of my favourite savoury breakfasts and is a great crowd-pleaser.

Serves: 6

Prepare: 10 minutes

Cook: 5 minutes

For the salsa:

300g cherry tomatoes, finely diced
½ red onion, finely diced
Juice of 1 lime
Bunch of soft herbs, such as coriander,

flat-leaf parsley or dill or a mix of all three, roughly chopped
1 green chilli, finely diced, including the seeds if you like a kick
A glug of extra virgin olive oil
Flaky sea salt and black pepper

For the French toast:

6 eggs
1 small tin of sweetcorn (165g)
1 tsp sea salt
½ tsp black pepper
½ tsp smoked paprika
6 slices of thick cut white bread
Butter, for frying
50g strong Cheddar cheese, grated
Hot sauce (optional)

1. Make the salsa first, by combining all the ingredients in a bowl and setting it to one side to marinate.

2. Crack all the eggs into a large bowl, and add the drained sweetcorn, salt, pepper and paprika. Blend the mixture with a stick blender under silky and smooth.

3. Submerge each slice of bread in the batter to coat.

4. Heat a little butter in a frying pan over a medium heat and fry each slice of bread until golden brown and crisp on both sides, adding more butter to the pan when needed.

5. Serve each slice with a little grated Cheddar, a generous helping of salsa and perhaps some hot sauce on the side.

Browned Butter, Almond, Summer Fruit Cake

This cake is the epitome of summer: it's sticky, jammy, fresh and not too sweet. The browned butter and ground almond give it a beautiful nuttiness and it's just dreamy with a dollop of creme fraiche on top, on a warm summer's day.

Serves: 8, generously

Prep: 25 minutes

Cook: 1 hour 15 minutes

250g unsalted butter
370g icing sugar, sifted
200g ground almonds
80g plain flour
Pinch of sea salt
220g egg whites
3 tsp vanilla extract
100g berries
1 ripe peach, sliced into half-moons (tinned also work well)
Creme fraiche, to serve

1. Preheat the oven to 170C/150C fan/gas mark 3. Grease and line a 21cm round tin.

2. Melt the butter in a saucepan over a medium-high heat and continue to cook until it starts to brown, swirling the pan and keeping an eye on it so it doesn't turn from brown to burnt. Once the milk solids have gone a nutty brown, take the pan off the heat and leave to cool.

3. Whisk together the icing sugar, ground almonds, plain flour and salt in a large bowl.
4. Add the egg whites and vanilla and stir until combined, then add the cooled brown butter and mix again.
5. Pour the batter into the tin and put the tin in the fridge for 15 minutes until the batter has slightly firmed up.
6. Sprinkle the fruit on top, pressing the berries and slices of peach halfway into the batter.
7. Bake for 1 hour 15 minutes, covering loosely with foil after 50 minutes so it doesn't brown too much on top.
8. Let the cake cool completely in the tin, then serve with a light dusting of icing sugar and a dollop of creme fraiche.

Citrus Mackerel Spaghetti with Pangrattato

This recipe was born, like the best of them, out of necessity. While living with my first boyfriend in my early twenties, we existed almost exclusively off BLTs and a version of this pasta. Tinned fish and dried pasta were affordable, and this recipe became a staple dinner. It's for the cash poor and the time poor, yet it's serving big time flavour. It's made up of pantry staples and will be on the table in less than half an hour.

Serves: 6

Prepare: 5 minutes

Cook: 15 minutes

"This cake is the epitome of summer: it's sticky, jammy, fresh and not too sweet"

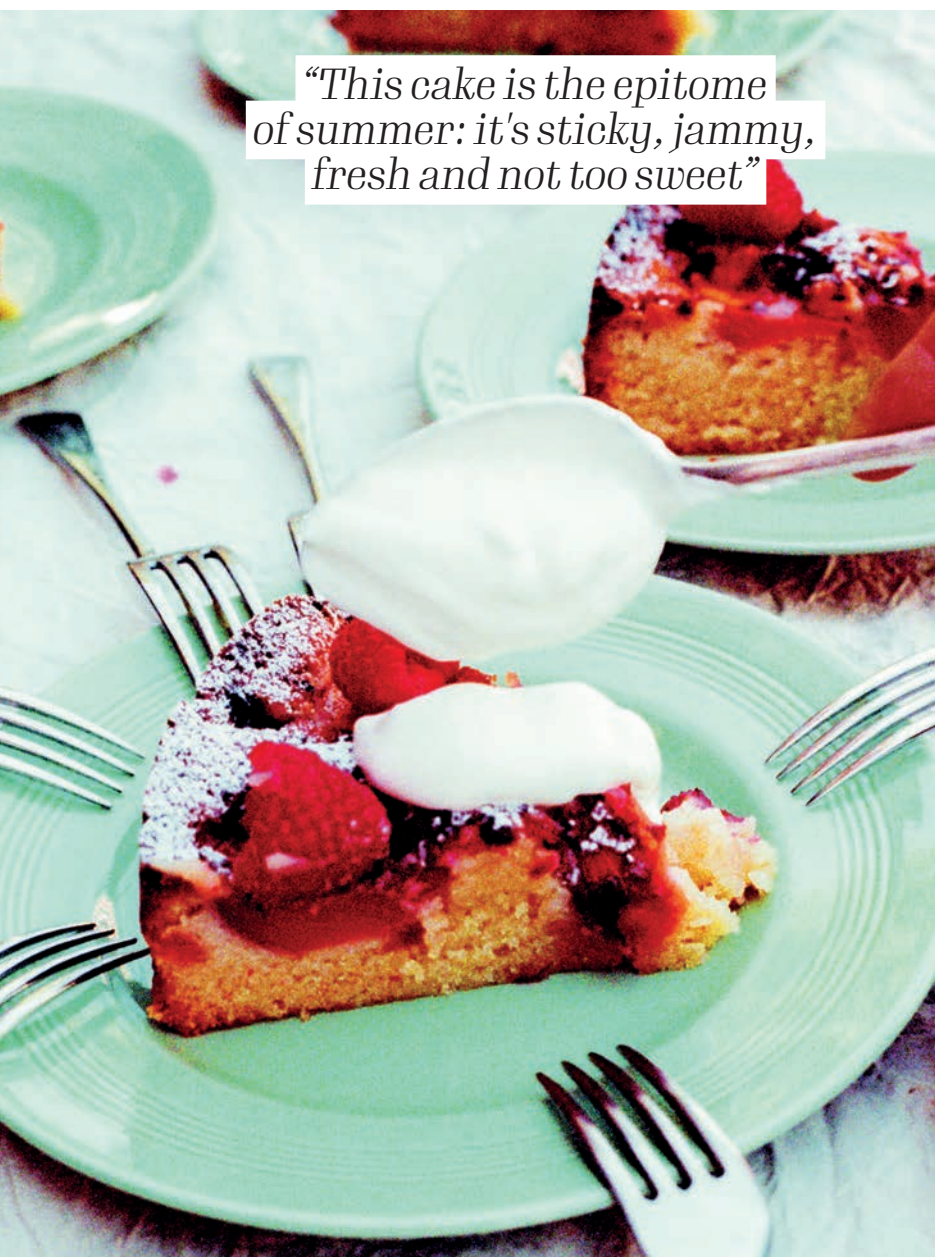


200g stale bread
10ml extra virgin olive oil
1 clove of garlic, minced
500g dried spaghetti
4 x 125g tins of mackerel in olive oil, drained and broken up
180g jar of capers, drained and finely chopped
2 tsp chilli flakes
Zest and juice of 3 lemons
Large bunch of flat-leaf parsley, leaves and stalks finely chopped
Sea salt and ground black pepper



Extracted from *In For Dinner* by Rosie Kellett (Square Peg, £27).
All photography by Benedikte Klüver

1. First make the pangrattato by blitzing the bread into breadcrumbs in a food processor.
2. In a frying pan, over a medium heat, heat a tablespoon of the olive oil and fry the breadcrumbs with the garlic until golden brown and crisp. I like to take them pretty dark, bordering on a little burned, but you do you.
3. Cook the spaghetti in well-salted, boiling water until al dente.
4. Put the mackerel, capers, chilli flakes, lemon zest and juice, most of the parsley and half the olive oil into a large mixing bowl and combine thoroughly.
5. Drain the pasta, reserving a little of the water, and add it to the mackerel mixture.
6. Mix vigorously, adding a little pasta water and more olive oil if it seems too dry. You should end up with a glossy sauce that clings to the pasta.
7. Serve on a large platter, topped with the pangrattato and the rest of the chopped parsley.



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A taste of sunshine

Bring the spirit of Sicilian cooking into your very own kitchen, with help from **Enza Genovese**

Fisherman's risotto

Risotto alla pescatore

Risotto is not really a Sicilian speciality, but over the years Sicilians have adopted it and cooked it in their own way with seafood taking centre stage, naturally. My advice is to use only the freshest produce, as it makes all the difference! Also, ideally, prepare the stock yourself, but you can buy it readymade if you are short of time.

Serves: 4

Prepare: 20 minutes

Cook: 1 hour

400g raw prawns
4 raw king prawns, shelled but keep the tails on
2 onions
500g canned chopped tomatoes
15 flat-leaf parsley sprigs, chopped, plus extra to garnish
1 small red chilli
200ml dry white wine
500g mussels
500g clams
3 garlic cloves
200ml olive oil, plus extra as needed
500g squid, cleaned and prepared
1 small shallot, finely chopped
350g Carnaroli rice
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Peel the prawns and put their heads and shells in a large saucepan. Chop 1 onion and add to the pan with the chopped tomatoes, a third of the parsley, the chilli, 1 litre (1¾ pints) of water, half of the wine and a pinch of salt. Cook for 20 minutes, then strain the stock, crushing the heads and shells with a spoon to extract their flavour. Reserve the stock.

2. Clean the mussels and clams and put them in another large pan. Crush 1 garlic clove and add to the pan with a drizzle of olive oil and half of the remaining parsley. Cover the pan tightly and cook over a high heat for 5–6 minutes, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon, until all the mussel and clam shells open. Strain the cooking juices and add them to the prawn stock. Remove most of the mussels and clams from their shells

but keep a few in their shells for garnish.

3. Cut the squid into small pieces, including the heads. Finely chop 1 garlic clove and the remaining onion and fry in 100ml (3½fl oz) olive oil for about 10 minutes. Add the squid and the rest of the parsley, season with salt and pepper and fry over a medium heat for 5 minutes. Set aside.

4. Heat 100ml (3½fl oz) olive oil in a large sauté pan or large, deep-frying pan over a medium heat. Fry the remaining whole garlic clove and the shallot until golden, then remove the garlic and add the rice. Fry until the rice develops a pearly sheen, pour in the rest of the wine and leave until it has evaporated. Reheat the stock, if necessary, and add it to the pan a

Cheers!

This risotto tastes delicious with a glass of Inzolia Bianco or another Sicilian white wine



“Use only the freshest produce, as it makes all the difference!”

**Top tip**

"I sometimes prefer to use 10 sheets of fresh lasagne that I cut in half, so they are the right size to roll around the filling (as the pasta is fresh, the cooking time will be reduced to 20 minutes)"

"Sicilian cannelloni uses dried fruits and Marsala wine"

Sicilian cannelloni

Cannelloni alla siciliana

Unlike classic cannelloni, the Sicilian version includes dried fruits and Marsala wine. There are reasonably priced dry Marsalas, which are ideal for cooking.

Serves: 4

Prepare: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 35 minutes

Drizzle of olive oil
1 small onion, very finely chopped
50ml dry Marsala wine
200ml double cream (or full-fat crème fraîche)
200g cooked ham, diced
500g sheep's milk ricotta cheese, mashed
50g pine nuts, lightly toasted
50g raisins, soaked for 5 minutes in 120ml water and drained
20 cannelloni tubes
15g butter
1 quantity Sicilian Tomato Sauce (see panel)
100g grated pecorino or Parmesan cheese
Cumin seeds, to sprinkle (optional)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. To prepare the filling, heat a little olive oil in a flameproof casserole over a medium heat and cook the onion until golden. Add the Marsala and cream, season with salt and pepper, and cook for 2–3 minutes to reduce a little. Add the diced ham, ricotta, pine nuts and raisins, stir to mix everything, then set aside to cool and thicken.
2. Stuff the cannelloni tubes with the filling (see my tip for an alternative method).
3. Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F), Gas Mark 4.
4. Use the butter to grease an ovenproof dish that will accommodate

Sicilian tomato sauce

90ml (6 tbsp) olive oil
2 garlic cloves
500g (1lb 2oz) passata
2 basil leaves, torn
1tsp teaspoon sugar

Heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a flameproof casserole and gently fry the whole garlic cloves. Add the passata, basil leaves and sugar and season with salt and pepper. Simmer for 15 minutes, adding 100ml (3½fl oz) of water, if necessary.

ladleful at a time, allowing the rice to absorb the stock before adding another ladleful (if you do not have enough stock, you can use hot water for the final additions). Continue to cook for about 18–20 minutes, stirring frequently, until the rice is al dente. Towards the end of the cooking time, add the raw prawns (not the king prawns) and squid.

5. Heat a little oil in a frying pan and fry the king prawns until they turn pink. A few minutes before the rice is ready, add the shelled mussels and clams to the rice pan and stir through to reheat.

6. Remove the pan from the heat, garnish with the unshelled mussels and clams, the king prawns and a few parsley sprigs. Serve immediately

Add to your basket

Garofalo Organic
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Available from **Amazon.co.uk**
and **Ocado.com**. RRP £2.75.



all of the cannelloni in a single layer and spread a layer of tomato sauce over the base. Place the filled tubes side by side on top of the sauce. Spoon the remaining sauce over the cannelloni to cover them and pour 50ml of water around the sides. Top with a good layer of grated pecorino or Parmesan and sprinkle over a few cumin seeds (if using). Cover the dish with foil and bake for 30 minutes. Leave to cool a little before serving.

Salt cod and olive fritters

Frittelle di baccalà alle olive

Salt cod is a staple in many Mediterranean countries and regularly features on Sicilian tables. It is frequently eaten on Fridays but, more especially, to celebrate religious festivals. Deep-frying it as fritters makes it even tastier, of course!

Serves: 4

Prepare: 25 minutes plus 20 minutes soaking time

Cook: 30–40 minutes

10g salted capers
Bunch of flat-leaf parsley
30g pine nuts
9 tbsp olive oil
500g salt cod, desalted and cut into pieces
200g potatoes
1 egg, beaten
Finely grated zest of unwaxed lemon
30g Taggiasche olives, pitted and chopped
80g leek, white part only, finely chopped
100g dry breadcrumbs
Oil, for deep-frying
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Rinse the capers, soak them in cold water for 20 minutes, then drain. Put half of the capers, three-quarters of the parsley, the pine nuts, 7 tablespoons of the olive oil, a pinch of salt, some freshly ground pepper and 3–4 tablespoons of cold water into a liquidiser or food processor. Blend to make a smooth parsley pesto, adding a little more water, if necessary, then set aside.

2. Rinse the desalted salt cod pieces (see tip), place in a saucepan, cover with cold water and bring to the boil, then simmer for about 10 minutes. Drain the salt cod, remove the skin and any bones, then, using your hands, flake the flesh into a bowl.

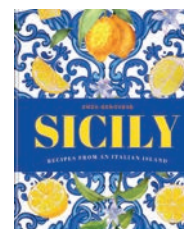
3. Boil the potatoes in a saucepan of salted water until tender.

Drain and mash, then add to the salt cod. Mix in the egg, the remaining parsley, the lemon zest, olives and the rest of the capers.

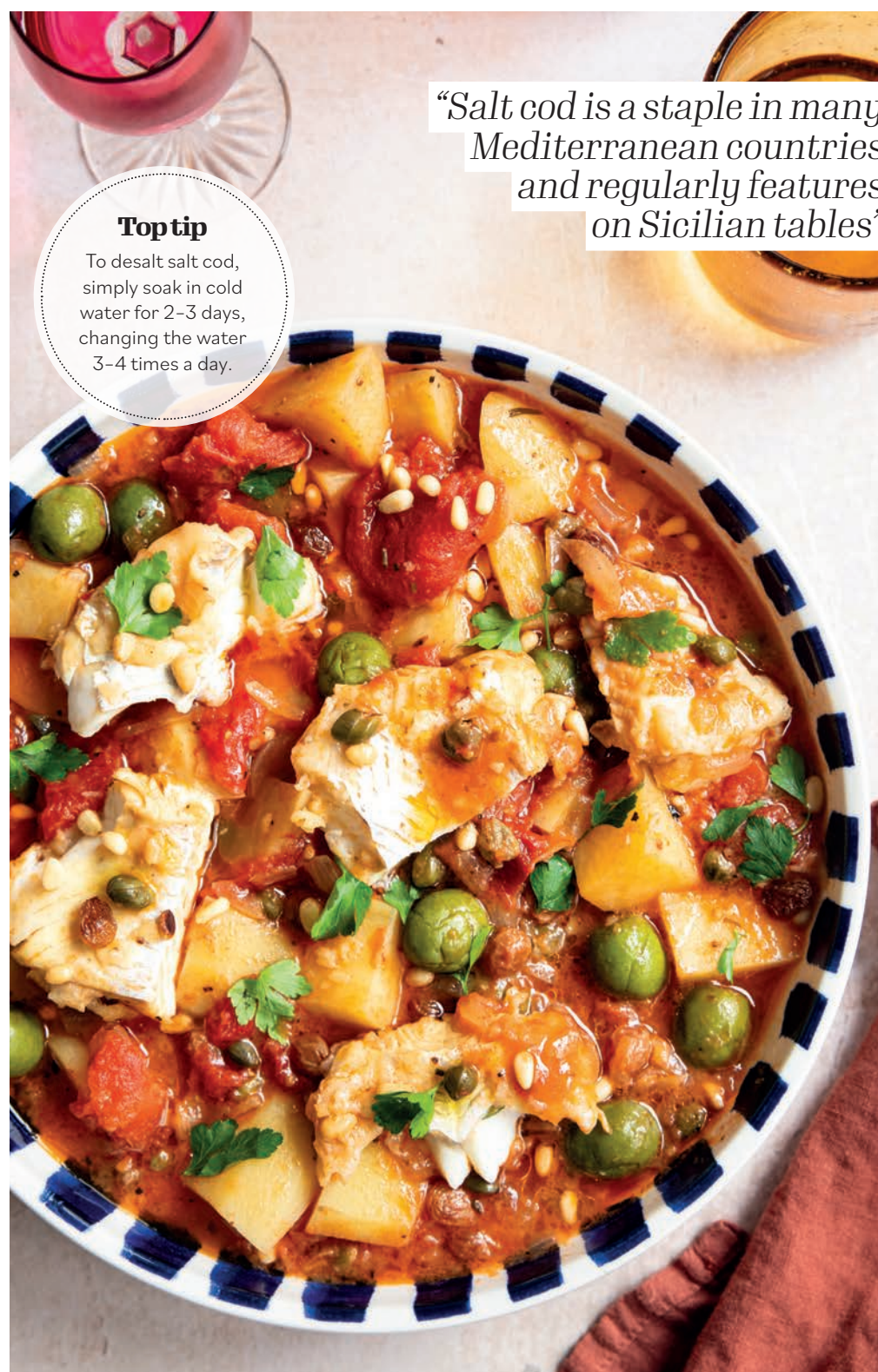
4. Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil with a pinch of salt and 50ml of water in a saucepan and sweat the leek over a medium heat for 5 minutes until the water has evaporated. Stir the leek into the potatoes and salt cod. Shape the mixture into small balls and

roll them in the breadcrumbs until they are evenly coated.

5. Heat enough oil for deep-frying in a deep-sided saucepan to 180–190°C, or until a cube of bread browns in 30 seconds. Fry the fritters, in batches if required, until they are golden brown all over. Drain on a plate lined with kitchen paper and serve with aperitifs, accompanied with the parsley pesto for dipping.



Extracted from *Sicily* by Enza Genovese (Mitchell Beazley). Photography by Sandra Mahut



“Salt cod is a staple in many Mediterranean countries and regularly features on Sicilian tables”

Top tip

To desalt salt cod, simply soak in cold water for 2–3 days, changing the water 3–4 times a day.



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The SOUTH EAST *food scene*

For foodies on the hunt for fresh, local produce and passionate chefs, the South East has it all



Home to nine counties (Kent, East Sussex, West Sussex, Hampshire, Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Surrey and the Isle of Wight), the South East region is vast and wide, and full of an array of gems to discover - from big cities and small characterful villages, to coastlines and forests and much more. Plus, there's plenty to fill the plates of those who want to eat and drink their way around the region. Over the next few pages, we're shining a spotlight on some of the people happily celebrating the food and drink scene here. Where will you visit first?



Showcasing the local larder of East Sussex

The pretty town of Rye is a popular spot for visitors to East Sussex, and for good reason. With its cobbled streets, medieval buildings and unspoiled beaches, it's the perfect place for a summer break.

And right at the centre of the town sits Rye Deli. This is a real mainstay in the town, having first opened its doors 22 years ago, and now visitors and locals alike delight in the celebration of local produce displayed within its counters, including fresh salads, pastries, cakes and homemade meals.

Owner Dezi Dalton says: "We are proud to work closely with our local suppliers, boasting sensational wines from Charles Palmer and local ale and cheeses from a wide number of producers. We are spoilt for the quality and range of produce that we can enjoy from our immediate surrounds."

And, while you're in Rye, don't miss the chance to discover some of the local watering holes. There's the historic Mermaid Inn (a 600-year-old pub with all the traditional pub features you'd expect), Rye Waterworks Micropub, and Tillingam Winery and organic farm just a short drive away.

Fine dining in Surrey

If you're looking for somewhere special to eat, you're spoilt for choice in Surrey, but there's one place we particularly want to highlight: The Latymer, a Michelin-starred restaurant in Bagshot, which can be found inside the luxurious Pennyhill Park Hotel.

"At the heart of it, we simply want to create an unforgettable experience for our guests," explains head chef Steve Smith. "Many of our diners choose to spend their most important moments with us and it's a privilege to be part of those occasions. For us, it's about more than just serving amazing food and drink – it's about making people feel genuinely happy and cared for."

Good food certainly helps here, and Steve and his team use local and seasonal ingredients to develop modern, refined and creative dishes, with flavours, textures and balance galore.

"Being a chef in Surrey is a fabulous place to be and we're proud to be part of a thriving and evolving food scene," he adds. "We have access to some incredible ingredients, like the beautifully crafted cheeses from Village Maid. We also regularly use ChalkStream trout from Hampshire. It's a fantastic product, and right now it's on the menu with a seasonal twist, paired with peas and broad beans."



A foodie magnet in Berkshire

If you're looking for your next food-inspired weekend destination, Bray has to be up there. This may be a relatively small village in the grand scheme of things, but it packs a big punch in terms of foodie offerings. Both Heston Blumenthal's world-renowned Fat Duck and The Hinds Head are here, as well as Alain Roux's legendary Waterside Inn, which has held three Michelin Stars since 1985.

Alain has a deep appreciation for the local area. "I love working and living in Bray," he tells us. "For a small village, we have a unique community of quality gastro pubs and restaurants. I think the chefs outnumber the inhabitants! In particular, I enjoy having my friend, Heston Blumenthal as neighbour. The camaraderie and gentle competition in the village is great inspiration and benefits us all."

At the Waterside, the team serves innovative seasonal dishes rooted in classic French cuisine. "This classic tradition underpins all cooking and when done with care and precision, it is always appreciated," Alain says. Ingredients come from across the UK, and Alain and his team use local producers when possible. They also make and churn their own butter, as well as preserves which they sell online.



Seasonality and sustainability in West Sussex

At Cowdray Farm Shop & Café in West Sussex, the team pride themselves on focusing on provenance, seasonality and sustainability. Located at the heart of the 16,000-acre Cowdray Estate in the beautiful South Downs National Park, they welcome visitors from far and wide as well as a regular, loyal, local customer base – all of whom are impressed by their varied selection of local products.

“It’s hard to narrow down the number of local producers who we would like to draw attention to but a few of them include Slade Farm in Rogate which supply us with fresh asparagus, Langham’s Brewery located on the estate which produces Cowdray Ale as well as an array of other high quality beers, and Susana & Daughters Cowdray Kefir, made from a single herd on the estate,” says Richard Main, the managing director of the farm shop and café.

At the café, ingredients from the estate sing on the menu including truffles, honey, lamb and even apples from the orchards.



Fresh flavours from the Isle of Wight

There's nothing quite like the rich aroma, sweet flavour, and sun-warmed flesh of a freshly picked, home-grown tomato. But as anyone who's ever tasted one knows, not all tomatoes are made equal and there are a number of factors which combine to create the perfect fruit.

Paul Thomas, the managing director at Isle of Wight Tomatoes, says: "For us, it's about selecting the best varieties to start with. Then, never rush the process. With the right light, expertise and time, you will get a great tomato. Lastly, we have to get it to our customers fresh, hence why we deliver fruits that have been harvested no more than 48 hours before, so they can enjoy the tomatoes as they should be – rich, aromatic and full of flavour."

The team here have been growing tomatoes in the rich fertile soil of the Arreton Valley for more than 15 years and now produce over 40 different varieties every year, each specially selected for their unique flavour. They are certainly a product of their location – the Isle of Wight enjoys more sunshine than anywhere else in the UK, after all, and this creates the perfect conditions for growing tomatoes. But it's not just this that sets them apart. The nursery uses sustainable growing practices, and every tomato is vine-ripened and hand-picked at to ensure maximum taste.



Two decades of local produce in Hampshire

This year is a special year for Wellington Farm Shop in Hampshire, as the business is celebrating its 20th anniversary, having first been established in 2005 by Lady Honor Montagu, the daughter of the ninth Duke of Wellington in a building that once housed a Guernsey dairy herd. Today, there's a shop, café and beautiful outdoor terrace with stunning views of the Wellington Estate and it's a much-loved destination for visitors from near and far.

"Each product in the farm shop has a story, chosen for its quality, sustainability, and the passion of the producers behind it," says Lady Montagu. "We stock the finest locally sourced produce, including vegetables, honey from the estate's hives, and seasonal meats like lamb and Hereford beef."

"One of our cherished local producers is Village Maid Cheese, a well-established name. In its early days, the 8th Duke of Wellington even allowed them to mature and store their cheese in the cellar of his private residence. The cheese was originally made from the Wellington Guernsey herd's milk and aged in the cellars of Stratfield Saye House."



A neighbourhood restaurant in Buckinghamshire

For chef patron Laurie Gear of Michelin-starred restaurant Artichoke, creative, seasonal dishes are king. Drawing inspiration from the natural rhythm of the year and the bounty of the surrounding countryside, the restaurant has been highly lauded in recent years, and is definitely one to add to your to-visit list.

“Being a chef in Buckinghamshire allows you to be part of the community and we are surrounded by great produce,” he enthuses. “Artichoke is first and foremost a neighbourhood restaurant and we focus on seasonal cooking using the best ingredients we can source.”

Their list of local suppliers is long and varied, and the menu is a celebration of flavours found close by and across the UK. “Our dry aged Ruby Red beef is farmed three miles up the road at Bailey’s farm,” he adds, “and in the summer months we have been lucky enough to have allotment-grown fruit and vegetables from my home village of Sarratt and access to a world class private apple orchard too. We use a fantastic cheese supplier called No 2 Pound Street in Wendover who only supply artisan English cheeses. Even our flower displays at the restaurant are grown for us in Sarratt.”

Kent: A constantly evolving region

Heading down to Kent? Make sure you take the time to visit Falconhurst Estate in the beautiful High Weald area. This estate has been the home of the Talbot family since the mid-19th century and members of the family continue to live and work here today. Now managed by George Talbot, many areas are open to the public. Visitors can enjoy wandering around the beautiful gardens and browsing the wares in the farm shop, and there’s also an event space in the renovated Victorian threshing barn, and a nature trail on site.

George is a real foodie (having worked in London as a butcher, cheesemonger and chef before heading back to Kent) and celebrating the local area is at the heart of what the team here does.

“We sell a great variety of produce in the shop with a focus on small producers and as local as possible,” he says. “From the estate we provide wild venison, honey and veg from our market garden and the estate also sells lamb/beef boxes from the farm. We also support other local businesses; Chiddingstone Dairy for milk, butter and cream, Sussex Bakery, Charringtons cider and apple juice, Goodtrees Farm for meat and so on. One of our USPs is our cheese fridge where we champion as many local producers as possible.”



Cooking up a storm in Oxfordshire

In Oxfordshire, foodies are spoilt for choice for place to visit – after all, this region is home to Raymond Blanc’s Le Manoir aux Quat’Saisons and Michelin-starred gem The Nut Tree Inn. But one eatery we’re keen to highlight is the White Hart at Fyfield.

Husband and wife team Mark and Kay Chandler fell in love with the property when they first saw it 20 years ago, and since taking it on they have restored this beautiful hostelry to its 15th century former glory.

“Our whole ethos revolves around sustainability and supporting the local community,” Kay says. “We have a large kitchen garden where we grow lots of our own herbs, fruit and vegetables and we forage locally for produce such as wild garlic, elderflowers and blackberries, depending on the season. This ethos keeps our carbon footprint low and has massive benefits for freshness and flavour too.

“We are incredibly proud to be part of the South East food scene,” she adds. “The area has so much to offer in terms of wonderful local produce to inspire our menus and we have a wealth of fabulous artisan suppliers too, with the same passion for quality that we have.”



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48 HOURS IN... Swansea

Move over, Abergavenny — there's a new culinary capital in Wales. Swansea isn't just about stunning landscapes and sweeping beaches; it's fast becoming a must-visit destination for food lovers. **Holly Treacy-West** explores the vibrant food scene that's making waves down at the Bay



If you're going to drive seven hours across the UK for a meal, On The Rocks in Mumbles, Swansea, is the place that makes it worth the journey. This coastal restaurant has a relaxed, effortless charm — airy, light-filled, and with sweeping sea views. But the real draw? The food.

We started with crispy fresh cockles and warm, homemade tomato focaccia served with Welsh salted butter — simple, but exceptional. Choosing a main was a challenge, but I settled on the sticky soy-glazed salmon with velvety mash and tenderstem broccoli, while my guest went for the pan-fried chicken with dauphinoise potatoes and a roasted carrot so good it became a talking point. You know a meal is hitting the right notes when conversation slows — even our three-year-old paused to savour every bite.

A pint of Gower Gold accompanied it all, a golden ale with just the right balance of bitterness and a smooth, caramel-like finish. And then dessert: a warm apple and rhubarb crumble, its gingery kick cutting through the sweetness perfectly, alongside a rich chocolate brownie with indulgent vanilla ice cream.

Service? Impeccable. Atmosphere? Lively but intimate. If you're heading to Swansea, On The Rocks isn't just worth a visit — it's reason enough to make the trip.



Living like a King

Just a 20-minute drive away, we found our home for the weekend: The King Arthur Hotel. Arriving late on a Friday evening, we expected a quiet rural inn — but instead, we stepped into a warm, buzzing hub of locals and visitors alike, drawn together by live music, laughter and the comforting scent of woodsmoke. The bar was alive with conversation, pints in hand, and a welcoming, easy-going atmosphere that made us feel instantly at home.

“If you're heading to Swansea, On The Rocks isn't just worth a visit — it's reason enough to make the trip. This coastal restaurant has a relaxed, effortless charm — airy, light-filled, and with sweeping sea views”



“The View’s menu is built around local produce and fresh herbs from its own garden – a true taste of Gower’s landscape, served with a side of breathtaking scenery”

We were lucky enough to stay in the Lower Brynfield Cottage Apartment—a spacious, one-bedroom retreat that balanced rustic charm with cosy comfort, complete with a gas log-effect fireplace and a private terrace for quiet morning coffees.

Steeped in history, The King Arthur Hotel is thought to have been built in 1870 by the Tucker family and has remained a beloved local fixture ever since. In 2021, it earned a well-deserved spot on *The Times* list as ‘Best Cosy Pub’—a title it more than lives up to.

Down by the bay

After a hearty breakfast at The King Arthur, we set off for Rhossili Bay — a beach so spectacular it has ranked in Britain’s top four for four years running, according to TripAdvisor users. So, what’s all the fuss about? Three miles of unspoiled sand, framed by rugged cliffs and home to one of Gower’s most famous landmarks: Worm’s Head. The name comes from the Old Norse wurm, meaning dragon, as the promontory is said to resemble a sleeping beast curled against the sea.

Passing the 13th-century St Mary’s Church, we took the scenic path up to Rhossili Downs, where sweeping views stretched across the coastline and countryside. The wind whipped

at the cliffs, but down on the golden sands, the world felt different — sheltered, warm, endless. We chased the rolling Welsh waves with our toddler; the kind of simple, joyful moment that makes a place unforgettable.

Room with a view

If all that walking has worked up an appetite, The View — perched at the top of Rhossili Cliffs — is well worth the 52-step climb back from the beach. This small café with a big view more than lives up to its name; in fact, you’ll likely find yourself gazing out the window, murmuring, “Just look at that view.”



It’s the perfect spot to recharge with a rich coffee (or, in my case, a fragrant chai latte) and a slice of incredible homemade carrot cake. But if you’re after something more substantial, The View’s menu is built around local produce and fresh herbs from its very own garden — a true taste of Gower’s landscape, served with a side of breathtaking scenery.

Spinning the wheel

Next, we made our way to the Gower Heritage Centre in Parkmill, a living snapshot of rural Welsh life set in the heart of the Gower Peninsula. Built around a working 12th-century watermill, this unique attraction brings history to life with craft workshops, children’s play areas, an animal park, a woollen mill, and even a tiny cinema, La Charrette. The centre’s beating heart is its 800-year-old corn and sawmill, still powered by a traditional waterwheel, where visitors





RHOSILI DOWNS

can watch flour grinding, wood turning, and blacksmith demonstrations in action.

We were lucky enough to get a full tour of the working flour mill where we learned fascinating insights — including the surprising fact that flour dust is highly explosive! But what struck me most was the sustainability of the whole operation, from traditional flour milling to foraging-based cookery demos.

Beyond the mill, the centre is a treasure trove of unexpected delights. We wandered past ponies, ducklings, vintage tractors, and even a dazzling golden pheasant. But the real

highlight? Welsh cakes. Not the shop-bought kind, but the ones made from a grandmother's recipe, sizzling away on an old cast-iron griddle. If you're lucky enough to catch Colin from the Gower Gourmet Kitchen at work, don't pass up the chance to try one. Warm, buttery, and perfectly spiced — they're worth the visit alone.

Before you leave, don't miss the chance to try one of Shed Head Cider's finest creations. Richard, the owner, shared the fascinating process behind his cider-making, which stays true to tradition. Hand-picked apples from the Mill Orchard are pressed using an 1890s Traveling Cider Press, then fermented and matured in oak casks to develop their rich, full-bodied flavour. The secret? Dabinett apples, known for their perfect balance of sweetness and tannins. It's cider-making at its purest — unrushed, authentic, and bursting with as much character as Richard himself.



LANGLAND BRASSERIE

“The real highlight? Welsh cakes. Not the shop-bought kind, but the ones made from a grandmother's recipe, sizzling away on an old cast-iron griddle. Warm, buttery, and perfectly spiced”

Comfort classics

For our evening meal, we headed to The Britannia Inn in Llanmadoc, a beautifully preserved 17th-century inn steeped in history. The low-beamed lounge — rumoured to be built from shipwreck timbers, lured ashore by wreckers — still holds echoes of the past.

Once again, we were welcomed with warm Welsh hospitality and a lively local atmosphere. The Welsh rugby match played in the bar next door, the sound of cheers spilling through, but we were happily tucked away in the cosy restaurant, ready to indulge.

For the main event, we savoured sous-vide Gower salt marsh lamb, perfectly tender and served with silky mash and seasonal vegetables. The crispy duck leg was equally divine, paired with the creamiest mash, buttery Savoy cabbage, peas, and rich, glossy gravy — comfort food at its absolute best.

If you've got room for dessert, don't miss the white chocolate mousse profiteroles — light, indulgent, and the perfect sweet finish to a fantastic meal.

Coastal cool

Before setting off on the long drive home, we couldn't resist one last adventure — rock pooling at Langland Bay. On a sun-drenched Sunday morning, the waves dappled light across the sand.

And just overlooking that view? Langland's Brasserie. Cool, stylish, and effortlessly coastal, it was the ideal spot for a slow, indulgent brunch. The coffee was rich and creamy, and the food was everything you want on a seaside morning — I had perfectly poached eggs on toasted focaccia, layered with wilted spinach, smashed avocado, and golden halloumi, while my guest opted for a classic eggs Benedict, executed to perfection.

The staff were incredible, going out of their way to accommodate our unusually fussy three-year-old, making the whole experience feel even more special. A perfect final stop to round off 48 unforgettable hours in Swansea.

The Bath Priory, Bath

Just a few minutes' walk from the centre of the stunning city of Bath, The Bath Priory offers a taste of quiet luxury for foodies with a penchant for the finer things



SLEEP: For a hotel located so close to the bustling centre of the popular city of Bath, it's somewhat surprising how away from it all you feel at Bath Priory. Set back from the road and backing onto extensive – and beautiful – gardens, the building feels restful as soon as you step indoors. As we had a toddler in tow, we stayed in a family suite which was generously proportioned and came with everything required for a comfortable stay. It's not often that a hotel stay with children gives you the opportunity to relax in front of the television, complimentary whisky in hand, while the little one slumbers in their own separate room, but that's what Bath Priory provided; the space was more of an apartment than a standard family suite. We all had an all-too-rare full night of sleep – testament to the rooms' comfort – and relished the extra space to play and chill out

before meals and check-out time. There is a L'Occitane spa on-site, so naturally our bathroom was resplendent with minis of their soap, shampoo, shower gel and more, meaning that although we didn't have the time for a full treatment, we got a taste of the luxury available in the comfort of our own space.

“Each dish we enjoyed was the epitome of fine dining: stunningly presented and beautifully balanced”

EAT: We were all brilliantly catered for, with a menu of great options for our son – which he loved, and we tucked in too! – and a plethora of fine foods for us adults to choose from. The snacks which kicked off proceedings were finely crafted and packed with elegant flavour, and these were followed by a delicate wild mushroom tartlet complete with quail egg and English truffle, then a perfectly cooked loin of Exmoor venison, served with quince and a jasmine sauce. The epitome of fine dining, each dish was stunningly presented and perfectly balanced. For dessert, we opted for the most beautifully presented cheese board we have ever had the pleasure of eating, complete with truffle honey and incredible house-made savoury biscuits. Breakfast was an equally enjoyable affair, with the classics deliciously well represented and us all – including the toddler – leaving happy and content following exceptional service.

DO: Bath is rich with foodie and cultural offerings, but if you're tight on time be sure to take a wander to the famous Royal Crescent via the park and one of the city's iconic residential Circuses. Despite still being full from breakfast, we managed to make room for a superb coffee and pastry from Landrace Bakery – we stocked up on bread to take home, too – and walked up the hill to Taylors Bagels. Both foodie hotspots had queues out the door, but don't let that put you off – they're both more than worth the wait. To end the trip, we couldn't visit the West Country without a visit to Gloucester Services. A world away from the motorway services we're all familiar with, this is a prime food hall with takeaway options and a fully fledged restaurant on-site. A great stop-off whatever your next destination, whether for in-car picnics or stocking your cupboards when you get home.





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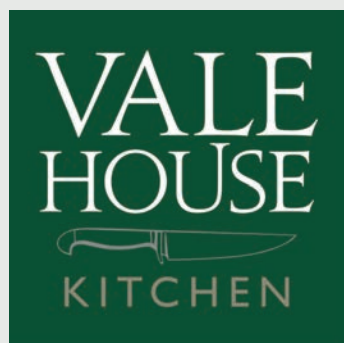
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Out & About

Our favourite foodie discoveries this season

SPOTLIGHT ON SOHO



BREADSTALL

Headed up by an expert baker with decades of experience who relatively recently turned his attentions to pizza, Breadstall has fast become a destination for pizza lovers of all persuasions. Choose from a wide array of flavour - packed pizza slices - we went for the vodka sauce, hot pepperoni (with candied jalapenos, hot honey and burrata) and levelled up ham and pineapple with nduja and basil - and refresh your palate with a chilled beer, housemade lemonade or frozen margarita. Founder Sebastian Vince is a true master of his craft, clearly utilising his baking prowess to create his own signature, biga dough base. His sizeable crusts are moreishly light - and great value - so no wonder it's drawing the crowds. You can find Breadstall in Soho and Battersea breadstall.com

DARJEELING EXPRESS

Fans of *Chef's Table* will be well acquainted with Asma Khan's journey towards opening this popular restaurant, and having genned up on her story and read a lot of lipsmacking reviews we couldn't have been more excited to take a seat. The warm welcome we received was apparent at every table and at every stage of the meal; it's true what they say, this is a family - style restaurant where it truly feels like you are being welcomed into Asma's home (and the generous portions tally up too!). Drinks - wise, we opted for the non - alcoholic drinks flight: a pairing of a peach bellini and a creamy - tropical pineapple, coconut and chilli cocktail. We kicked things off with the butter chicken masala toastie - pure comfort in a bite - which came partnered with two punchy chutneys, clean - with - a - kick chicken momos and our favourite discovery of the day: pushkas. These crisp pillows filled with aromatic chickpeas and potato which you filled with tangy tamarind water and ate all in one were truly addictive. Next up, the Badami Baingan aubergine curry, which was so good that our waitress told us she requested the secret recipe from

Asma for her graduation present, and Kosha Mangsho, a huge portion of slow cooked meat in a rich and sumptuous gravy. Of course, we couldn't resist trying the supremely delicate paratha, refreshing raita and flavour - packed tamarind dal - leaving us suitably stuffed - but we couldn't leave without sampling the restaurant's famous chai, mango lassi and Khoobani Ka Meetha: a light but fruity combination of stewed hunza apricots with pistachio and cream. We already can't wait to return with family and friends. Darjeeling Express can be found in Kingly Court, Soho darjeeling-express.com



DONUTELIER

Sweet - toothed readers need to hotfoot it down to Soho stat, as there's a donut destination that cannot be surpassed. Donutelier brings unrivalled artistry to this most decadent of bread treats, with everything made on - site by a team of expert patisserie chefs to the delight of diners and passers - by alike. Be sure to check out the window display which backs onto the kitchen to see what's on offer that day; from glistening fresh fruit to rich chocolate ganache, every item is picture perfect - and utterly delicious to boot. Spoiled for choice, it was difficult to come to a decision, but

we chose to try the St Honore, a blissful concoction of toffee caramel, blonde chocolate, hazelnut and cream; the pink royale, a pretty - in - pink blend of berries, cream and meringue; the Rochers Gianduja, a rich chocolate and hazelnut delight; and the Pistachio, a creamy and crisp combination of pistachio, chantilly cream and raspberries topped with an almond sable disc. The pastries are also to die for - the croissant and pain au chocolate in particular are must - buys. Donutelier can be found at Charing Cross Road and Carnaby Street donutelier.co.uk



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Edinburgh

Charlotte Smith-Jarvis delves into the delicious foodie heart of Scotland's capital

There's only one word to describe Edinburgh: magical. Whether admired from afar atop the precipice of Arthur's Seat or close up, gazing towards the fairytale cityscape from Prince's Street; every angle, every labyrinthine hidden courtyard and lantern-lit alleyway tells a story.

If you peel away the layers, exploring beyond the famed Royal Mile, delving into its myriad, eclectic neighbourhoods, there's some superb eating to be found in every pocket of the city.

Stuart Ralston (whose empire includes the recently Michelin Star-awarded Lyla) brings relaxed New York/Japanese-style vibes to New Town with **Noto** on Thistle Street, where

pared back decor and a cool soundtrack play second fiddle to the sharing plates menu.

Armed with one of the bar manager's incredible signature cocktails (we recommend the Pisco Sour), knock the socks off your taste buds by cracking into dishes such as customer favourite North Sea crab butter and sourdough – an affordable, exceptional indulgence that should not be missed. Food here is playful and theatrical without being ostentatious. Take the prawn toast, for example, topped with ethereally light flakes of katsuobushi, which 'dance' on top of a prawn mousse. Or a bowl of gnocchi-like potato udon noodles with wild mushrooms and mushroom broth – an egg yolk balanced on top, ready for diners to churn into the bosky liquid, emulsifying it to silky perfection. Service is bright and charming, and absolutely makes this place.

On the other side of the city, in upwardly trendy Leith, Roberta Hall-McCarron's third eatery, **Ardfern** on Bonnington Road, stands out from the crowd.

The low-key all-day cafe, bar and bottle shop is one to watch. Not only are front of house incredible, being super passionate about the provenance of the food, cocktails and carefully chosen wines (including organic wine on tap from Tre Monti), but the food is out-of-this-world good.

Expect, like Noto, small but substantial

sharing plates that tease the beauty out of Scottish ingredients, using them in simple but daring ways which push the boundaries.

The cafe's signature hash brown (on our trip topped with sweet crushed peas, baby gem lettuce, green chilli and wakame) was a highlight of the weekend, as were the sweetest, lightest chicken liver parfait over an English muffin with pickled shimeji mushrooms, a yeasty homemade crumpet, turned in lashings of butter, topped with smoked cod, poached egg and silky hollandaise, and a puffy flatbread, layered with wild garlic pesto, asparagus, duck egg, smoked almond and Spenwood cheese.

The doughnuts are incredible too!

Speaking of doughnuts, we highly recommend joining **Lannan Bakery's** queue at Hamilton Place in Edinburgh's leafy Stockbridge suburb – it really is worth the hype. You'll find it impossible to choose from the counter of self-taught baker Darcie Maher's rightly celebrated artisan joint.

Elegant squares of blackcurrant and creme fraiche custard mille-feuille. Pastries bursting with pistachio cream and rhubarb compote. Darcie's take on a Jaffa cake. Intricately knotted cardamom buns. And tarts gleaming with exquisite toppings. You'll savour every single bite.

Stay awhile in Stockbridge to wander along flower-strewn mews, and to linger around the affluent area's independent foodie shops, from **IJ Mellis** cheesemongers to **Cato**. A flourishing food market takes place here on Sundays too.

There's more fab food shopping to be had at Italian food hall/deli **Valvona & Crolla** on Elm Row. You cannot fail to be dazzled by the floor-to-ceiling food displays, vibrant fresh produce delivered weekly from Milan, and incredible cheese and charcuterie counter. Wherever you land in the city, there's inevitably something good to eat nearby.



ARDFERN



The Scott Hotel & Bonnar's

SCOTTISH DREAMS ARE MADE OF ROOMS LIKE THOSE FOUND WITHIN THE UOE COLLECTION, AND THE SCOTT HOTEL (PART OF THE GROUP) IS CERTAINLY THE JEWEL IN ITS CROWN.

The historic townhouse is just a short bus ride from Edinburgh city centre, delivering an instant moment of calm to all those who step over the threshold.

An oasis, set in leafy grounds, The Scott marries country house elegance with dramatic flair – traditional wainscoting and carved wooden detailing elevated by bold fabric and wall coverings, and an eclectic art collection, drawn from some of the UK's most

exciting talents.

It's not hard to imagine starlets of old like Marilyn Monroe slinking into one of the curvaceous pastel pink chairs found in Bonnar's, the hotel's 18th century dining room, which takes colour cues from the original Thomas Bonnar ceiling fresco.

You can expect refined, informed and genuinely friendly hospitality from the front of house team, who go out of their way to deliver a personalised, warm experience. In the kitchen, Roman head chef Pier Berretta combines classic cooking with ingenious techniques he learnt at Copenhagen's Noma, devising plates that celebrate Scottish produce with a fresh, light-handed touch.

Sustainability is key to Pier's mission, and he clearly takes immense pride in working with local producers, harvesting ingredients from

the hotel's kitchen garden, and ensuring nothing is wasted.

An outstanding demonstration of this concept is in Pier's white rye sourdough brioche bread, presented to the table wrapped like a parcel in string. Cream is used to craft the kitchen's own cultured and Marmite butters, with the resulting buttermilk folded into the bread, finished with an unbelievably moreish glaze of brown sugar and tarragon vinegar. It is a must-order.

Lettuce is given a different lease of life in a starter at Bonnar's, being charred, layered with roasted garlic dressing, garnished with sea purslane and topped with pops of sharp, briny mustard seed.

Castle Game venison was interestingly garnished – in a way that pulled what's considered an autumn and winter meat into



The Fingal

EXPERIENCE THE EXTRAORDINARY WITH A STAY ON THE FINGAL.

The five-star floating hotel, docked in trendy Leith (which has a distinctly Flemish/Belgian feel with its docks, waterways and cafe culture), is considered some of the most luxurious accommodation in Britain.

She started life in 1963, commissioned by the Northern Lighthouse Board to safely transport lighthouse keepers, supplies and staff, later becoming part of The Royal Yacht Britannia Trust, which lavished £5 million on

her conversion. No stone was left unturned in the refurbishment, which included creating 14 cabins (four duplex rooms), the 2 AA Rosette Lighthouse Restaurant & Bar, and an elegant, modern ballroom, complete with a duo of sweeping staircases.

It's not every day you get to walk the red carpet, so it certainly feels special waltzing along the gangway onto the boat, where reception staff delight in making every part of your stay as wonderful as possible.

When the day is clear and bright, there's no better way to spend an afternoon than up on Fingal's Moët & Chandon deck, where Champagne, cocktails and nibbles are the order of the day. The Yard No. 140 is highly recommended!

Do dress up for dinner in the restaurant, aiming for a window seat so you can watch the sun set.

Head chef Pedro Barreria and restaurant

chef Andrea Sendon Alonso spend a great deal of time sourcing the best produce for their menus. We began dinner in style, with a chic aperitif of cherry liqueur, Cognac, bitters and Champagne, and nibbles of warm sourdough rolls with lashings of whipped seaweed and wild garlic butter.



Whisky-cured Wester Ross salmon with a piccalilli-style cucumber puree, tart lemon gel and herbed cream cheese arrived next, alongside one of the most exquisite starters we've eaten this year, both in terms of flavour and plating. The presentation of Eyemouth crab, dressed with hazelnut, dill, apple, mandarin gel and avocado cream showed an eye for detail and enormous restraint, allowing the sweetness of the crab to

play a starring role.

This level of simplicity, letting the food do the talking, came across in a salad of smoked



summer. Tenderly pink within, it landed with a moreish barbecue sauce, charred corn, corn puree and greens.

And when it comes to dessert, the kitchen team have been really quite thoughtful. The list is short... and not too sweet. Our Eton Mess, for example, layered meadowsweet-dusted meringue, with a featherlight syllabub-like cream, just-cooked rhubarb and buttery biscuits. A riot of textures that never veered towards being too sweet.

And we loved Pier's take on a cheese course. Luscious Morangie Brie custard, glazed with spruce syrup and covered in seeded onion crackers for dunking.

We couldn't have asked for more.

For further details visit

theuocollection.com

duck breast, blood orange and chicory too.

Andrea could not have handled the Peterhead lemon sole any better. Caramelised in the pan, it retained its melt-in-the-mouth texture, and, again, remained the centrepiece of the plate, garnished with smoked leek and nori, succulent Shetland mussels and wild garlic butter sauce.

It was a brave move to put a picanha cut steak on the menu (they're best served medium to rare with little leeway either side) but Andrea did justice to this flavoursome slab of Black Isle beef, pairing it with beef fat cooked pearl onions, turned asparagus, pea puree and a bolshy Rioja sauce.

The cherry on top of our meal was a pair of the prettiest, most accomplished desserts. A mille-feuille of rhubarb with caramelised pastry, tender rhubarb pieces, rhubarb jus and rhubarb sorbet sang in the bowl. And the Valrhona mousse and hazelnut sponge, encased in a thin chocolate shell, with Greek yoghurt sorbet was a masterclass in chocolate work.

Make time for a leisurely breakfast – all table service. The brûléed porridge with whisky, its top lightly crunchy, sweet and smoky, has to be tried to be believed.

Find out more at **fingal.co.uk**



SCOTLAND



The Witchery

OPULENT. MYSTICAL. EXTRAVAGANT. JUST THREE ADJECTIVES WHICH BARELY SCRATCH THE SURFACE OF DESCRIBING A STAY AT THE WITCHERY.

Set within a historic building at the top of the Royal Mile, a stone's throw from Edinburgh Castle, the hotel and restaurant's raison d'être is to surprise and delight its guests. And delighted we were to climb the twisty turny spiral staircase up to The Turret room, where our luggage awaited.

The palatial suite of three rooms is fantastical. Light dances from chandeliers. A four-poster bed overflows with cushions. And doors swing open into a gorgeously ostentatious bathroom.

There's nothing The Witchery team hasn't thought of. A bottle of champers on ice, handmade chocolates ... a superfast phone charger by the bed. The devil is in the details, and on these, The Witchery is absolutely flawless.

Dinner was taken in The Secret Garden – thought by many to be the most romantic dining room in Britain. Wow. What can we say other than there's nothing quite like it? Moody and smouldering, sensual even, The Secret Garden has sexy down to a tee, the low lighting, candelabra and flickering tealights casting a spell while hanging floral centrepieces bring a touch of femininity.

The menu is pricey (you're definitely paying a premium for the atmosphere) but clearly crafted from excellent ingredients.

Our grilled hand-dived Orkney scallops were the best we've eaten. Absolutely

stunning, melting dreamily in the mouth, and matched with a well-judged romesco sauce and bitter sea greens.

We thought the East Neuk lobster and Tarbet brown crab pie was the epitome of luxury, filled generously with sweet seafood in a light sauce laden with concasse tomatoes, and finished with a pithivier-style pastry lid. The triple-cooked chips alongside were well-seasoned and crisp, and it was appreciated that the kitchen had gone to the effort of mixing up the accompanying greens too, flavouring them generously with butter, salt and a dash of acidity.

To finish? It had to be cheese. Scotland is endowed with world-class cheesemakers who deserve more recognition, and it was refreshing to see so many of the great and the good of the country's dairy world on the list, rather than the usual suspects.

It was quite possibly the most interesting cheese plate we've been served in a very long time (the only veering away from the country being Suffolk's Baron Bigod, a

Brie-style variety served at its unctuous, silky, voluptuous best).

Also served was a piece of supple, milky Connage Gouda, complex, almost smoky, rich Anster, buttery Dhorlin from the Mull of Kintyre (a Scottish take on Taleggio), and, our standout favourite, Hebridean Blue. What a

cheese! Fudgy, slightly crumbly, meaty, mineral, almost crystalline in places. It's an absolute joy, and rarely seen outside of the finest local cheesemongers.

Possibly the most memorable part of our stay was the simple pleasure of being able to take a late breakfast in our room.

The Turret has a table laid out ready for dining, so all you need do is slip into a robe and marvel as a member of the breakfast team sets out a generously packed hamper to enjoy at your leisure. Utter, utter bliss, and the best end to an unforgettable stay.

Find out more about The Witchery at **thewitchery.com**



The Great British GIVEAWAY

Read on for your chance to win some delicious prizes

For your chance to win these fantastic prizes, plus full details and T&Cs, visit **GREAT BRITISHFOOD AWARDS.COM**

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hydescyder.com



WIN A SELECTION OF LUXURIOUS CHOCOLATE FROM COCO CHOCOLATIER WORTH £300

Treat yourself to a deliciously artistic experience with COCO Chocolatier. Based in Edinburgh, COCO pairs premium single-origin Colombian cocoa with eye-catching packaging created by independent artists. Each bar is a miniature masterpiece – from Salted Caramel to Cold Brew Coffee, COCO's flavours are as bold as its designs. Whether you're gifting or indulging, COCO is chocolate with substance, style, and soul. Ethical, beautiful, and unforgettable.

coco-chocolatier.com



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Now you can enjoy restaurant-quality Belgian waffles at home with the stylish and smart WaffleUp by Caso Design – we have two to giveaway! This sleek vertical waffle maker combines German precision with smart, space-saving design. Its top-pour system and non-stick plates ensure beautiful, perfectly formed Belgian waffles every time, while the clever drip tray means no batter goes to waste. With custom browning controls, intuitive indicator lights and a perfectly sized ladle included, WaffleUp makes it easy to master your favourite sweet or savoury creations.

casodesign.co.uk

WIN ONE OF FIVE HECK! SUMMER FOOD BUNDLES

Known for their healthier take on the nation's food favourites, the HECK! range has become a hit with sausage and burger lovers and we've got five delicious summer bundles to give away, chock-full of all the favourites, plus their new Minted Lamb Burgers and no-added-nitrite Smoky Pork Rashers that combine all the deliciousness of a traditional sausage with the convenience of a quick-cook rasher. Everything is gluten-free and made with top quality British meat, perfect for a banging BBQ, shaking up mid-week meals or stocking up the freezer. The bundle contains one pack each of Minted Lamb Burgers, Spring Chicken Chipolatas, Smoky Pork Rashers, Chicken Italia Burgers, Chicken Italia Mince, 97% Pork Chipolatas, 97% Pork Sausages, Steak & Butter Meatballs and Steak & Butter Burgers.

heckfood.co.uk





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Indulge in something a little different with Ootherly – quirky, creamy, and 100% plant-based chocolate made with oatm*lk. Each bar is wrapped in joyful, illustrated designs that turn heads and spark curiosity. From Birthday Cake to Cold Brew Coffee, Ootherly is the ultimate treat for snackers, gifters, and anyone who embraces the unexpected. B Corp certified, plastic-free, and proudly inclusive – Ootherly is chocolate for the wonderfully different.

theotherlyside.com

WIN A KITCHEN BUNDLE WORTH £370!

Ready to revolutionise your cooking? Enter now for a chance to win a luxury kitchen bundle worth over £370! Featuring the Zyliss Gourmet Drum Grater (£129) for effortless prepping, glass food containers (£45), premium Cole & Mason Hoxton Silver-Plated Mill Set (£190), and a clever stainless-steel funnel (£9) for easy refills – this prize pack is all about Swiss innovation and British excellence. Whether you're a seasoned chef or a home cook on the rise, this bundle is for you!



For your chance to win these fantastic prizes, plus full details and T&Cs,



WIN BULLARDS' HAND-CRAFTED CLASSIC GIN COLLECTION – WORTH £150!

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bullardsspirits.co.uk

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Get your hands on chocolate that's as principled as it is punchy. UP-UP crafts its bars using fully traceable, child labour-free cocoa from a single estate farm in Colombia. With flavour-packed favourites like Tequila & Lime or Sea Salt Dark, and vivid packaging that jumps off the shelf, UP-UP is chocolate with impact. B Corp certified, ethically made, and endlessly snackable – this is great chocolate, with no downside.

upupchocolate.com



WIN A DELECTABLE SUMMER HAMPER FROM TIPTREE – WORTH £150!

British foodie icon Wilkin & Sons is offering one lucky winner the chance to win a hamper filled to the brim with Tiptree treats. Complete with sweet and savoury preserves, delightful tipples, homewares including a Little Scarlet tea towel and diffuser, this is all you need to add delicious flavour to your summer occasions – whatever the weather!

tiptree.com

visit GREATBRITISHFOODAWARDS.COM



In the Kitchen With...

JEREMY PANG

The TV chef, best-selling author and founder of London's award-winning School of Wok welcomes us into his summer kitchen

What's your kitchen like at home?

Well, I've just moved house so it's not exactly how I like it at the moment – but my old kitchen had everything designed exactly how I like it for my home cooking.

A Symphony Kitchen: Blue matt finish with a copper trim handle, quartz white worktops and honeycomb tiles, under cabinet lighting (hover sensitive so you didn't have to touch the light switches with food hands – gosh I miss those), floor to ceiling cabinets spread over three walls with a double American-style fridge freezer, two pantries: one under the stairs with replacement bulk dry goods, and one more accessible pantry with pull out drawers ordered in types of cuisine i.e. Asian sauces and oils, Indian spices, Western spices, baking, noodles and rice, pasta and cans. An AEG Induction wok duple hob (one like a bowl that allows the wok to sit into), four gas hob burners, one Neff hide and slide oven and a microwave oven on top plus a wine fridge.

Are you a messy or tidy cook?

I used to be messy until I went to Le Cordon Bleu to train – really what I paid for was discipline and how to be better at washing up as you go – so now I'm much tidier, but still not THE tidiest (especially when I'm under time pressure – flour gets everywhere! Ask the *Ready Steady Cook* home ecs – they'll tell you!



“A wok, a cleaver and good thick wooden chopping board is all I need”

Are you a gadget-lover or a fan of the simple things?

Simple things: a wok, a cleaver and a good thick wooden chopping board is all I need.

What most excites you about summer cooking?

Outdoor feasts – barbecue and fire... I love cooking on fire for friends.

What would be on your ultimate summer menu...?

Char siu pork neck, lemongrass fish sauce chicken wings, maybe some pandan leaf fish satay and a som tam salad on the side

... And who would you invite to share it with you?

My dad – he'd love that if he was still around – although he'd add a Mr Whippy ice cream with a 99 flake to the end of the meal I think.

What would be on your playlist?

A mix of blues (Eric Clapton), Elton John, John Mayer and some Manu Chao.

What's your ultimate summer cooking tip?

Get outside and cook as much as you can, always have a mixing bowl of cold clean water nearby, a separate mixing bowl of hot washing up water and a separate

empty mixing bowl for rubbish whilst you are cooking. Have lots of spoons at the ready, and set a little tray up with all your pantry ingredients first (oils, butter, the sauces and spices) and then a separate tray for a load of cooking utensils – then you won't have to go back and forth to the garden a million times.

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