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INTRODUCTION

David Herbert is one of The Weekend Australian Magazine’s most popular and enduring columnists for good reason: his recipes work. You don’t need to have the gadgetry, pantry or skills of a professional chef to execute his dishes and you will never have to worry about creating dusts or foams or sourcing rare succulents from the other side of the continent.

David is a home cook and recipe writer and his dishes are produced in a domestic kitchen. He’s all about simplicity and flavour: “Be inspired by restaurant food,” he says, “but don’t try to cook it at home.”

We know that many readers – from the beginner cook to the experienced – collect his recipes and return to them time and again. This year we’ve selected our favourite summer recipes from David’s collection. All compiled here in one handy spot: your holiday cooking is sorted.

Christine Middap
Editor, The Weekend Australian Magazine
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Herbert writes recipes for *The Weekend Australian Magazine* and is the author of several cookbooks. He lives and works in London, surrounded by kitchen treasures, cookbooks and antique copper saucepans.

For full archive of David Herbert’s recipes, go to theaustralian.com.au/life/food-wine/recipes
LIGHT MEALS & SIDES
HEADLINE
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CATEGORY

6
LIGHT MEALS & SIDES

GAZPACHO; CHILLED PEA, MINT & PINE NUT SOUP
GAZPACHO

SERVES 6

1kg cherry tomatoes, halved
1 lebanese cucumber, roughly chopped
1 red capsicum, seeded and chopped
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 red onion, chopped
2 thick slices Italian-style white bread
3 tablespoons sherry vinegar or red wine vinegar
Extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling
Diced avocado, red capsicum or cucumber, to garnish
(optional)
Basil leaves, to garnish

Place tomatoes, cucumber, capsicum, garlic and onion in large mixing bowl. Remove crusts from bread; chop bread and add to bowl. Stir in 375ml cold water. Puree soup in batches until mixture is roughly combined and slightly chunky. Add a little extra water to thin soup if needed. Chill for at least 5 hours, preferably overnight.

Just before serving, stir in vinegar and season with salt and pepper. Serve with a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil and bowls of diced avocado, chopped capsicum or cucumber to garnish, if desired.
CHILLED PEA, MINT & PINE NUT SOUP

SERVES 4-6

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1 stick celery, chopped
1 leek, washed and sliced into rings
1 litre chicken or vegetable stock
600g fresh or frozen peas
2 tablespoons chopped mint
2 tablespoons pine nuts

Heat oil in large saucepan over medium heat, add onion, celery and leek; cook, stirring, for 5-7 minutes until vegetables are soft but not coloured. Add stock, peas and ¾ of the mint; simmer for 15 minutes. Remove soup from heat. Puree in batches in a blender or with a stick blender until smooth. Season with salt and pepper. Cool, then chill well.

When ready to serve, toast pine nuts by tossing in a frying pan over medium heat until golden. Roughly chop nuts and combine with remaining mint leaves. Sprinkle nuts and mint over soup before serving.
LABNEH WITH GRILLED ASPARAGUS
LABNEH WITH GRILLED ASPARAGUS

SERVES 4 AS AN ENTREE OR PART OF A MEZZE

FOR THE LABNEH
650ml plain natural yoghurt  
(try Greek-style)
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
Grated zest ½ lemon

FOR THE ASPARAGUS
Extra virgin olive oil
2 bunches thin asparagus
2 teaspoons zaatar
Pinch dried chilli

TO SERVE
2 tablespoons roughly chopped mint leaves
Pea shoots
Lemon wedges

Mix yoghurt with garlic, salt, lemon juice and lemon zest. Pour yoghurt mixture into a sieve lined with cheesecloth or muslin (or a clean, damp Chux-style cloth); allow liquid to drain off for 3-4 hours. Do this at room temperature on your kitchen bench or leave in fridge overnight. (To speed up the process, squeeze the cloth to expel the liquid faster; this will make the labneh softer, but still perfectly acceptable.) Chill until needed. (To keep longer in the fridge, shape into balls, roll in chopped fresh basil, place in a clean lidded jar and cover with olive oil.)

When ready to serve, heat a char-grill or non-stick frying pan over medium high heat. Brush asparagus with a little oil; when pan is hot, add asparagus and cook, turning once after 2-3 minutes, or until tender and a little charred. Spread labneh on a serving plate, overlay with asparagus and sprinkle with zaatar and dried chilli. Season with salt and pepper. Drizzle with a little olive oil; scatter over mint leaves and pea shoots. Serve with lemon wedges and flatbread.
TOMATO GALETTE WITH BASIL DRESSING

LIGHT MEALS & SIDES
TOMATO GALETTE WITH BASIL DRESSING

MAKES 4

This recipe makes use of fresh, good quality tomatoes, along with time-savers such as frozen puff pastry and sun-dried tomatoes in oil.

2 sheets ready-made puff pastry
240g sun-dried tomatoes (in oil)
2 teaspoons tomato paste
4-5 ripe tomatoes, cored, peeled and sliced
Fresh thyme leaves

BASIL DRESSING
Large handful basil leaves
1 clove garlic, chopped
100ml extra virgin olive oil

Preheat oven to 200°C. Cut pastry sheets in half to make 4 rectangles. Prick pastry with a fork; lie rectangles side by side on oiled baking trays. Drain most of the oil from sun-dried tomatoes; process with tomato paste to make a fine paste. Add more oil from the sun-dried tomatoes to bring mixture together, if needed. Transfer to a bowl. Spread a thin layer of tomato mixture over pastry, leaving a 1cm border. Place sliced tomatoes on top, overlapping slightly. Sprinkle with thyme leaves; drizzle with a little oil. Season. Bake for 15-20 minutes until golden on top; check underneath base to make sure pastry is cooked.

For dressing, process basil, garlic and olive oil, adding more oil if dressing seems too thick. Drizzle tarts with a little basil oil to serve.
VEGETABLE & FETA TART

LIGHT MEALS & SIDES
VEGETABLE & FETA TART

SERVES 4

Mediterranean food and sunshine go hand in hand. This tart can be served hot or at room temperature.

1 pack filo pastry
Olive oil
2 small red onions, cut into thin wedges
2 garlic cloves, quartered
2 zucchini, cut into 2cm pieces
2 large yellow capsicums, quartered lengthways
4 Roma tomatoes, quartered lengthways
200g ricotta cheese
50g feta cheese, crumbled
Small handful basil leaves

Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease a 20x30cm slice or brownie tin with olive oil. Line base and sides of tin with about 5 layers of filo pastry, overlapping and brushing each layer with a little oil, allowing pastry to come above the rim. Bake for 10 minutes, then cool. Combine 2 tablespoons olive oil, onion, garlic, zucchini and capsicum in a roasting pan. Season with salt and pepper. Roast for 15 minutes or until just tender. Add tomatoes. Cook for a further 15-20 minutes or until vegetables are golden. Spread ricotta over pastry base, top with vegetables, sprinkle with feta and bake for 10 minutes or until heated through. Top with basil.
MEXICAN STYLE CORN FRITTERS
MEXICAN STYLE
CORN FRITTERS

SERVES 4 (MAKES 12-15)

Make breakfast great again with corn and its Mexican companions chilli, coriander and avocado. These fritters are also good for lunch or dinner or as an accompaniment to roasts. If you’re averse to chilli, leave it out.

3 large cobs of corn
150g plain flour
½ teaspoon baking powder
1 tablespoon chopped fresh coriander
½ long green chilli, finely chopped
3 tablespoons milk, plus extra if needed
1 large free-range egg, lightly beaten
Vegetable oil, for cooking

To prepare corn, remove husks and trim stalks. Stand cob upright on chopping board; using sharp knife, carefully slice downwards, repeating until all kernels are removed. Put kernels in mixing bowl; sift in flour, baking powder and ½ teaspoon salt. Add coriander and chilli; season with pepper. Whisk milk and egg together and stir into corn mixture until combined — the mixture should fall off the spoon with a light tap. Add a little extra milk if necessary.

Heat 1-2 tablespoons of oil in a non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Add heaped tablespoons of the mixture to the pan and cook for about 2-3 minutes each side or until golden brown. Drain on kitchen paper and keep warm. Repeat with remaining mixture. Serve with guacamole and sour cream, if desired.
GUACAMOLE

SERVES 4

6 ripe cherry tomatoes or 1 large ripe tomato
2 ripe avocados
Juice 1 lime
¼ cup chopped fresh coriander
1 small red onion, finely chopped
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped

Finely chop tomatoes and transfer pulp and juice into a bowl. Halve and stone avocados; scoop out flesh into bowl with the tomato. Use a fork to roughly mash the avocado. Tip other ingredients into the bowl; mix through. Season with salt and pepper.

Serve with corn fritters and sour cream.
CAJUN-SPICED PRAWN & AVOCADO OPEN SANDWICH

LIGHT MEALS & SIDES
MEDITERRANEAN OPEN SANDWICH

SERVES 2

Open sandwiches are perfect for relaxed summer lunches. Pan-fry, chargrill or toast the bread until golden and top with the fillings. Vary the bread or change the fillings to suit your mood.

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for brushing
1 clove garlic, crushed
2 tablespoons chopped basil
4 thick slices of rustic white Italian-style bread (such as ciabatta or sourdough)
1 eggplant, sliced into 1cm thick rounds
Handful baby salad leaves
2 Roma tomatoes, sliced
250g buffalo mozzarella, broken into chunks
Basil leaves, to serve

In a small bowl, combine oil, garlic and basil. Brush bread on both sides with oil mixture and cook in a non-stick frying pan until crisp and golden. Place two slices on each of two plates. Brush eggplant slices with olive mixture, season and cook in same pan until charred, about 5 minutes. Turn and grill until tender, about 3 minutes longer.

Top toasted bread with salad leaves; drizzle with any remaining olive oil mixture. Top with eggplant, tomatoes, mozzarella and basil leaves. Season well.
CAJUN-SPICED PRAWN & AVOCADO OPEN SANDWICH

SERVES 2

15cm piece Turkish bread or pide
2 tablespoons olive oil
400g uncooked tiger prawns, peeled and veined
1-2 teaspoons Cajun seasoning mix
1 tablespoon chopped flat-leaf parsley leaves
2 spring onions, trimmed, chopped
2 radishes, sliced
Handful salad leaves
½ avocado, peeled, stoned, chopped
8 cherry tomatoes, halved
4 lemon wedges to serve

Slice bread horizontally and cut into halves. Brush with a little olive oil and toast or grill. Divide between two plates. Heat remaining oil in a frying pan; add prawns and Cajun seasoning to taste and cook over a high heat, stirring for 3-4 minutes, or until cooked. Remove to a bowl and stir in parsley, spring onions and radish. Season well.

Top bread with salad leaves, avocado, prawns and tomatoes. Season well. Serve with lemon wedges.
PEA & PEARL COUSCOUS SALAD

LIGHT MEALS & SIDES
PEA & PEARL COUSCOUS SALAD

SERVES 2 AS MAIN COURSE OR 4 AS A SIDE DISH

Pearl couscous is larger than regular couscous and has a slightly chewy texture and a nutty flavour.

150g sugar snap peas, sliced lengthways
1/2 cup fresh or frozen peas
250g pearl couscous
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 small red onion, finely chopped
1 medium zucchini, thinly sliced
2 spring onions, finely sliced
2 tablespoons torn fresh basil
175g feta cheese, crumbled
50g pine nuts, lightly toasted
Handful baby spinach leaves

Cook both pea varieties in a large saucepan of boiling salted water for 2-3 minutes; drain and set aside. Cook pearl couscous according to packet instructions until tender.

Meanwhile, combine 2 tablespoons olive oil with lemon juice and chopped onion. Drain couscous and mix with oil and lemon juice mixture. Allow to cool then combine peas, couscous, zucchini, spring onion and basil. Season with salt and pepper.

Let sit for 10 minutes. Transfer to a serving bowl, sprinkle with feta, pine nuts and spinach, and drizzle with remaining olive oil.
ROASTED CHICKPEAS WITH MIDDLE EASTERN SPICES

SERVES 4

If you can, use a few different shapes, sizes and varieties of tomato.

2 x 400g cans chickpeas
Pinch dried chilli
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 teaspoon coriander seeds
1 clove garlic, peeled, left whole
2 teaspoons chopped rosemary
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1kg ripe tomatoes
½ cup chopped flat-leaf parsley
1 small red onion, sliced

1 teaspoon ground sumac (optional)

DRESSING
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 clove garlic, crushed
Grated zest ½ lemon

Drain and rinse chickpeas, then dry on kitchen paper. Combine chickpeas, chilli, cumin, coriander, garlic and rosemary. Toss with oil and transfer to a baking dish. Cook in preheated 180°C (fan) oven for 15-20 minutes, or until crisp and lightly browned. Remove and discard garlic.

Meanwhile, place all dressing ingredients in a screw-top jar and shake well to mix. Slice, halve or quarter tomatoes (depending on size). Toss warm chickpeas with parsley and red onion; stir through tomatoes. Season to taste. Pour over dressing and sprinkle with sumac, if using.
POULTRY & MEAT
MALAYSIAN-STYLE ROAST CHICKEN
MALAYSIAN STYLE
ROAST CHICKEN

SERVES 4

Removing the backbone of a chicken and flattening the bird (or getting the butcher to do it) speeds cooking and ensures it’s even. It also exposes more skin for crisping.

1 whole free-range chicken
2 limes, cut into wedges

MARINADE
3 cloves garlic, crushed
1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
3 tablespoons runny honey
3 tablespoons light soy sauce
1 red chilli, chopped (optional)
1 tablespoon sesame oil
2 tablespoons fish sauce

Place chicken breast-side down with legs towards you. Using poultry shears or kitchen scissors, cut along one side of backbone; turn chicken around and cut along other side. Remove backbone, cutting through rib bones as you go. Open chicken out, turn over and flatten by pushing down hard. Combine the marinade ingredients and season with salt. Brush over the chicken. Marinate in fridge for 1-2 hours.

To cook, place chicken in a roasting tin, skin-side up, and season with sea salt; reserve any remaining marinade. Roast in a preheated 200°C fan oven for about 30 minutes, then reduce to 180°C fan and roast for a further 20-25 minutes, brushing occasionally with remaining marinade. Rest in a warm place for 10 minutes before serving with lime wedges.
Portuguese Chicken
PORTUGUESE CHICKEN

SERVES 4

This moderately spiced Portuguese-style chicken dish should be marinated for a few hours and cooked in a hot oven. The lovely crisp cucumber and fennel salad is a perfect companion to it.

4 chicken legs (with thighs)
¹⁄₃ cup fresh lime juice
2 tablespoons olive oil
3 cloves garlic, crushed
2 teaspoons dried chilli flakes
2 teaspoons ground coriander
1 teaspoon sweet paprika
1 teaspoon dried oregano
Lime or lemon wedges, to serve

Score chicken legs with a knife a few times. Whisk lime, oil, garlic, chilli flakes, coriander, paprika, oregano and 2 teaspoons salt together in a bowl. Pour over chicken, cover and refrigerate for up to 8 hours. Place chicken in a single layer in a roasting tin and roast in a preheated 200°C (fan) oven for 25-35 minutes or until golden and cooked through. Baste occasionally with marinade as it cooks.

Serve with cucumber salad and lime or lemon wedges.
CUCUMBER, FENNEL & AVOCADO SALAD

SERVES 4

1 red onion, halved and thinly sliced
1 tablespoon sherry vinegar
2 lebanese cucumbers, peeled, seeded and thinly sliced
1 small fennel bulb, thinly sliced
1-2 ripe avocados, peeled and sliced
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint

Toss onion with vinegar and set aside for a few minutes. Mix onion, cucumbers, fennel and avocado in a large bowl and toss with olive oil. Add mint and season with salt and pepper.
CHICKEN PHO

SERVES 4

This aromatic rice-noodle soup is a staple in Vietnam. Serve with mint, basil and coriander on the side.

**1-1.2kg whole chicken**
2 medium brown onions, quartered
4 garlic cloves, halved
2 carrots, chopped
2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger
1 long fresh red chilli, sliced
1 teaspoon Chinese five-spice
2 star anise
4 tablespoons soy sauce
1 tablespoon Thai fish sauce
300g dried flat rice noodles

**TO SERVE**
2 handfuls baby spinach leaves
6 spring onions, thinly sliced
100g bean sprouts, rinsed
1 long red chilli, thinly sliced
1 lime, cut into wedges
1/3 cup each of mint, Thai basil and coriander leaves

Place chicken in a large stock pot. Add onion, garlic, carrots, ginger, half the chilli, five-spice, star anise, soy sauce and 2 litres water. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer very gently for 11/2 hours. Remove chicken to a bowl and strain stock through a sieve, discarding vegetables. Skim off any fat; bring stock and fish sauce to the boil in a clean saucepan. Slice chicken meat into bite-size pieces and set aside.

Meanwhile, cook noodles as per packet instructions and divide among 4 bowls. Top with chicken, spinach, spring onions and bean sprouts. Ladle over hot stock and season with soy. Serve garnished with chilli, lime and herbs.
POULTRY & MEAT

DUCK SALAD
This warm salad is quick and easy. Rest the meat for 10 minutes before combining with salad ingredients.

**3 DUCK SALAD**

**SERVES 4**

- 3 duck breasts, skin on
- 1 teaspoon five-spice powder
- 1 cup frozen peas
- Large handful pea shoots
- 1 baby cos lettuce, trimmed
- 1 fennel bulb, trimmed and sliced
- ½ cucumber, cut into matchsticks
- 3 spring onions, sliced diagonally
- 2 pak choy, shredded

**DRESSING**

- 1 garlic clove, grated
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil

Heat oven to 180°C (fan). Score skin of duck, brush with oil and rub with five-spice and salt. Heat a frying pan to high; add duck skin-side down and cook for 3-4 minutes or until skin is crisp. Turn over and quickly brown underside, then transfer to an oven tray and roast for 10 minutes (meat should still be pink in middle).

Place dressing ingredients in a screw-top jar and shake to mix. Cook peas for 3 minutes then rinse in cold water and add to other salad ingredients; drizzle with dressing. Slice duck and serve with salad.
POMEGRANATE DUCK WITH FREEKEH SALAD

SERVES 4

Like bulgur, freekeh is an earthy grain, chock-full of protein, slightly nutty, and easy to cook. It is made from durum wheat, roasted in the husk before being cracked.

FOR THE SALAD
1 cup freekeh
250g preserved artichokes, drained
2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley
2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
Juice and grated zest ½ lemon
Extra virgin olive oil

FOR THE DUCK
2 teaspoons pomegranate molasses
1 tablespoon runny honey
4 duck breasts, skin on

Preheat oven to 200°C. Cook freekeh according to packet instructions; drain well. Slice artichokes in half; toss through freekeh. Add herbs, juice and lemon zest. Season to taste; drizzle with olive oil. Place molasses and honey into small bowl; mix well.

To cook duck, score skin in cross-hatch pattern using a sharp knife; season with salt and pepper. Heat a non-stick, oven-proof frying pan over medium heat; sear breasts, skin-side down, for about three minutes; flip and cook underside for 1 minute. Brush skin with molasses mixture and transfer to oven. Roast, skin side up, for about 8-10 minutes, or until cooked to your liking. Remove from oven and rest. Serve with freekeh.
HEADLINE
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TANDOORI-STYLE LAMB CUTLETS
These yoghurt-and-spice marinated lamb cutlets are traditionally cooked in a tandoor oven, but a very hot grill or barbecue works well too. The cucumber and herb salsa makes a refreshing accompaniment.

2.5cm piece ginger, peeled and roughly chopped
4 cloves garlic
1 green chilli, chopped
½ cup thick plain yoghurt
1 teaspoon mild paprika
½ teaspoon chilli powder
½ teaspoon garam masala
1 teaspoon ground coriander
Juice ½ lemon
12 spring lamb cutlets

TO SERVE
Plain yoghurt
Lemon wedges
Naan bread

Pound ginger, garlic and chilli to a paste. In a bowl, mix yoghurt with ginger paste, paprika, chilli powder, garam masala, coriander and lemon juice. Stir well, add cutlets and mix well. Cover and leave to marinate in the fridge for 2-4 hours or overnight.

Preheat grill to high. Cook cutlets for 2-3 minutes each side, or until cooked and slightly charred. Alternatively, cook on a barbecue. Serve with cucumber salsa, yoghurt, lemon wedges and naan.
CUCUMBER SALSA

SERVES 2

1 Lebanese cucumber, skin on
1 small red onion, peeled
2 radishes, trimmed
¼ cup fresh coriander leaves
¼ cup fresh mint leaves
¼ cup basil leaves
1 small green chilli
2-3 tablespoons fresh lime juice
1 tablespoon vegetable oil

Thinly slice cucumber, onion and radish. Roughly chop herbs;
deseed chilli and finely dice.

Place all ingredients in a bowl; stir in lime juice and oil. Season to
taste with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.
SPICED BEEF FILLET WITH PEANUT RELISH
SPICED BEEF FILLET WITH PEANUT RELISH

SERVES 6

These recipes are inspired by a South African friend’s delicious barbecued beef fillet and corn. Don’t be put off by the number of ingredients — it’s really quite simple to prepare.

**900g beef fillet**
- **1 red chilli, deseeded, chopped**
- **2 cloves garlic, crushed**
- **2 tablespoons clear runny honey**
- **2 tablespoons sunflower oil**
- **2 tablespoons light soy sauce**
- **Juice 1 lime**

**PEANUT RELISH**
- **75g unsalted peanuts, chopped**
- **1 shallot, chopped**
- **1-2 green chillies, deseeded, chopped**
- **2 cloves garlic, crushed**
- **½ cup chopped fresh basil and coriander leaves**
- **Juice and zest 1 lime**
- **2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger**
- **2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar**
- **2 tablespoons light soy sauce**
- **2 tablespoons sunflower oil**
- **1 teaspoon caster sugar**

Place fillet in a ceramic dish and add all the ingredients that are not going into the relish. Cover and marinate, turning occasionally, for 3-4 hours.

To make the relish, combine all ingredients in a bowl. Remove beef from marinade and season with salt. Cook on a grill rack over hot coals, turning every 5 minutes, until it’s done to your liking. Rest for 10 minutes, then slice and serve with relish.
GRILLED CORN COBS
GRILLED CORN COBS

SERVES 4

250g softened butter
2 tablespoons chopped thyme
Grated zest 1 lime
1 red chilli, deseeded, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, chopped
6 cobs corn, with husks

Mash butter, thyme, zest, chilli, and garlic. Season with salt. Pull down outer husks of each cob, strip away silk then smear 2 tablespoons of flavoured butter over each cob; fold husks back into place and tie with a piece of string.

Place corn in a large bowl of cold water for 30 minutes. Remove, wrap in foil and cook on a grill rack for 15 minutes, turning every 5 minutes. Remove foil and cook for a further 5 minutes. Serve with remaining flavoured butter.
POULTRY & MEAT

STEAK WITH VIETNAMESE ZUCCHINI SALAD
STEAK WITH VIETNAMESE ZUCCHINI SALAD

SERVES 2

Zucchini are plentiful in summer, and the Vietnamese-style dressing is great for all sorts of steamed vegetables or green salads. To make thin ribbons, use a mandoline or peeler.

2 ribeye or sirloin steaks
2 zucchini, sliced into ribbons
1 large carrot, sliced into ribbons
Coriander leaves, to garnish

FOR THE DRESSING
1 tablespoon caster sugar
⅓ cup boiling water
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
2 teaspoons sesame oil
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
Juice 1 lime
1 teaspoon sesame seeds

Cook steaks in a frying pan to your liking; set aside in a warm place for 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, put dressing ingredients in screw-top jar; shake until combined. Place zucchini and carrot ribbons into a bowl; pour over enough dressing to coat them. Slice steaks thickly and divide between two plates, pouring over any juices. Arrange zucchini and carrot on top; garnish with coriander.
Seafood: White Fish & Grapefruit Ceviche
WHITE FISH & GRAPEFRUIT CEVICHE

SERVES 2

Mexican food is fresh and easy, with plenty of full-on flavours. In ceviche, it’s the lime juice that “cooks” the fish; marinate it in the fridge for 30-60 minutes before serving.

170g firm white fish, cut into 1cm dice
1 ripe avocado, cut into 1cm dice
5 radishes, thinly sliced
4 spring onions, thinly sliced
1 stick celery, cut into 0.5cm dice
1 green chilli, thinly sliced
1 teaspoon fennel seeds, lightly toasted and crushed
⅓ cup chopped fresh coriander leaves, plus extra to finish
Grated zest 1 lime
Juice 2 limes
1 garlic clove, peeled and crushed
2 tablespoons olive oil
Flesh of ½ pink grapefruit, cut into 1cm dice
4 small slices sourdough bread, freshly toasted

Put all but last two ingredients in a large bowl and stir gently. Taste, season with plenty of salt and pepper, adding more lime juice if desired. Chill for up to 60 minutes.

Just before serving, fold through grapefruit. Sprinkle with extra coriander and serve with toast.
CALAMARI TWO WAYS
FRIED CALAMARI
SERVES 4 AS A STARTER, OR 2 AS A MAIN COURSE

These calamari dishes are quick, easy and definitely worth the effort. There is no need to batter calamari before deep-frying; a simple dusting of flour is perfect. The Thai-style version can also be cooked on a very hot barbecue.

4 medium-sized calamari, cleaned
3 tablespoons cornflour
3 tablespoons plain flour
1 tablespoon fine polenta
1 teaspoon sea salt
Sunflower oil, to cook
3 tablespoons roughly chopped flat-leaf parsley
1 small red chilli, deseeded, chopped
Lemon wedges, to serve

Lightly dry calamari with a little kitchen paper, leaving some moisture for the flour to adhere to. Slice tubes into rings. When ready to cook, combine flours, polenta and salt in a shallow dish. Season calamari with freshly ground black pepper.

Pour oil into a large, heavy-based saucepan or deep frying pan until one-third full. Place over medium-high heat until a pinch of flour sizzles when it hits the oil.

When ready to start cooking, dunk calamari in flour mixture and shake off excess. Fry in batches (to avoid overfilling the pan) for 1-2 minutes, until crisp and slightly golden, then drain on kitchen paper.

Sprinkle with salt, toss with parsley and chilli and serve with lemon wedges.
THAI STYLE GRILLED CALAMARI

SERVES 3-4

600g baby calamari, cleaned
2 tablespoons fish sauce
2 tablespoons sweet chilli sauce
1 teaspoon light soy sauce
1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
1 clove garlic, crushed
3 tablespoons fresh lime juice
Lime wedges, to serve
Baby salad leaves, to serve

Slice calamari open flat and cut into 3cm pieces, saving the tentacles. Combine fish sauce, chilli sauce, soy sauce, ginger, garlic and lime juice and place in a large ceramic or glass bowl. Add calamari and tentacles and mix well to coat. Marinate in refrigerator for about 1 hour.

Remove calamari and lightly dry with a little kitchen paper. Bring marinade to boil in a small saucepan and simmer gently for 2 minutes.

Preheat an oiled chargrill and cook calamari for 2 minutes, turning once; do this in batches if required. Serve with lime wedges, baby salad leaves and the heated marinade.
SEAFOOD: SNAPPER WITH CITRUS SALSA
SNAPPER WITH CITRUS SALSA

SERVES 4

This makes an interesting and delicious change from the classic fish with lemon combination. I have used plate-sized snapper, but you could use bream or a large (1.5kg) snapper. A large fish would take about 30 minutes to cook at the same temperature.

4 whole plate-size snapper
1 small bunch coriander, stalks trimmed, leaves reserved
Extra virgin olive oil

Ask your fishmonger to clean, scale and gut the fish, leaving their heads on. Fill the cavities of each fish with coriander stalks; season well, inside and out, with salt and pepper.

Brush each with olive oil. Wrap each in a greased sheet of foil (leaving space in the packages to allow the air to circulate). Make sure the seam of the parcel is to the side, so you can turn the fish upside down without juices leaking out.

This can be prepared ahead of time. When ready to cook, bake in a preheated 180°C (fan) oven for about 20 minutes, turning over after 15 minutes.

Serve with grapefruit and lime salsa.
GRAPeFRUIT & LIME SALSA

SERVES 4

1 pink/red flesh grapefruit
1 Lebanese cucumber, deseeded and finely diced
1 green chilli, finely chopped
20 cherry tomatoes, quartered
Juice and grated zest 1 lime
2 teaspoons freshly grated ginger
3-4 tablespoons olive oil
3 heaped tablespoons mango chutney
Reserved coriander leaves, chopped

Peel grapefruit, remove pith and cut flesh into 1.5cm dice (do this on a plate, saving any juice). Place cucumber, chilli, tomatoes, lime juice and zest, ginger, olive oil, chutney, grapefruit and its juice into a bowl and mix together.

Season with salt and pepper. Warm salsa gently in a saucepan, adding coriander immediately before serving with fish.
BAKED FISH WITH SUMMER VEGETABLES

SEAFOOD
BAKED FISH WITH SUMMER VEGETABLES

SERVES 4-6

This is a great all-in-one dish. I like to use snapper, but any large whole fish will work.

1.8-2kg whole snapper, cleaned, scaled and gutted
Extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
200g cherry tomatoes, halved
2 zucchini, sliced
1 red onion, sliced
1 fennel bulb, trimmed and sliced
2 red capsicums, diced
8 new potatoes, quartered
3 cloves garlic, chopped
3 sprigs thyme

Preheat oven to 200°C fan. Slash each side of the fish 3-4 times; place on a baking tray lined with baking paper.

Whisk 1 tablespoon olive oil with the vinegar and brush over fish, inside and out; season. Toss tomatoes, vegetables, garlic and thyme in 2 tablespoons olive oil and arrange around fish.

Bake for 20-25 minutes, until fish is cooked (when the flesh is opaque and flakes easily, it’s done). Serve with vegetables, any juices and a dollop of salsa verde.
SALSA VERDE

SERVES 2

4 tablespoons roughly chopped flat-leaf parsley leaves
1 tablespoon roughly chopped mint leaves
2 tablespoons roughly chopped basil leaves
2 tablespoons capers
2 anchovy fillets in oil, drained
1 clove garlic
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
Juice ½ lemon
½ cup extra virgin olive oil

Finely chop herbs, capers, anchovies and garlic together on a chopping board or whizz briefly in a food processor. Place in a bowl and stir in mustard, lemon juice and olive oil. Season well.

This can be made up to six hours ahead of time; stir well before serving.
MUSSELS WITH THAI SPICES

SEAFOOD
I love mussels; they are cheap, plentiful and quick to cook.

2 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
1 Asian shallot (or small onion), sliced
1 tablespoon grated fresh galangal or ginger
1 small chilli, de-seeded and chopped
2 stalks lemongrass
1 tablespoon palm sugar
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1kg mussels, beards removed, cleaned
2 fresh lime leaves
1 tablespoon fish sauce
1 ½ cups coconut milk
Juice 1 lime
Fresh coriander or mint leaves, to serve

Pound garlic, shallot, galangal, chilli, lemongrass and palm sugar with a mortar and pestle.

Heat oil in a wok over high heat and cook pounded mixture for 1-2 minutes. Add mussels, lime leaves, fish sauce and coconut milk. Mix well. Bring to boil and cook for 3-4 minutes, or until mussels have opened. Stir in lime juice and garnish with coriander or mint leaves.
SWEETS
PASSIONFRUIT PANNA COTTA
PASSIONFRUIT PANNA COTTA

SERVES 6

This is one of my favourite passionfruit desserts. I usually use powdered gelatine as leaf gelatine varies in strength.

600ml cream
375ml (1½ cups) milk
185ml (¾ cup) passionfruit pulp, strained
125g (½ cup) caster sugar
3 level teaspoons powdered gelatine
2 tablespoons boiling water

Place cream, milk, passionfruit pulp and sugar in medium saucepan and cook over low heat, stirring, until sugar has dissolved. Continue to cook, stirring often, for 10 minutes, making sure it doesn’t boil. Set aside.

Add gelatine to boiling water, stirring until dissolved; pour into warm cream mixture. Allow to cool for 10 minutes, then divide between six 375ml capacity moulds or glasses. Cover and chill for at least 3 hours, or until set.
LEMON & STRAWBERRY FOOL
LEMON & STRAWBERRY FOOL

SERVES 4

This is the perfect summer dessert. It’s simple to make, tastes delicious—and looks beautiful.

200g ripe strawberries
3 tablespoons icing sugar
300ml whipping cream
200ml Greek style yoghurt
250ml lemon curd
1 tablespoon chopped mint
Shortbread, to serve

Halve strawberries; place in a bowl. Sift over icing sugar and crush lightly with a fork.

In another bowl, whip cream until it forms soft peaks; carefully fold in yoghurt, lemon curd and mint. Spoon half the cream mixture into four glasses and top with half of the strawberries (and their juices). Top with remaining cream and strawberries; garnish with a few extra mint leaves and serve with shortbread.
RHUBARB TIRAMISU

SERVES 6

Rhubarb comes into its own in desserts, and gives the classic Italian tiramisu a colourful twist. This dish can be assembled ahead of time and chilled until ready to serve — perfect for entertaining.

6 stalks rhubarb, trimmed, washed and chopped
55g brown sugar
250g mascarpone
2 tablespoons icing sugar
1 tablespoon marsala wine
Grated zest and juice 1 orange
100ml cream, whipped
12 sponge finger biscuits
Grated white chocolate, to serve

Cook rhubarb and brown sugar in a saucepan over a low heat, covered, for 15 minutes, until very soft. Transfer to a container and chill.

Mix mascarpone, icing sugar, marsala and orange zest until smooth. Fold through whipped cream. Dip biscuits in orange juice two at a time. Break in half and place two halves in the base of six serving glasses. Top each with 2 tablespoons mascarpone mixture, 2 tablespoons rhubarb, another two biscuit halves and another tablespoon of mascarpone mixture. Top each with grated white chocolate before serving.
PASSIONFRUIT & LIME SPONGE

There is something wonderful about the taste of a ripe, purple-skinned passionfruit. It’s sweet yet slightly acidic, and full of flavour.

250g self-raising flour
½ teaspoon baking powder
250g unsalted butter, softened
250g caster sugar
Finely grated zest 1 lime
4 free-range eggs, beaten
Strained pulp 1 passionfruit

PASSIONFRUIT FILLING
Strained pulp 2-3 passionfruit
250ml cream or double cream
3 tablespoons caster sugar

Preheat oven to 170°C. Grease and line bases of two 20cm sandwich tins. Sift flour, baking powder and a pinch of salt into a large bowl. Add butter, sugar, zest, beaten eggs and passionfruit pulp (strain it in a sieve, using the back of a metal spoon to get all the juice out). Beat with a wooden spoon or electric beaters on low speed for 2 minutes or until combined; don’t overbeat. Spoon into tins and bake for about 20-25 minutes; a skewer inserted in the centre should come out clean. Cool in tins for 10 minutes, then turn out on to a wire rack to cool completely.

To make filling, strain passionfruit pulp into a bowl (returning a third of the seeds for some crunch, if desired) and add cream and sugar. Whisk until it forms soft peaks. Sandwich cakes together with filling. Dust with icing sugar and serve.
69 SWEETS
STRAWBERRY CRUMBLE CAKE
STRAWBERRY CRUMBLE CAKE

SERVES 10

Strawberries are at their best in spring and early summer.

220g soft butter
1 cup caster sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 medium free-range eggs
2 cups self-raising flour
¾ cup milk
Grated zest 1 small orange
200g strawberries, washed, hulled, halved

CRUMBLE TOPPING
½ cup plain flour
50g chilled butter, chopped
¼ cup firmly packed brown sugar
2 tablespoons flaked almonds

Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease and line a 20cm spring-form cake tin. Put all cake ingredients (except strawberries) and a pinch of salt in a large bowl; beat until just combined. Spoon batter into tin, smooth top, sprinkle with strawberries.

Make crumble by rubbing butter into flour until it resembles coarse breadcrumbs. Stir in sugar and almonds. Sprinkle on cake, pressing in lightly. Bake for 60-70 minutes or until skewer inserted in centre comes out clean. Cool in tin for about 10 minutes; turn out onto wire rack to cool completely. Dust with icing sugar to serve.
SWEETSPLUM & POLENTA CAKE
PLUM & POLENTA CAKE

SERVES 8

This gluten-free cake is slightly crumbly due to the lack of flour and best eaten the day after baking. You can use grated lemon zest instead of plums.

75g fine polenta (cornmeal)
150g almond meal
150g caster sugar
½ teaspoon gluten-free baking powder
½ teaspoon ground cardamom
Zest ½ unwaxed orange, finely grated
2 eggs
¾ cup (185ml) light olive oil
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 ripe plums, pitted and chopped
2 tablespoons flaked almonds

Preheat oven to 160°C fan; grease and line a medium loaf tin. In a bowl, combine polenta, almond meal, sugar, baking powder, cardamom and zest.

In a separate bowl, whisk together eggs, oil and vanilla extract; add to dry ingredients and combine. Fold in chopped plums. Pour mixture into cake tin and sprinkle with flaked almonds. Bake for 60 minutes until top is golden brown and skewer comes out clean (if the top browns too quickly, cover with foil). Dust with icing sugar and serve with yoghurt or cream.
COFFEE & PECAN CAKE
COFFEE & PECAN CAKE

SERVES 8-10

This easy, all-in-one cake is one of my most requested. The filling and topping is made with mascarpone, which is much less sweet than a classic buttercream. The pecans can be swapped with walnuts, if preferred.

220g unsalted butter, softened
220g caster sugar
220g self-raising flour, sifted
75g pecans, ground in a food processor
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 tablespoon instant coffee dissolved in 2 tablespoons hot water
4 free-range eggs, lightly beaten
12 pecan halves, to decorate

MASCARPONE CREAM

300g mascarpone
1 tablespoon instant coffee
3 tablespoons sifted icing sugar

Preheat oven to 160°C (fan). Grease two 20cm sandwich tins and line bases with greaseproof paper. Put all ingredients (except pecan halves) and a pinch of salt in a large bowl and beat with a wooden spoon or hand-held electric beaters until just combined and smooth. It’s important not to beat too much. Divide batter between tins, smooth tops with a spatula and bake for 20-25 minutes or until risen and golden. Turn out onto a wire rack to cool.

To make the mascarpone cream, dissolve coffee in 1-2 tablespoons of hot water. Whisk mascarpone, coffee and icing sugar until smooth. When cake is completely cold, spread half the mascarpone cream over one cake, sandwich them together, then spread the rest over the top using a palette knife, making a swirling pattern. Decorate with pecan halves.
75 SWEET SIMPLE CHERRY TART
SIMPLE CHERRY TART

SERVES 8

Cherries are one of summer’s delights, and perfect in this easy tart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>375g shortbread biscuits</th>
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<tr>
<td>100g butter, melted</td>
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</table>

FILLING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>250ml (1 cup) cream</th>
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<tr>
<td>½ cup caster sugar</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 teaspoon vanilla extract</td>
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<tr>
<td>100ml plain yoghurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250g pitted cherries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 tablespoons orange juice</td>
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Grease a 22cm loose-bottom tart tin. Pulse biscuits in a food processor, add butter and process until it just clumps together. Press mixture into base and sides of tin. Refrigerate for 60 minutes.

To make filling, whip cream, 1 tablespoon caster sugar and vanilla until soft peaks form. Stir in yoghurt. Spoon mixture into tin and sprinkle top with brown sugar. Leave in fridge for up to 3 hours (but at least 1 hour). Halve cherries and place in a saucepan with remaining caster sugar and orange juice; simmer for 5-7 minutes or until just softened, stirring to dissolve sugar. Chill until ready to serve. Just before serving, spoon cherries on top and drizzle with cooking juice.
CLASSIC LEMON TART

SERVES 8

I was reminded how delicious lemon tart is when a friend asked me to bring one to her party. Handle the pastry as little as possible, and chill it well before cooking.

250g plain flour
75g icing sugar, sifted, plus extra for dusting
120g chilled unsalted butter, diced
3 egg yolks
2 tablespoons water

FILLING
5 medium-sized organic eggs
150g caster sugar
120ml (½ cup) lemon juice
2 tablespoons finely grated lemon zest
150ml double cream

For the pastry, put flour, sugar and a pinch of salt in a food processor and pulse briefly. Add butter; pulse until combined. With the motor running, add yolks and water and mix until it just comes together into a dough. Remove, shape into a disc (don’t knead or work it), cover in plastic wrap and chill for an hour, until pliable but not sticky to the touch. Preheat oven to 190°C. Roll out pastry until about 4-5mm thick, and put into a greased 24cm fluted tart tin; trim, leaving about 1cm of pastry above the rim. Refrigerate until cold. Line pastry case with greaseproof paper and baking beans and bake for about 15 minutes, until golden. Remove beans and paper, brush base with egg white and put back in oven for another 8 minutes. Trim pastry to rim.

For the filling, put all ingredients into large bowl and whisk until combined. Set it aside to settle for an hour or so in the fridge. Preheat oven again to 140°C. Pour mixture into pastry case, place on a baking tray and bake for 25-35 minutes, or until just set. Remove from oven and leave to cool for at least 1 hour, then chill until needed. Dust with icing sugar to serve.
**BEST-EVER CHEESECAKE**

**SERVES 8**

The short cooking time results in a pale, light and softly set centre. This cheesecake needs to be chilled well before serving, so try to make it the day before. Serve with fresh berries or other ripe fruit.

- 160g digestive plain sweet biscuits
- 90g butter, melted
- 900g cream cheese, softened at room temperature
- 200g caster sugar
- 2 tablespoons plain flour
- 3 large free-range eggs, plus 1 yolk
- 200ml sour cream
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice

**TOPPING**
- 200ml sour cream
- 1 tablespoon caster sugar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Grease a 23cm springform tin and line base with baking paper. Place biscuits and melted butter in a food processor and pulse until mixture comes together. Press mixture into base of tin. Refrigerate for 30 minutes, then bake in a preheated 170°C fan-forced oven for 12 minutes. Allow to cool. Increase oven temperature to 190°C (fan-forced). Place cream cheese, sugar and flour in a benchtop electric mixer and beat until creamy and well combined. Add eggs and extra yolk one at a time, then beat in sour cream, vanilla, lemon zest and juice. Beat for 2-3 minutes or until mixture is light and fluffy. Spoon onto cheesecake base and smooth top.

Bake for 10 minutes, then reduce oven to 110°C and bake for a further 25 minutes or until just set in middle. Turn off oven and allow cheesecake to cool in oven. When cool, combine topping ingredients and spread over top of cheesecake. Refrigerate for at least 6 hours before serving.
NO-CHURN PLUM ICE CREAM
NO-CHURN PLUM ICE CREAM

SERVES 6-8

Make the most of the last plums of the season. Ripe, dark ones add good colour.

450g ripe plums, stoned and chopped
300g caster sugar
100ml water
3 large eggs
300ml cream

Line a 20cm x 30cm tin with plastic wrap. Simmer plums, 110g of sugar and 2 tablespoons water gently for 10 minutes. Cool, then blitz with a hand blender. Pass through a sieve. Bring remaining sugar and water to boil, stirring to dissolve sugar. Boil for 3 minutes.

Meanwhile, beat eggs and a pinch of salt with an electric mixer until frothy. Slowly pour hot sugar syrup into egg mixture; continue to beat for 3-4 minutes, or until mixture is thick. Whip cream until soft peaks form; fold whipped cream into egg mixture. Swirl through plum puree. Pour into tin and freeze until set.
PLUM & ALMOND SLICE

MAKES 20

250g butter, chilled
1 cup caster sugar
300g ground almonds
1 cup plain flour, plus extra
2 free-range eggs
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon ground ginger
8 plums, stoned and cut into sixths
50g flaked almonds
Raw sugar

Heat oven to 160°C. Grease and line a 20cm x 30cm slice tin. Pulse butter, sugar and ground almonds in a food processor until combined. Reserve half the mix and set aside. Add flour to remaining mixture in processor and pulse until it comes together. Tip into tin and press into base. Bake for 15-20 minutes, until golden. Leave to cool.

For filling, return reserved mixture to processor. Add eggs, 1 heaped tablespoon flour, baking powder and ginger; pulse until combined. Spread over base, top with plums and bake for 20 minutes. Sprinkle with flaked almonds and a little raw sugar. Cook for another 25-35 minutes or until golden. Leave to cool in tin before slicing.
SWEETS

CHERRY, PISTACHIO & WHITE CHOCOLATE FRiANDS
CHERRY, PISTACHIO & WHITE CHOCOLATE FRIANDS

MAKES 8

Late summer is the end of the cherry season, and a great time for baking and preserving.

100g unsalted pistachios
125g icing sugar, sifted
50g plain flour, sifted
2 teaspoons finely grated lemon zest
100g unsalted butter
100g white chocolate, chopped
5 egg whites
12 cherries, pitted and halved

Lightly grease an eight-hole friand or muffin tin or line with baking paper. In a food processor, blitz pistachios and half the icing sugar until nuts are finely ground. Tip into mixing bowl with remaining icing sugar, flour and zest.

In a saucepan, melt butter and chocolate together. Whisk egg whites until foamy; add to dry ingredients. Allow chocolate mix to cool slightly; add to dry ingredients; mix until smooth. Divide mixture among friand holes; place three cherry halves on each. Sprinkle with extra chopped pistachios, if desired. Bake in a preheated 170°C oven for 18-20 minutes, or until firm. Allow to cool for 5 minutes; remove to a wire rack to cool completely.
BOOZY CHERRIES

Don’t let excess cherries go to waste – preserve them. This is good served chilled with vanilla ice cream and will keep for up to two months in the refrigerator.

1½ cups brandy or bourbon
¾ cup sugar
½ cup orange juice
Strip orange peel
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
500g cherries, pitted

Combine brandy, sugar, orange juice and peel in saucepan. Bring to gentle simmer, stirring to dissolve sugar; reduce slightly. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla.

Fill large sterilised jar with cherries; pour over warm mixture, seal. Allow contents to cool to room temperature; transfer to fridge. Chill for at least three days before using.
ALMOND & LEMON BISCOTTINI

MAKES ABOUT 20

These Italian-style biscuits make ideal gifts

2 egg whites  
180g caster sugar  
250g ground almonds  
1 tablespoon runny honey  
1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest  
½ cup icing sugar, sifted

ICING  
1 cup icing sugar, sifted  
2 tablespoons lemon juice

Whisk egg whites with electric beater until frothy; add sugar and whisk for 2-3 minutes until thick. Add ground almonds, honey and lemon zest; beat until combined. Place icing sugar in a bowl; spoon a walnut-size piece of dough into it. Shape into a ball; toss to coat with sugar. Transfer to a lined baking tray. Repeat with remaining dough; leave to sit for 15 minutes.

Bake in preheated 200°C (180°C fan) oven for 15-20 minutes until golden and cracked. Allow to cool. Mix icing ingredients and drizzle over biscuits.
RICOTTA HOTCAKES
WITH STRAWBERRIES & PASSIONFRUIT SYRUP

MAKES ABOUT 18

They’re on the menu in trendy cafes but ricotta pancakes are also easy to whip up at home. They work better with full-fat ricotta.

**STRAWBERRY SYRUP**
- 1 punnet strawberries
- ¾ cup caster sugar
- ½ cup water
- 4 passionfruit
- ¼ cup freshly squeezed orange juice

**HOTCAKES**
- 250g ricotta
- ½ cup milk
- 2 large eggs (separated)
- ¾ cup plain flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- Finely grated zest ½ lemon
- Sunflower oil

For the syrup, wash, hull and halve strawberries (cut large ones into quarters) and place in heatproof bowl. Place sugar and water in a small saucepan over low heat. Cook, stirring until sugar dissolves, then increase the heat a little. Simmer for 3 minutes. Remove from heat and stir through passionfruit pulp and orange juice. Cool for 10 minutes; pour over the strawberries.

For the hotcakes, combine ricotta, milk and egg yolks in a bowl. Stir in flour, baking powder, zest and a pinch of salt and gently whisk to make a smooth batter. Beat egg whites until they become frothy and foamy; fold into ricotta mixture. Heat about 1 tablespoon oil in a large frying pan and drop in heaped tablespoons of batter. Cook pancakes for about 1 minute until golden; flip and cook for another minute. Cover with a tea towel and keep in a warm place while making the rest of the hotcakes. Serve with strawberries and syrup.
ROSE & STRAWBERRY MERINGUES
ROSE & STRAWBERRY MERINGUES

SERVES 4

A heavy Christmas pud can be the last thing you fancy after a big lunch on a hot day. This festive alternative can be made ahead of time, and just needs assembling on the day.

3 large egg whites
175g caster sugar
1 teaspoon rose water
12 ripe strawberries, chopped
300ml whipping cream
2 extra tablespoons caster sugar

Preheat oven to 150°C. Line 2 baking sheets with baking paper. Draw six 5-6cm circles on each sheet. Place egg whites and a pinch of salt in a clean, dry bowl. Beat with electric mixer until soft peaks form. Add caster sugar, a tablespoon at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat until mixture is stiff and glossy. Fold in rose water. Pipe 12 circles of meringue on the prepared baking sheets. Cook for about 45-55 minutes (alternating the trays), or until crisp on the outside. Turn off the oven and allow to cool in the oven with the door ajar.

To serve, place chopped strawberries in a bowl with any juice. Whisk cream and caster sugar until it forms very soft peaks then fold through chopped strawberries and juice. Place a teaspoonful of the cream mixture onto each of four plates and top with a meringue (the cream stops it slipping off the plate). Top each with two layers of cream and meringue.
CHRISTMAS TRIFLE
CHRISTMAS TRifle

SERVES 8

My one constant at Christmas is a trifle. I start the day before by soaking the cake and making the zabaglione, which replaces custard. I add the syllabub (a fortified whipped cream) a few hours before serving.

**FOR THE ZABAGLIONE**
- 250g sponge cake (store bought is fine)
- ½ cup caster sugar
- ½ cup raspberry jam
- 1½ cup raspberry jam
- 2 tablespoons sweet sherry
- 2 tablespoons sweet sherry
- 300g fresh raspberries
- 300g fresh raspberries
- Toasted flaked almonds, to serve
- Toasted flaked almonds, to serve

**FOR THE SYLLABUB**
- 12 large egg yolks
- Grated zest of ½ lemon
- 2-3 tablespoons caster sugar
- 100ml sweet white wine
- 300ml cream
- ¾ cup double cream
- ¾ cup double cream

Cut cake into 2cm cubes and arrange over base of large glass trifle bowl. Spread cake with jam, sprinkle with sherry and top with raspberries. Cover with plastic wrap and chill well.

For the zabaglione, place egg yolks, sugar, grated rind and juice in large bowl over pan of just-simmering water (make sure base of bowl doesn’t touch water or egg mixture will get too hot). Using electric hand beater, whisk mixture for about 8-10 minutes until it triples in volume and loosely holds its shape. Lift off bowl and place in sink filled with about 7cm cold water. Whisk for 3-4 minutes to cool down zabaglione. Whisk cream to floppy peaks and fold into cooled zabaglione. Spoon zabaglione over fruit and chill.

To finish the trifle, make syllabub cream by mixing together lemon zest, sugar and wine; leave for 30 minutes. Strain through fine sieve into large bowl; add cream, whisk until mixture just holds its shape. Carefully spread cream over surface of trifle. Chill for 1-2 hours. Before serving, decorate with toasted flaked almonds.
FROSTED STRAWBERRY CAKE
FROSTED STRAWBERRY CAKE

SERVES 8

This festive cake is one of the simplest I know—everything goes in the bowl and you mix it all together. I like to cover the cake with buttercream icing, but you can dust it with icing sugar if you prefer.

CAKE
250g unsalted butter, softened
250g (1 cup) caster sugar
4 free-range eggs, lightly beaten
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
250g self-raising flour, sifted
Pinch salt
½ teaspoon baking powder
2 tablespoons ground almonds

SYRUP
Juice and zest 1 large orange
100g caster sugar
2 tablespoons orange liqueur

FILLING
300ml double cream
100ml ready-made custard
2 tablespoons icing sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
150g strawberries, hulled
½ cup strawberry jam

BUTTERCREAM ICING
150g butter
350g icing sugar
1-2 tablespoons milk
Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease and line two 18cm round cake tins. Put all cake ingredients in a large bowl and beat until just combined. Divide between tins and bake for 20-30 minutes or until risen, golden and firm to the touch. Cool in tins for 5 minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack to cool completely.

To make syrup, put juice, zest and sugar in a pan and bring to the boil, stirring; simmer for 2 minutes, remove from heat and stir in liqueur. Using a large knife, cut each cake in half horizontally. Brush cut sides with plenty of syrup.

When ready to assemble, whisk cream, custard, icing sugar and vanilla extract until just firm; chop strawberries and fold through. Place one layer of sponge on a serving plate and spread with some strawberry jam then a third of the cream filling. Repeat, finishing with a sponge layer (cut side down).

To make buttercream, beat butter until soft. Add half the icing sugar and beat until smooth. Add remaining icing sugar and one tablespoon of milk and beat until creamy and smooth. Beat in extra milk, if necessary, to loosen it up.

Spread over cake.
SLUSHIES

MAKES 2-3

These cool drinks are perfect on a hot summer day. Freeze the fruit first, then whizz up in a blender. I avoid adding sugar as ripe fruit should be sweet enough. Make up your own in-season combinations. If the mood takes you, add a dash of vodka, white rum or gin.

BERRY & YOGHURT SLUSHIE

2 cups berries, frozen
1 banana, peeled, sliced and frozen
2 teaspoons maple syrup
½ cup yoghurt

Add frozen berries, frozen banana slices, syrup, yoghurt and juice to blender. Whizz until smooth. Add more juice if needed to keep the mixture flowing. Divide between serving glasses or bowls. Serve immediately.

MANGO & PINEAPPLE SLUSHIE

1 cup diced mango, frozen
1 cup diced pineapple, frozen
½ cup orange juice

Place frozen fruit and juice in a blender and whizz until smooth. Divide between serving two glasses or bowls. Serve immediately.

WATERMELON, LIME & MINT

2 cups diced watermelon, frozen
Juice 1 fresh lime
2 teaspoons chopped fresh mint
100ml cranberry juice

Place all ingredients in a blender and whizz until smooth. Divide between serving two glasses or bowls. Serve immediately.
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