

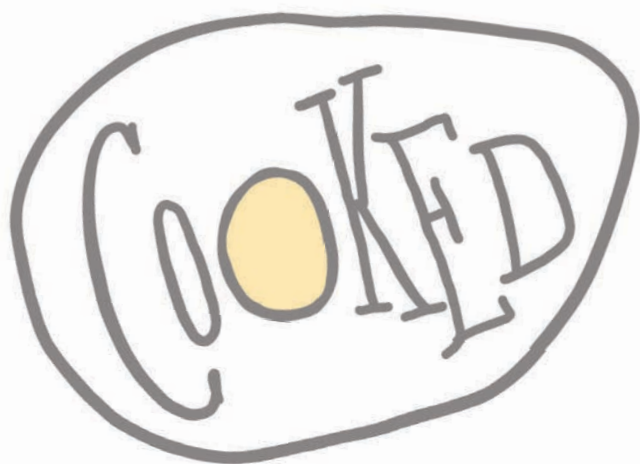
COOKED

culinary

adventures

2020 - 2021







From our Beautiful Square [26 June – 4 September 2021] explores themes of interiority and isolation - feelings which became familiar to many of us during the COVID-19 lockdown.

As part of a curatorial placement with Gus Fisher Gallery, we spent a long time thinking about other ways we could share our lockdown experiences with one another. One way or another this would always turn into a conversation about food. Thus, COOKED was born.

COOKED is a collection of experiences sent in by people across New Zealand who used food as an outlet or source of comfort during lockdown. From elaborate kitchen masterpieces to easy last minute meals, each recipe tells a story about how food made lockdown seem a little less cooked.

Thank you to Linda Tyler, Robbie Handcock and the Gus Fisher Gallery team for this opportunity, and to all of those whose submissions made this project a reality.

-Shania Pablo, Chani Balmer, Reah Somerville & Anneka Scholtz x





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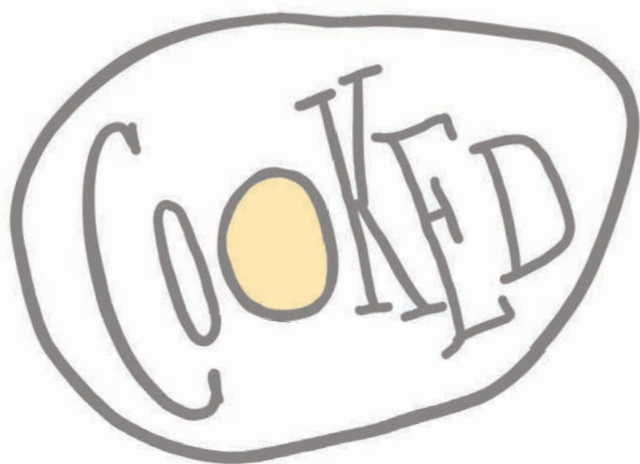
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Greatest Hits

*Well-known kitchen classics,
made in lockdown and loved
by all!*



Super Easy Soft Pretzels

A Recipe from *Sally's Baking Addiction*

Ingredients:

1.5 cups warm water
2.25 teaspoon instant yeast
1 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon brown sugar
3.75-4 cups flour & more for bench
course sea salt (sprinkle)
1 tablespoon butter, melted

For the water bath:
0.25 cups baking soda
4.5 cups water

Recipe:

1. In large bowl, whisk yeast into warm water, leave for about 5/10 mins. Whisk in salt, brown sugar, melted butter. Then add the 3 cups flour, 1 at a time. Mix until dough is thick and then add 3/4 cup flour until it stops being sticky (add 1/4 - 1/2 more if needed)
2. Turn dough onto floured bench & knead for 3 mins, shape into a ball (this is your dough baby - tuck it in!).
Cover with towel & rest for 10 mins
3. Boil water & add baking soda (it fizzes, v hard to clean so wipe spills straight away), preheat oven to 200°C & line 2 trays w/ baking paper
4. Cut dough into 12 equal pieces, roll each into approx. 20 inch rope & shape into pretzel (see pics online for help)
5. Drop 1-2 pretzels in boiling baking soda water for 20-30 seconds MAX (otherwise tastes like metal). Lift with slotted spoon, drain, put onto tray & sprinkle salt
6. Bake 12-15 mins/til golden - eat immediately!!



From baking a lot of different types of doughs, mostly pizza doughs, I now know that the little bit of melted butter in this one makes it really soft and pliable - so the kneading process is made super easy for a beginner. I wouldn't recommend leaving them for more than a day because they kinda get soggy, but in my experience they don't last much longer than that anyway!

Making various doughs was my main COVID coping mechanism. All my flatmates left to other regions of the country, and I would bake during the day on my own, waiting for my essential worker boyfriend to return home and share the latest creation with him. It's funny that I've come out the other end with a new skill, but at the time it was the long waiting periods for rising and tending to the doughs that kept me busy all day.

Tasmin's

Harvey Wallbanger

Ingredients:

15ml vodka

30ml Vanilla Galliano

Orange juice (to taste)

Ice if you like it

"The Harvey Wallbanger cocktail is apparently one that goes back decades, except I haven't yet met anyone in my generation who knows what it is."

Method:

Pour everything into a glass - being as generous as you like, stir, and drink outside (but still in the confines of your bubble) or on the couch in front of a movie, if its one of those lockdown days.

I did lockdown at home with my parents and siblings, and to try and keep our spirits up - in more ways than one - we decided to do tri-weekly "cocktail hours".

In real life we are a hospitality family and seeing as the Hotel was closed over lockdown I didn't have much else to do other than perfect my drink-making skills anyway.

I had wanted to do something with vodka and orange juice seeing as I'm a bit basic and had limited resources, and luckily mum has awful memories of drinking too many of these in her youth to forget the recipe. Originally there is meant to be more vodka than Galliano but I prefer the sweeter vanilla flavour to the burning, so changed the recipe. In light of that, it is not one set in stone and I would seriously recommend forming your own perfect ratios to suit your drinking style... they all end up tasting the same after a few anyway.

Lockdown was quite dull for me. I had nothing to do academically as I was on a gap year, and was also not able to work in level 4. It was made easier by the fact that Lake Brunner is a great spot to be locked down in and was a good chance for the family to bond.

Experimenting with drink creations and getting my family to try them kept me occupied and it sort of felt like a long (restrictive) holiday in the end.

In saying that, I was definitely glad to be back into the swing of life when it was over, although I do still make Harvey Wallbanger's every so often.

Mark's *Funky Short Black*

Using the Bialetti Mini Express 2, hand grind your favourite roast coffee beans.

Meanwhile boil a jug, then pour the hot water into the bottom half and put it on the gas.

Have a bowl of cold water ready.

When the coffee is almost done pouring into the cups, remove and place in bowl of cold water just as it begins to spit.

Enjoy!



"I'm a total coffee nerd."

"We tried out way too many bread recipes and worked our way through a number of cook books while holding regular 'wine at five' with cheese sessions and eating our way through kilos of the stuff."

OG Mini Cookies



24-26 Mini cookies

Preheat to 180°C

Prep: 1hr 10min

Bake: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

250g Olivani

1 cup Brown Sugar

1/2 cup White Sugar

9 tsp Aquafaba

1 tsp Vanilla Extract OR 2 tsp

Vanilla Essence

3 to 3&1/2 cup Flour

1/2 tsp Baking Soda

1/2 tsp Baking Powder

1/2 tsp Cinnamon

1/2 tsp Sea Salt

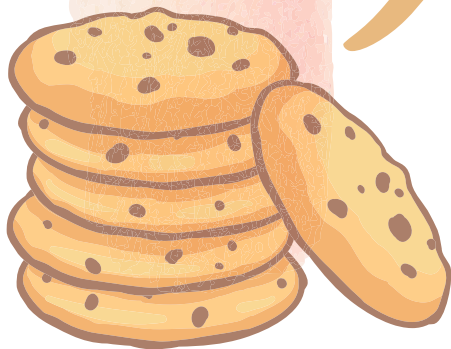
250g Whittaker's Dark Block

100g Nirwana Rice Milk
Chocolate

METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 180°C and prepare 1 or more baking tray/s with your cookie sheet or baking paper.
2. Using a hand mixer or paddle attachment on a mixer, cream the butter and sugars together until the sugar is dissolved but do not over whip because we don't want bread-y cookies.
3. Add your vanilla and aquafaba to the wet mix and slowly mix in until just combined.
4. Sift in all the dry ingredients straight into the same bowl, along with the salt. Mix together to form your cookie dough base.
5. Chop your chocolate (you can alt. for a dairy free baking chocolate/choc chips) in whichever way you desire and add into your cookie dough until the chocolate bits are incorporated throughout your cookie dough base.
6. Cover your complete cookie dough (you can totally eat this as is) in the mixing bowl with a lid/tea towel and chill for at least 1 hour in the fridge.
7. When chilled, pull the bowl out and prepare to portion! This batch makes at least 24 mini cookies using a small ice cream scoop - you can use this method or you can portion the cookie dough by hand for larger cookies and adjust the cooking time.
8. Bake the mini cookies for 15 minutes and allow to cool for at least 15 minutes before eating.

Enjoy!



Grace's

Monstrous Marzipan Kūmara Cake

Ingredients:

1 cup cooked orange kūmara
1 cup self raising flour
1/2 cup cocoa powder
1/4 tsp salt
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
3 eggs
1/2 cup olive oil
1/2 cup maple syrup
Chocolate
Marzipan
Food colouring

The cake:

Cooking the kūmara:

Preheat the oven to 180° fan bake.
Bake the kūmara for 30ish mins, or
cube and boil until cooked (12-
20mins). Once cooked, mash it and
leave to cool.

In a medium bowl, combine the flour,
salt, baking soda and coca powder.

Mix the kūmara with the eggs and
other wet ingredients (oil, vanilla,
maple syrup)

Add the juicy kūmara combo to the
dry ingredients and mix it all together.

Spoon into a greased/lined cake tin
and cook for 18 mins.

The icing:

Melt some leftover Easter chocolate
for icing

Boil water in a saucepan

Place a bowl to act as a lid of the
saucepan so it catches steam

Stir chocolate in bowl until melted
pour onto cake

The marzipan toppings:

Roll out and separate your marzipan
into bits

On a small dish, put a few drops of
food colouring (different fruit
colours).

Dip the clumps of marzipan into food
colouring and shape as desired, eg.
dip a clump into yellow, then a tiny
bit of red, roll into a sphere and you
have an orange!

Arrange on top of delicious chocolate
monstrosity



"Enjoy cake with loved
ones and/or yourself."



"This delightfully dense cake was made by my family and I during Easter of the first 2020 covid lockdown. I had been on the opposite side of the world, but flew back to Aotearoa just before the lockdown was announced. After 14 days of self isolating at home, I was so happy to reunite with my family. Lockdown was a strange time because we were all back under one roof, engaging in funny old family traditions. Mum insisted we make a marzipan fruit cake for Easter and my sister and I helped her shape the wobbly fruits for the top. I love that our final creation was a bit lopsided. It reflected the time - things not quite turning out as expected, but being lucky enough to make the most of it."

Mark's

Friday night Za



THE DOUGH

Place 3 cups of '0' or '00' flour into a wooden bowl*

Add a large pinch of sea salt flakes and mix gently.

Warm a saucepan with 1 and a 1/2 cups of water remove from heat source, swirl you finger in water to ensure it's only warm.

Add 1 tablespoon of dried active yeast and 1 teaspoon of sugar and swirl

Place lid on and wait for it to rise.

Make a space in the centre of the flour and add the yeast.

Fold thoroughly, it will be sticky at this stage.

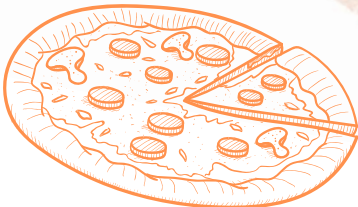
Add around 3-4 table spoons of olive oil and continue folding.

Leave to rise in a warm area.

Seperate into three equal sections.

You can use straight away or put in fridge or freezer. If you store it make sure the container has room for it to rise a little further (the dough is better after a day in the fridge!)

*if you can't find 0 or 00 flour you can use stone ground standard flour



THE REST

Preheat oven to near-maximum on bake

If you're using a metal tray; place your pizza base on cold tray.**

Add about one cup passata sauce to centre of base - include chopped/crushed garlic, fresh or dried oregano / Italian herbs / chilli.

Spread the sauce with the back of a ladle but keep away from the edges of base, leave about 1-1.5cm free

Add cheese; (I've been enjoying hand sliced havarti but you can use mozzarella, pizzarella, edam or whatever you like. Hand slicing will produce uneven chunks of melted cheese which is a nice touch)

Add toppings. (I've been using chargrilled red peppers and black olives with anchovies)

Place in oven for about 15-20 mins until edges of base are light brown

Remove, slice and serve

**if you're using a pizza stone it will need to be placed in the oven while pre-heating but you'll need to transfer your pizza to the stone by sliding it off whatever surface you've prepared it on OR taking the hot stone out to quickly place the base on it and prepare the sauce and toppings before placing it back in - you may need to experiment with your baking time as well to get the underside of the base cooked to your liking.

Passed Down

Recipes borrowed
and recipes shared.
Keeping connections
close even while
apart.

ALEX'S NEWSPAPER WRAPPED FISH

A great way of cooking over a fire or barbecue. The fish steams in its wet parcel, so it stays moist. You won't get crisp skin, but you do get lovely, tender flesh. Serves two to four.

Ingredients:

2 black bream (or grey mullet or trout), cleaned

A few bay leaves and thyme sprigs

A few knobs of butter

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 lemon, plus wedges for serving

Lay each fish on some newspaper (three sheets if it's a tabloid, two for a broadsheet) with a bay leaf and a thyme sprig both in the belly and tucked underneath. Put a few scraps of butter on top of and inside the fish, season with salt, pepper and a squeeze of lemon, then wrap it up so you have a snug parcel. Soak the parcels in water until wet through.

It's important that the barbecue coals or embers of the fire are fiercely hot with plenty of burn time left, and that the grill over the barbecue has had time to heat up, too. Cook the parcels for 15 minutes, until the paper is charred and starting to burst into flames (if it catches fire sooner than you'd like, sprinkle with water). Unwrap carefully, trying to prevent newspaper ash falling on the fish flesh. Serve with lemon wedges.

This recipe is from Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall of River Cottage fame.

I grew up in a household full of cookbooks and my Dad especially was in love with anything River Cottage. One of my most prized possessions (which I took with me when I moved out of home) is the "River Cottage Family Cookbook", which is essentially a children's cookbook that I've carried on using as an adult. This recipe is a variation on the "Fish in tin-foil" recipe in that book.

Cooking during lockdown was a huge part of how I got through things, along with lots of cycling.

I really built a lot more focus on eating and cooking nice food (instead of my usual utilitarian approach, birthed out of working an office job I commute to).

The cooking and eating of food became more significant for me. Given how long one had to queue up for the supermarket during lockdown, you really had to earn your food. During the second lockdown I had access to a charcoal barbeque which really expanded my ability to cook smokey food - of which this recipe is definitely an example of. I think taking the time to cook outside added an element of enjoyment which wasn't really there during the first lockdown heading into winter, but cooking over coals on my deck, with the optimism of heading into spring, provided a degree of uplift.



Katherine's

My "Mother-in-law's breadmaker recipe.

Total winner:"

Potato Bread & Bread Rolls

Ingredients:

1 & 3/4 cups warm
water

3 Tbsp Rice Bran Oil
3 cups flour

1 cup instant potato
flakes

1 Tbsp sugar

1 & 1/2 tsp salt

3 tsp yeast



*"This is how I rolled
during lockdown."*

Ingredients:

250ml water

50g melted Butter

3 cups flour

2 Tbsp Milk Powder

1 & 1/2 tsp sugar

1 tsp salt

1 & 1/2 tsp yeast

Measure ingredients and put in breadmaker tin, set to dough. When finished remove from breadmaker and form into an "O" shaped loaf. Leave to rise until almost doubled in size.

Spray the loaf with some water and sprinkle with flour. Cut a checkerboard pattern into the top.

Bake at 225°C for 20-30 minutes.

Remove from oven and leave to cool.

Serve when cold.

Measure ingredients and put in breadmaker tin, set to dough. When finished remove from breadmaker and form into buns.

Place on a tray and leave in a warm place for about an hour.

Bake at 220°C for 5 minutes. Lower temp to 200°C and bake for a further 10 minutes. (or 5 if the rolls are small)

Wrap them in a damp tea towel as soon as they come out of the oven to keep them soft.

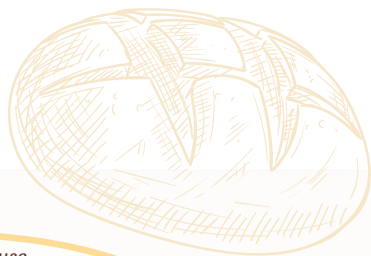
*My friends would "never
speak to me again if I didn't
share. I even did a
contactless delivery during
lockdown."*



COBB LOAF

Yum!

(For 1 loaf)



This recipe is super easy to make because

all you need to do is throw everything in a pot/pan!

*You can add more cheese/cream cheese if you're a cheese lover like me hehe.
There's not much of a story behind my recipe, besides the fact I'm horrendous at cooking
and this dish makes me look like I know what I'm doing in the kitchen LOL.
The recipe is originally from a friend of mine who had this as a snack at her
party and although I was very drunk that night, the next day, all I could
remember was the Cobb loaf...*

*I've made it for my family and they also love it, they're usually quite
harsh with their food critique so it really must be good!*

INGREDIENTS

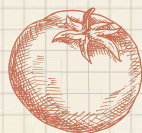
1/2 an onion (diced)
1 cup of mayo
1 cup of cheese
1 cup of cream cheese
1/2 bag frozen
spinach (or full bag
fresh)
salt + pepper

1. Cut the top of the loaf off and hollow out the inside. Save the inside pieces to toast later.
2. Mix all the other ingredients in a pot or pan on a low heat until all the cheese is melted and everything is mixed niceley. (If using frozen spinach, start with that)
3. While the filling is coming together, toast the loaf + bread inners in the oven. (You can also cut up the loaf's lid to toast)
4. Season the filling with salt and peper. Once all is cooked and mixed, pour it into the loaf.
5. Serve with the toasted bread bits and enjoy!

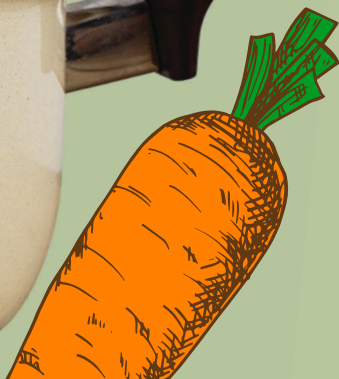
(Cheese and cream
cheese are optional!)

*"The lockdown was pretty difficult. Thankfully I lived with my
Auntie at the time who was a caterer so she made lots of yummy
meals. I didn't cook much besides simple eggs on toast etc. but
with this Cobb loaf recipe, I'll be sorted in the next lockdown if
there ever is one!"*

comfort food



It doesn't
take being a good
cook to know
that food is
all about sparking joy.



LOCKDOWN DEPRESSION MEAL:



Grated carrot on
un-toasted bread.

Raw capsicum.
Fried egg and Sriracha
on top.

"The thinking behind this was: "I just have to cover my basic nutritional values." Toast = carbs, two types of veges, and eggs = protein.

Honestly not terrible but not great either. A solid 4/10... only because of the Sriracha.

It was good for me to remember to cook meals to have at least a little structure in my day; so in that sense it did help! But cooking is not my creative outlet of choice [quite obviously]!"

Anneka's

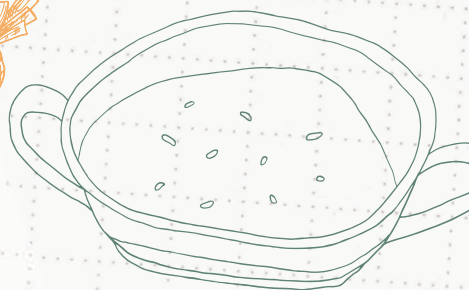
pity party lentil soup

Ingredients:

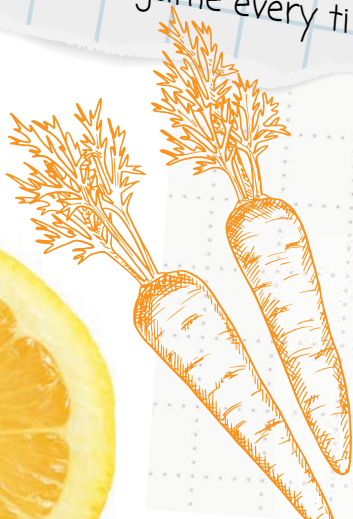
Lentils (brown or red) - 1
can or approx. 1 cup dried
Olive oil
Garlic
Onion (1 large)
Carrots - 2 to 3 larger
carrots
Ground cumin (you can also
add ground coriander and
tumeric)
Vege stock/broth
Fresh lemon - the best part!
Salt & pepper
Fresh coriander or parsley
to serve (optional)

Method:

Roughly chop the onion and carrot, and chuck them in a large pot with a large glug of olive oil and some garlic, until they begin to soften. Add a teaspoon or two of ground cumin (this is one of the main flavours so you can add more later to taste) and let everything simmer for a minute or two. Next, add the stock (I generally add around 3-4 cups) and lentils, and let everything simmer for around 20-24 mins. Add some salt & pepper to taste. Finally, just before serving add a generous amount of lemon juice - this adds an amazing bright & fresh taste. Garnish with fresh herbs (optional) and serve with some crusty bread or toast. You can blend the soup if you prefer a smoother texture, but I love the chunky texture without it. Enjoy cosied up with a blanket and your favourite Netflix drama!



Unfortunately I am That Girl™ who always talks about their semester abroad in Europe. So naturally, the only way to comfort myself whilst stuck at home was to make myself EVEN MORE depressed and torture myself with my photos, videos and Instagram memories from my 2019 exchange in Amsterdam. One day, from my sad little lockdown pity party, I remembered how one of my best friends from exchange, Tasia, told me that her go-to comfort meal in Amsterdam when she was particularly missing home was red lentil soup. I asked her for the recipe and it quickly became my favourite lockdown comfort-meal. These days I still make it every time I'm feeling down or unwell, and it always manages to cheer me up! I like to make a big pot so it lasts for a couple of meals, and I don't really follow a specific recipe anymore so its a bit of an improv-game every time I make it!



Caitlin's

90 Second Self-Saucing Chocolate Pudding in a Bowl

Instructions:

First, grab a bowl. (Make sure it is on the bigger side because this pudding rises in the microwave and you need the extra room for ice cream.)

In the bowl, add the flour, white sugar, 2 tablespoons of cocoa powder and baking powder. Mix well with a fork.

Add the milk, oil and vanilla essence and mix until combined, make sure there are no dry pockets of flour.

Evenly distribute the brown sugar and 2 teaspoons of cocoa powder over the top and evenly pour the boiling hot water over the top.

Cook the pudding in the microwave for 1 1/2 minutes.

Top with any ice cream, but my favourite to use for this pudding is wildberry ambrosia ice cream by Much Moore :)

Ingredients:

3 Tbsp white flour
3 Tbsp white sugar
1 1/2 Tbsp brown sugar
2 Tbsp cocoa powder
1/2 tsp baking powder
2 1/2 Tbsp oil
3 1/2 Tbsp milk
1/2 tsp vanilla essence
2 tsp cocoa powder
3-4 Tbsp boiling hot water



"This recipe helped me through the first lockdown of 2020. I was really struggling with my mental health, uni was difficult to do online, some days I couldn't get myself out of bed. At night time after my family had gone to bed I would go downstairs and make this pudding to help me feel better, plus it tastes amazing!"

I love chocolate self saucing pudding!! This recipe is super easy and super quick to make, especially when you time the jug to go off right when you finish mixing the batter together like I did! "

"Lockdown 1 was terrible for me and my mental health was at its lowest ever during that time. I really struggled with not being able to leave the house and not going to uni. "



Vibes *only* Foccacia



Sylvia's

"I perfected this recipe for Focaccia over lockdown, based on the Ligurian focaccia recipe from Salt Fat Acid Heat. Unlike most breads, I really strongly believe that Focaccia dough should NOT be kneaded. Instead, using a shit-tonne of yeast and water will create a beautiful, light and airy dough."

Ingredients:

Flour (around 500g is standard, but often I just use however much flour there is)

1 cup of warm water

+approx 1 tablespoon of sugar

So much olive oil

Instant yeast

Sea salt (ideally bougie flaky stuff)

Toppings:

classics are rosemary and olives, also pickled grapes are yum

In your warm water, mix together your yeast and sugar.

I've heard a few different techniques for maximum yeast 'popping-off' power, and I reckon the best is to add the yeast, sprinkle over the sugar and then do a little small stir afterwards!

But also, ideally the sugar should dissolve, so just go with the vibe!

(Also re- yeast quantity, I love the flavour of yeast, so I go really hard. In theory too much yeast wont work because it will be competing for food to rise and all die!! But so far I've never done too much yeast!! Vibes!!)

While you are waiting for the yeast to get all frothy and start smelling really good, mix around a solid teaspoon of salt with your flour and then make a well shape.

Pour your frothed yeast into your flour-well. (You know the yeast is ready when you have a solid layer of foam on top of the water/yeast/sugar mix).

Then add a really goooooood three to four glugs of olive oil and mix it all together!!

This is one of the biggest vibes steps, essentially you don't want a batter but you do want it to be really "wet". Ideally when all mixed you can kind of pick it up as one whole thing, but its super wet.

Do a goodd glug glug around the dough with olive oil and then cover with a plastic bag (I've tried tea towels, but anything non-plastic isn't as good!! Maybe sealed Tupperware would work?). If you don't feel guilty about it, gladwrap is even better.

Leave to at least double in size. Depending on the temperature of the room this can take a wide range of time, just check every 2-3 hours!

(Hot tip, if it is taking forever, turn on **ONLY THE LIGHT** in your oven, and use it as a proofing oven, or put it next to a heater!)

Once it's doubled, tip it out into your baking tray vessel.

Your vessel should be doused in...wait for it...

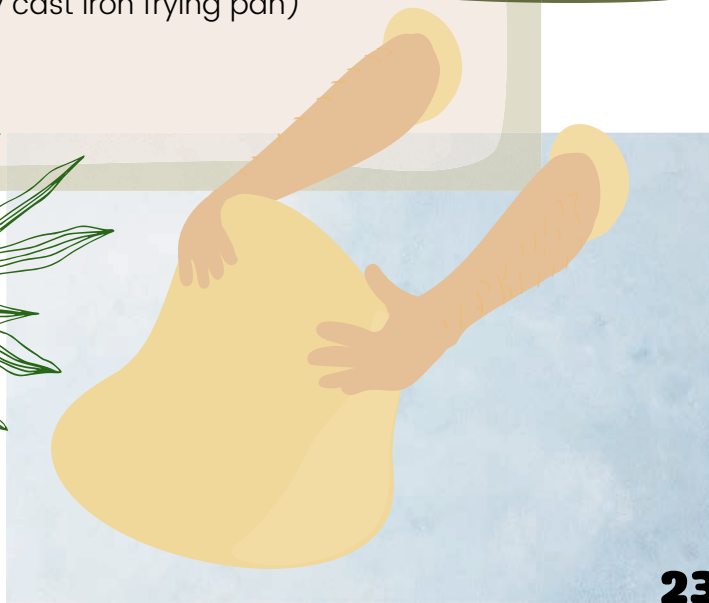
lots of olive oil!

Spread over every inch of the baking tray!

This is when you vibe what kind of focaccia you want!

Like a thin one, or like a big fluffy one!

Either way, carefully tip the dough into the tray
(Often I use my cast iron frying pan)





With your fingers push the dough evenly out to all the sides. There is a special technique for this, you push using the tips of your fingers. You don't want to pop too many bubbles in the dough. Be gentle! The dough will likely bounce back! That's ok!

Try spreading it again, often I will return after like 20 mins and need to spread it once more!



This is also a good time to pre-heat your oven to HOTTI (aka 200°C or like 180°C fan.)

Now leave the dough alone again!!!

Probably only for an hour, it should look nice and fluffy!

(if you want it to be fancy Ligurian and even more fluffy, pour like a 3rd of a cup of water mixed with heaps of salt over the dough, this will soak in and make the dough so light! But sometimes it ends up a bit soggy so if you want that crispy factor skip this step)

Fun step! Decorate!

Please don't do ugly artwork-out-of-focaccia things as it will burn, look sad and taste lame.

This is also when you make the cute dimples (could do in the previous step, I do it when I remember to, lol). This is done by poking your fingers down into the dough, like you are playing a chord on a piano.

I recommend covering the dough with bits of rosemary, stabbed in.

Then add a good glug of olive oil, and a generous sprinkle of salt.

Chuck in the oven for like 20 mins (middle of the oven not top not bottom)

Check: is it vibing, crispy and yum?? - Take it out!

Is it not? Give it a lil bit more time!!

(extra step if you used a frying pan: heat it up on the element to make the bottom EXTRA crispy yum!!!)

Wait for it to cool a little and serve up!

Yum!





Winged
It

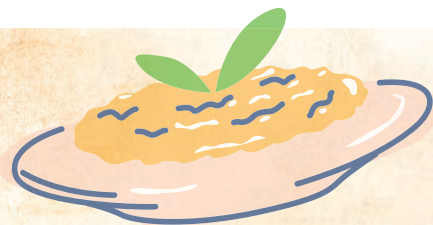
Sometimes the greatest
things in the world are
those made up on the
spot, like these recipes.

Kate's

Reliable Risotto

"An extremely reliable, un-fuck-up-able, spontaneous, make-it-up-as-you-find-weird-things-in-your-fridge kind of recipe."

"It's reasonably healthy, and can be vegetarian or vegan; I make it FODMAP-friendly (no onions or garlic, but those are great additions if you like!). You can do it all in one pan/pot, and while it can take a little time for the rice to cook (this dish takes me about 50 minutes start to finish), it's so worth it for the creamy goodness."



Pick some veges, whatever is in your fridge and gives you good vibes. I've used celery, carrot, mushrooms, peppers (any colour), broccoli, eggplant, leeks, etc. in the past.

Chop up your veges reasonably small (smaller chunks cook quicker!). You can pick a meat too if you want (I often chop up bacon or sausage - chorizo is best to make it spicy - but chicken is yummy too).



Get a large pan heating on a medium heat on your stove with some cooking oil (olive oil, sunflower, flaxseed, whatever your preference, but about 2T). The pan needs to be reasonably large, because you're cooking the whole thing in it.

I have a cast-iron pan that's about 35cm wide that works great.

If I am adding meat, or veges that take a bit longer to sauté (broccoli or eggplant), I put those in first to get them sweating/browning, and then add the rest of the vegetables when they are part-way along. Things like mushrooms don't need long at all.

Feel free to add a little oil if things are getting a bit dry, but keep moving your ingredients around. Also, put in some salt/pepper now (trick to cooking: season gradually!)



While everything is getting nicely softened in the pan, I pop the kettle on to prepare my stock. I usually use chicken stock, but vegetable works great too. I've even made this using stock made from miso paste. I use that funny gelatinous concentrated stuff because it's very convenient, but you can use cubes, powder, or you might be the kind of prepared foodie that has liquid stock ready to go - if so, just get it hot in an extra pot or in the microwave. You'll need about a litre and a half of liquid all up for 2 cups of rice - but I also use things like canned tomato to make up that total if I can't make enough stock.

Now you want 2 cups of arborio rice (which makes enough for 4 people to have a generous dinner with leftovers. You can decrease or increase as needed). I find I get best creamy results if I put some butter in the pan to get melty, and then put the rice in (but this isn't necessary).

When the vegetable/meat is nicely softened/browned (but not too far, because things will continue to cook), add your rice to the pan.

Toast the rice in there with the veges/meat for a maximum of two minutes, just by mixing it around and keeping it moving. If you have any white wine open, put a dash of that in there too.



Now, add enough stock to cover the other ingredients.

Turn the heat down low.

This is where I add things like 1Tbsp turmeric (it makes the rice a pretty colour!) and/or paprika, tomato paste, canned tomatoes, depending on what flavours I think will work with the vegetables/meat I've got going (more salt and pepper is essential at this point though).

I've actually found that the plain chicken stock is great too though.

Quantities of spices/herbs/flavours are entirely up to the vibe you're feeling at the time.

Measuring ingredients is for people who haven't lived through a pandemic.

Stir now to make sure everything is incorporated.

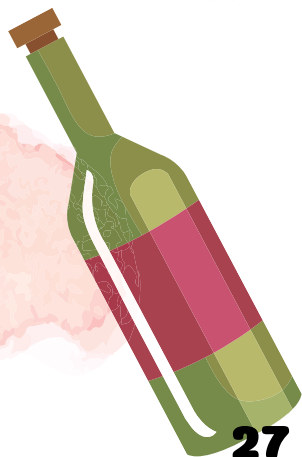
Now it's a bit of a waiting game.

Your rice may take around 20-25 minutes to be fully cooked, and you need to keep it moving (stir every couple of minutes) so that it doesn't burn on the bottom.

I do put the pan's lid on halfway to make sure my liquid doesn't all steam off, but I also sometimes forget and really experience no difference in finished quality, so if you're using a pan without a lid, don't worry about it.

As the rice starts to soak up the stock, top up with more to keep the rice mostly submerged (I often end up running out, at which point I just add hot water from the kettle).

You'll know you're getting to the end when the rice is becoming softer and chewy instead of crunchy, and when the liquid around it is getting creamy.



If you have spinach to use up, now is your time to throw it in there and stir until it wilts down.

When your rice is ready, I like to "cheese the dish", by which I mean adding copious amounts of parmesan straight into the pan after turning off the heat, and mixing it all in. Absolutely not necessary, but a delight if you're a cheese-eater. If you don't do this, you may need to make sure you've added enough salt.

To serve, my parents always put parsley or coriander on top (I personally don't believe in garnishes and coriander is the devil), but we always do extra parmesan (we are cheese people).



During lockdown we tried our best to hold out as long as we could before having to go back to the supermarket, which meant creative adaptations of easy base recipes (like this one) with whatever we had handy.

One day it was my turn to do dinner, and I had a massive rice hankering, and all we had was arborio!

I googled best tips/tricks for risotto (use hot stock, toast the rice, add liquid gradually) and an hour later had achieved peak risotto with just what we had in the fridge and pantry staples.

It was so easy too, just took some patience and a good stirring arm.

Some recipes tell you to cook the rice separately, but lockdown-lazy me was not keen to do more dishes, and honestly it works great all in one pan.

Apologies to the illustrious history of fine Italian cuisine.

This risotto became a weekly favourite in my family post-lockdown - a great meal for when you don't really have anything planned for dinner, but want a bowl of something warm and comforting. From the base idea of vegetables/meat sizzling, then adding rice and liquid and stirring until it's cooked, there are ENDLESS variations you can make - including easily making it vegetarian, vegan, FODMAP, etc.

I have to say, I was extremely lucky with my lockdown experience - first year of postgrad so smaller seminar classes were easy to do online and I had endless time for assignments, and I was living with my parents so was fortunate that I didn't have to worry about accommodation/food/income. It wasn't easy to keep working/studying forever though, so cooking and especially baking (when there was flour available!) got us all through it, as a much-needed break and something to look forward to - eating!

Butter "Chicken"

(Psst it's lentils)

1 grated carrot
1/4 cup dried lentils
1 cup veggie stock
1-2 teaspoons each of minced garlic, ginger
1/4 cup tomato paste
1/2 cup coconut milk
1/2-1 tsp chilli paste

Boil lentils in stock until they've soaked it all up. In the meantime, cook carrot in a frying pan with a little oil, the garlic, ginger, chilli, and some salt and pepper. When it's soft and wet, add tomato paste and coconut milk, add lentils whenever they're ready, and simmer until thickened. Serve with rice.

"I had lots of dried and canned food to use up, and didn't want to go shopping for ingredients... so I made this up myself. It was just for me, and I didn't have the proper spices for curry, but I ended up with something that tasted to me like butter chicken. I've also tried it with canned lentils and dairy milk, both were pretty bad. Got it right the first time"

"I had a lot more time to cook... me and a friend cooked for the whole week and didn't get takeout once. It was more wholesome than how I usually eat, I really appreciated the experience."

Peach's Strawberry Cheesecake

For The Crust

- 1 ½ cups (148 g) graham cracker crumbs (about 1 and ½ sleeves.)
- 6 Tbsp unsalted butter, melted.

For The Filling

- 24 ounces (680 g) cream cheese, softened.
- 1 ½ cups (180 g) confectioners' sugar, sifted.
- 1 Tbsp vanilla extract.
- 1 tsp lemon juice.
- 1 tsp salt.
- 1 cup (240 ml) cold heavy whipping cream.

Make The Crust

Line the bottom of a 9-inch springform pan with foil or parchment paper: set aside.

In a medium bowl, combine the cookie crumbs and melted butter. Mix until crumbs are well coated with butter.

Press the mixture firmly into the bottom and an inch up the sides of the prepared pan. Set in the freezer while you make the filling.

Make The Filling

In the bowl of a mixer fitted with the paddle attachment or with a handheld electric mixer, beat the cream cheese on medium speed until smooth and creamy - about 3 minutes.

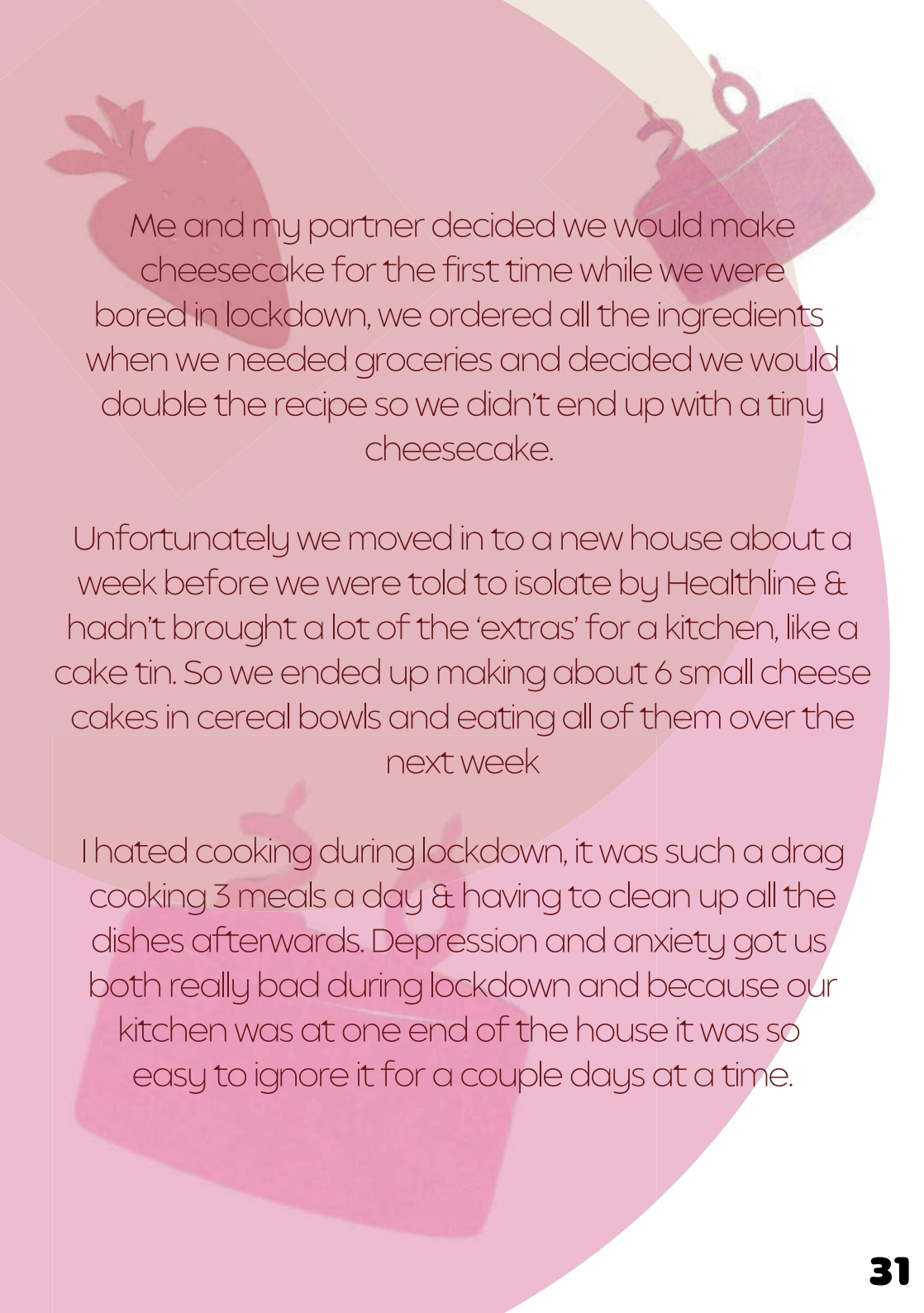
Add confectioners' sugar and mix on low speed until the sugar is moistened. Then turn the speed up to medium and continue mixing until well combined - about 2 minutes.

Add the vanilla, lemon juice, and salt. Mix on medium speed until well incorporated - about 1 minute.

If using a mixer with the paddle attachment, switch to the whisk attachment and add the heavy cream.

Beat on low speed until the cream is well mixed in. Turn the speed up to high and beat until the batter becomes thick and stiff.

Pour the filling over the prepared crust and spread to the edges of the pan. Refrigerate for at least 8 hours.



Me and my partner decided we would make cheesecake for the first time while we were bored in lockdown, we ordered all the ingredients when we needed groceries and decided we would double the recipe so we didn't end up with a tiny cheesecake.

Unfortunately we moved in to a new house about a week before we were told to isolate by Healthline & hadn't brought a lot of the 'extras' for a kitchen, like a cake tin. So we ended up making about 6 small cheese cakes in cereal bowls and eating all of them over the next week

I hated cooking during lockdown, it was such a drag cooking 3 meals a day & having to clean up all the dishes afterwards. Depression and anxiety got us both really bad during lockdown and because our kitchen was at one end of the house it was so easy to ignore it for a couple days at a time.

Sort of soybean stew!

"Okay so this is a VERY modified version of doenjang jjigae (soybean paste stew), and pretty much all the ingredients from the normal recipe I have just replaced with things I like, because it's comforting.

Ingredients:

2 courgettes, 6 mushrooms, spring onion, bok choy, tofu, whatever meat you want, add rice cakes or dumplings if you want right at the end because that's what I do!!! There are no rules. Most importantly you will need soybean paste and gochujang.

Step one:

Wash the rice one or two times, then wash it again but this time save the rice water and use this as the base for the soup. This sort of helps with thickening the soup apparently.... I dunno but I do it every time I make this soup like a ritual so... Anyways, cook the rice.

Step two:

Wash and cut up bok choy and when your water is heated up in a pot, add them first while you chop the other stuff. This kind of ensures that the bok choy is soft enough when it comes to eating. I add spring onion in here, but you can add it in near the end, whatever feels right.

Step three:

Chop ya courgette and mushroom and add them.

Step four:

Okay so pretty soon after I've added the courgette and mushroom, I add the soybean paste and the gochujang. Don't add them earlier because apparently the flavour isn't as strong if you add it straight into the water.... but like other things I cannot confirm this and I just add it here because it feels right in my soul.

Anyways, add a VERY LIBERAL tablespoon of gochujang, like a fat dollop of that hoe right in the pot. Then add the soybean paste. I do three tablespoons of this Chinese soybean paste that was literally just the first one I saw at a supermarket but I have not used another one ever so I cannot tell you how much to add if you use something else.

Step five:

Add the meat and just let that cook. This meal is so easy to cook it's so nice. Meat is also not necessary if you don't want it, just leave it out or replace it with something.

Step six:

Add tofu, and then whatever else you felt like putting in. Sometimes I add rice cakes and sometimes I add dumplings. It's nice to treat this stew like a lucky dip where it's an experience to find out what's inside. Anyway, when everything is cooked, serve it with the rice! I honestly make a fat pot of this stuff so it lasts until the next day and it's actually really good when everything has been sitting for a while in the flavour. It's like pizza the next day you know?

"This is actually so easy to make. I feel like it has gotten to a point where my stew isn't even doenjang jjigae anymore because the ingredients differ so much now because I just kept swapping things out. I absolutely by no means think my recipe is better, it's just catered to my tastes, and I made the cooking process for it easier because I hate cooking. No one has hated it so far....."

Honestly I do not enjoy cooking for the most part. Once in a while the mood strikes me and I'll happily cook, but as soon as it becomes part of a routine, I hate it. Being in lockdown meant I was cooking almost every night which I soon got sick of but this stew made it easier on me, because it's never a pain to make and I'm never disappointed with it. Plus, I always share it with two other flatmates, and I've cooked it countless times now and they've never gotten sick of it so that's reassuring! It's become a cute communal thing, I'll cook it on Friday nights for dinner and we have it for lunch on Saturday. Maybe one day I will cook doenjang jjigae the way it is supposed to be, but for now I will stick to my modified version."



Fried Garlic Beans

Ingredients:

Green Beans - to desired serving size.

Garlic - just a lot of crushed or finely minced garlic. Use 15, 20 cloves even. This dish has 4 ingredients - now is not the time for moderation. Literally go crazy.

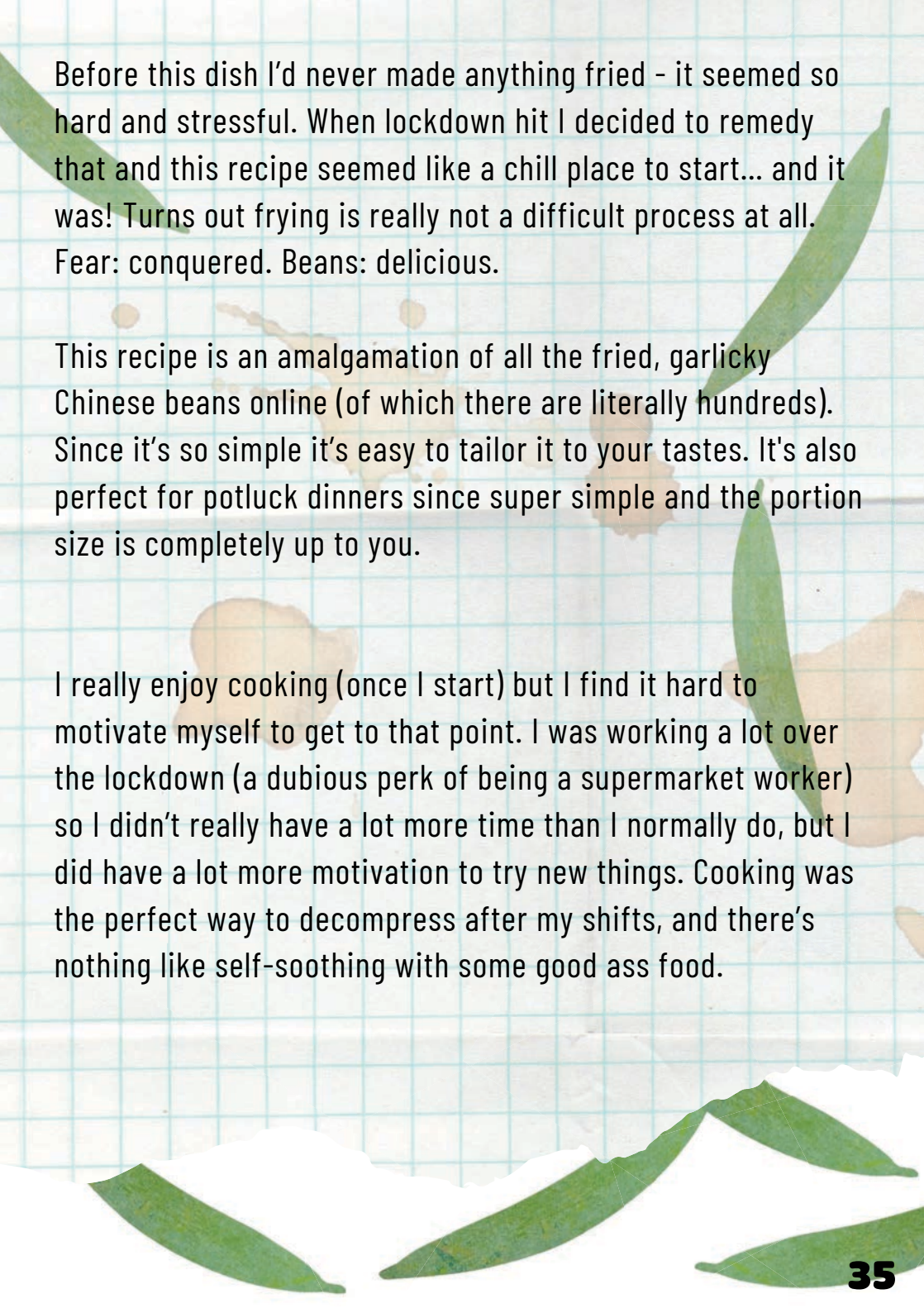
Soy sauce - enough to lightly caress each bean, but not so it's overwhelmingly salty (this *is* the time for moderation).

Chilli flakes - to taste.

Frying oil of your choice (vegetable, canola, sunflower, etc.) - 2 or so centimetres deep in a medium sized pot or enough to cover the bottom of a wok.

Instructions:

1. Trim or snap the ends off your beans. If they're really long, cut them in half. (If you wash your beans make sure you dry them thoroughly - if they're wet when you put them in the oil they'll spit... ow).
2. Heat your oil on medium-high. To check if it's hot enough you can use a bamboo chopstick (dipped in so it's tip is touching the bottom of the pot/wok); tiny bubbles will form rapidly around the tip when the oil is ready. Otherwise just chuck in a bean; if it bubbles when it hits the oil, you're good to go.
3. Fry the beans in batches until their skin starts to get a little wrinkly (this should take a minute or two). Remove them from the oil with a spider strainer (or if you're like me and don't have one, improvise: spaghetti scooper, tongs.... other tools of extrication I can't think of right now). Place the beans on a paper towel-lined plate while you fry the rest.
4. Once all the frying is done, carefully pour the oil into a bowl for later disposal or use. Turn down the heat to medium and fry the garlic in the residual oil. This really only needs a minute at most, just until it's fragrant.
5. Transfer the beans back to the pot, add your soy sauce and chilli flakes, and stir or jiggle until everything is evenly dispersed. Leave the beans on for a minute or two to warm them up again and steep the flavours.

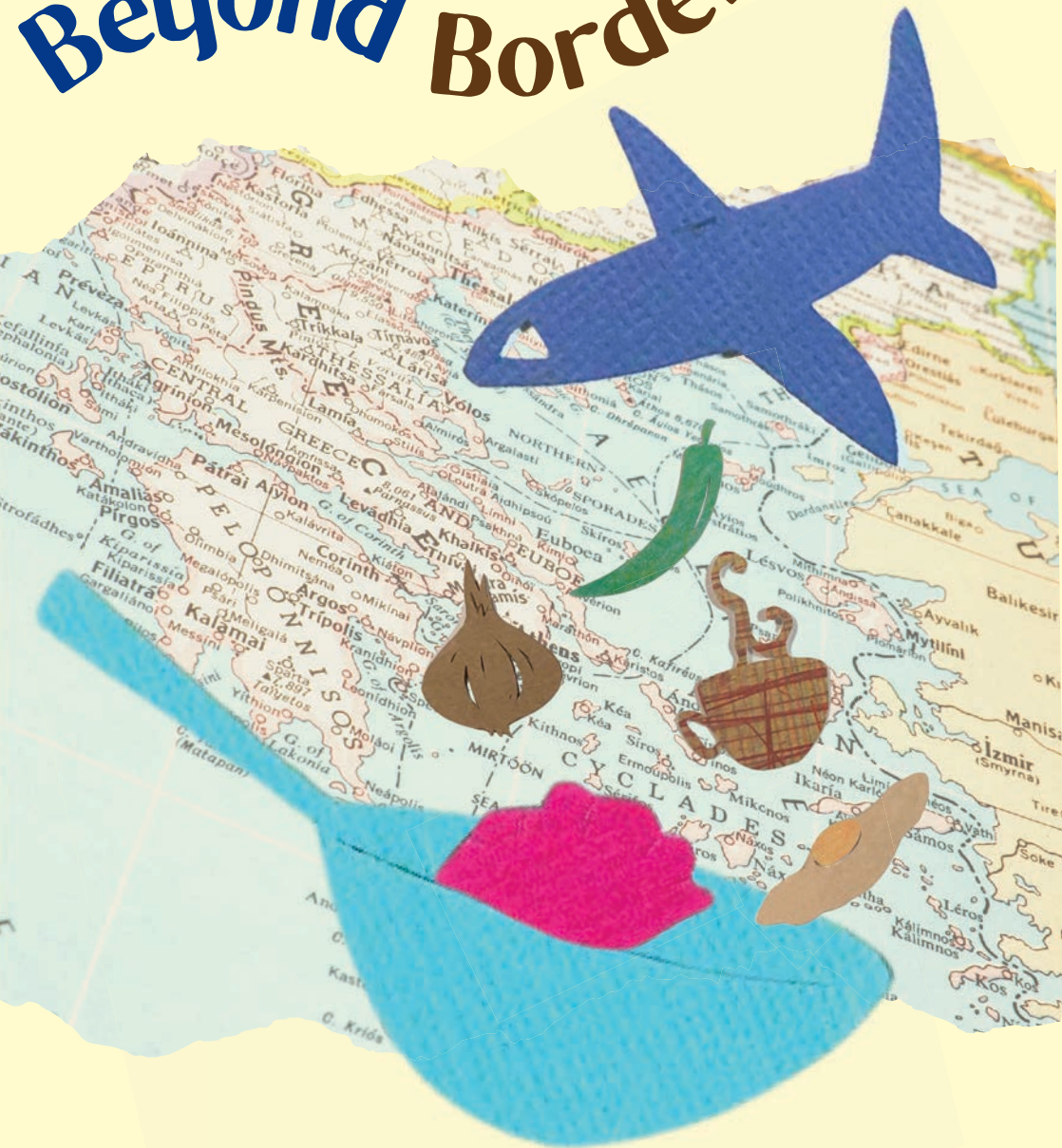


Before this dish I'd never made anything fried - it seemed so hard and stressful. When lockdown hit I decided to remedy that and this recipe seemed like a chill place to start... and it was! Turns out frying is really not a difficult process at all. Fear: conquered. Beans: delicious.

This recipe is an amalgamation of all the fried, garlicky Chinese beans online (of which there are literally hundreds). Since it's so simple it's easy to tailor it to your tastes. It's also perfect for potluck dinners since super simple and the portion size is completely up to you.

I really enjoy cooking (once I start) but I find it hard to motivate myself to get to that point. I was working a lot over the lockdown (a dubious perk of being a supermarket worker) so I didn't really have a lot more time than I normally do, but I did have a lot more motivation to try new things. Cooking was the perfect way to decompress after my shifts, and there's nothing like self-soothing with some good ass food.

Beyond Borders



Who needs a plane ticket when these recipes will take you around the world?

AN INVITATION AND SOME INSTRUCTIONS FOR MASALA CHAI

• INGREDIENTS •



• LOOSE LEAF BLACK TEA •



• A FEW GREEN CARDAMOM •



• A WHOLE CRUSHED NUTMEG •



• SOME WHOLE CLOVES •



• SOME GINGER SLICED •
• OPTIONAL •



ENOUGH MILK TO MAKE THE TEA CARAMEL COLOUR •



WHITE SUGAR TO TASTE

Boil an amount of water.

However much you'd like.

Add a whole nutmeg, crushed into bits, a couple of crushed green cardamom and a few crushed cloves.

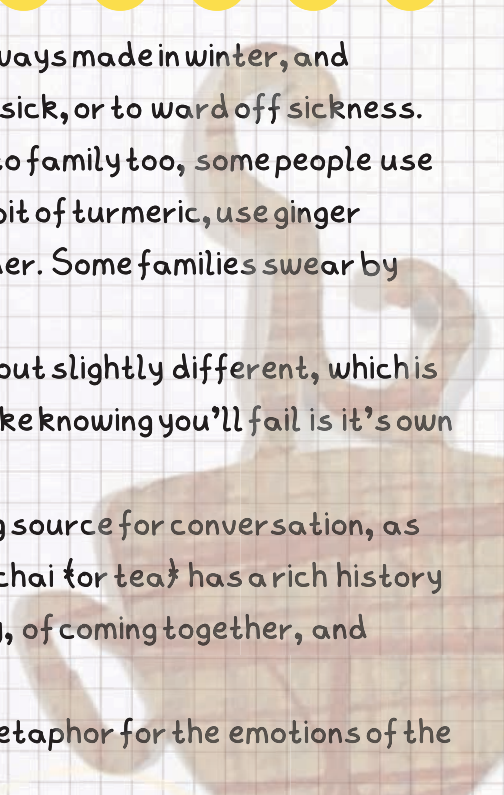
Add some sliced ginger if you'd like, or a few cracked whole black peppercorns.

Boil until very fragrant.

Add some loose black tea leaves, however much you'd like {less is more though}.

Once the tea is tea-like and fragrant, pour in milk {alternative milks don't work too well sorry!} until the colour of the tea is caramel/tanned skin/tea like.

Let it simmer for a few minutes, skimming off any skins that form. Stir always so the milk doesn't burn. When ready, sieve into a teapot, or a coffee plunger, and drink up!



Masala Chai {in my family} is always made in winter, and ALWAYS made when someone is sick, or to ward off sickness.

Chai is made differently family to family too, some people use peppercorns, some add a little bit of turmeric, use ginger powder or use masala chai powder. Some families swear by particular brands of tea!

Every time you make it, it comes out slightly different, which is both irritating and welcoming, like knowing you'll fail is it's own success.

I find chai to be a very interesting source for conversation, as both Pakeha and Fijian-Indian, chai {or tea} has a rich history of conflict, economy, community, of coming together, and coming apart.

It felt very simple and clean a metaphor for the emotions of the first lockdown.

Cooking helped me get through the lockdown in different ways – I kept a little diary of what I ate, out of curiosity, inspired by David Choe.

I made a lot of focaccia with rosemary and garlic, and ate the loaf in one sitting!

Cooking was both therapeutic and traumatic, because I could see every time I put something in my mouth, that it could be the vehicle for the virus, but also, as a vehicle for communal care and empathy.

Nothing is more giving than sharing a meal.

– ANONYMOUS

Escada para o Paraíso

First layer:

1 box of condensed milk.
2 box of cream milk.
1 1/2 cup powdered milk tea.
1 sachet of unflavoured gelatine.
5 tablespoons of water.

Second layer:

200g semisweet chocolate.
1 box of cream milk.
Sprinkles to taste.
Kit Kat to taste.



First layer:

Add the condensed milk carton, together with the cream milk and powdered milk cartons in a blender.

In a separate glass, add the gelatine sachet, hydrate with 5 tablespoons of water (at room temperature), stir until uniform, then place in the microwave for 15 seconds.

Add gelatine in a blender.

Blend the mixture in a blender for 2 minutes.

Place the contents of the blender on a platter.

Take the dish to the refrigerator for 1 hour.

Second layer:

Place the chocolate in a pan, together with the cream box.

Low heat.

Stir until the chocolate is completely melted.

Leave to cool at room temperature.

Mounting:

Add the chocolate icing on top of the first layer on the serving dish.

Spread the coverage evenly.

Add sprinkles.

Add the Kit Kats in a way that looks like a stairway.



As the cuisine from my country (Brazil) is very diverse, I've always been interested in learning how to cook. It was my first cooking experience! It was surprisingly tasty despite being simple! The idea came after long months at home with my family due to the pandemic. I have always been passionate about confectionery, but I had absolutely no experience with cooking. My mother presented an initial idea for the recipe, I replaced milk chocolate with bittersweet, I added the granules and, to finish, I put the Kit Kat in the form of a ladder to honour Led Zeppelin. At the end I ate with my family (father, mother and brother); like me, they liked it a lot, with that I learned several recipes, expanded to other areas such as snacks and food in general.

It did very well for the mind! This first experience paved the way for my passion for cooking. Despite this sad misfortune caused by the pandemic, learning to cook was undoubtedly the high point, I intend to continue learning until I am a great cook. I would like to thank the university of Auckland for the initiative, I have a lot of respect!

Sheng Jian Bao (Pan-Fried Pork Soup Dumplings)

BY CINDY HUANG

INGREDIENTS

Soup Base:

300g cleaned pork skin (fat
and hair removed)
2+ pork trotters
100-150g+ chicken feet
2tsb xiao shing wine
5 thick slices of ginger
3 pieces of spring onion
8 cloves of garlic
6 cups of water
salt to taste

Filling:

Soup Base
500g fatty pork mince
1tsb salt or season to taste
1tsb soy sauce
1tsb sugar
1/4tsb ground white pepper
sesame oil to taste
1/2 cup spring onion
Dumpling flavour tea (4 slices
ginger, 4 cloves garlic, 1/2 tsb
sichuan peppercorn, 1/4 cup
hot water



Dough:

400g all purpose flour
1/2 tsb yeast
1tsb sugar
1tsb salt
Approx. 220g warm
water

Sauce (optional):

Some julienned
ginger
2 part Chinese black
vinegar
1 part light soy sauce
Sugar to taste

METHOD

To Prepare the Soup Base:

Preheat oven to 220°C and roast chicken
feet for 15-20 minutes or until golden
brown

Boil pork skin and pork trotters for 10
minutes, drain and clean making sure you
remove all gunk

Cut the pork skin into strips, approx. 2cm
thick

In a pot, add all the ingredients and
simmer for 2 hours. Gelatin should form
on a spoon after about 10 minutes

Season to taste

Sieve the soup and pour the broth into glad wrap lined container

Allow to cool and refrigerate overnight

There should be 2 cups of soup base. If not, add water or boil soup down accordingly

Once cooled, take out the gelatinized soup and remove any excess fat, finely dice

To Prepare the Filling:

In a bowl add the pork mince, soy sauce, salt, pepper and sugar

Take 2/5th of the mixture and stir fry on high heat until crispy and caramelized, taste and adjust seasoning to both pork mixtures if needed

Once cooled, add cooked pork back to the raw pork mixture

In a mortar and pestle or blender, add 4 slices of ginger, 4 cloves of garlic and 1/2 tsb of sichuan peppercorn and grind, then add hot water and let it steep for 5 minutes. Once cooled, add to the mixture

Drizzle sesame oil to taste

Mix the filling mixture thoroughly until well combined and a sticky texture is achieved

Add the soup base and finely chopped spring onion and mix

To Prepare the Dough:

Activate the yeast with warm water and sugar

Add the rest of the dry ingredients in a bowl

Once the yeast is activated, stir the dough with chopsticks in one direction

Depending on water content of the flour, adjust the amount of water

Final dough should be relatively dry and just come together

Knead until smooth and rest for 10 mins

Make a hole in the centre of the dough and gently shape into a large donut shape, cut into 24 equal pieces

Roll each piece into 10-11cm circles making sure the centre is thicker than the edges

To Prepare and Cook the Dumplings:

Wrap the dumplings into a xiao long bao shape, try and aim for 12 pleats for the perfect dumpling

Add generous amount of oil to heavy duty pan

Place buns in the pan, no need to wait for the pan to heat up but make sure you leave a good amount of space in between each dumpling as they will expand

Cook on medium heat. When the dumpling is sizzling, add water (about 3-4 tsb per 6 dumplings) and steam with the lid on for 8 mins

Bottom of the dumpling should be golden brown and crisp, and the bun well steamed and risen

Garnish with spring onion & white or black sesame seeds (optional)

Serve immediately

Spaghetti aglio e olio with toasted breadcrumbs

Ingredients:

1/2 pack of spaghetti
1/2 an onion (diced)
4 cloves of garlic (sliced)
Generous pinch of chilli flakes
2 tablespoons olive oil (plus more for drizzling)
Cheese for topping (whatever kind you like)
Bread crumbs (either make your own or from a packet)
2 teaspoons of dried basil (or another herb of your choice)
Salt and pepper (to taste)

Instructions:

Toast breadcrumbs in a small pan with basil, salt and pepper.

Set aside.

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the pasta to al dente.

Brown the onion and garlic with olive oil in a large pan over medium heat, adding black pepper and chilli flakes halfway.


Drain the pasta, reserving the cooking water. Toss the pasta in the pan with the onion/garlic/chilli/oil mixture.

Drizzle with olive oil and add additional pasta water if moisture is needed.

Sprinkle with cheese and breadcrumbs as desired.

Enjoy!





Just before the first lockdown
I went on a trip to Wellington
and had a pasta from Eleven
Fifty Four with breadcrumbs
on top and it was just ~chefs
kiss~ So while stuck inside, I
decided to try and recreate it
(or something like it). This
pasta is my go-to and has
became a favourite of family
and flatmates alike!

I have always loved cooking
and watching cooking videos
(rip Bon Appetit). I find it so
comforting. In lockdown it
became even more important
to find a way to relax and
cooking was really the way for
me to just switch off and chill.

Huni's Tongan Pancakes with Banana

Ingredients:

2 ripe bananas

2-3 cups white flour

2-3 cups water, butter, or oil for frying

Method:

In a small bowl mash the bananas with a fork.

In a separate bowl sift the flour making sure there are no lumps. Gradually add water, stirring constantly to form a thick batter: stop once you have reached a desired consistency or add more water if you prefer a thin batter. Fold in the mashed banana and stir until combined.

Grease a non-stick pan with butter or oil over a low heat.


For each pancake: Drop about 2 tablespoonfuls of batter onto the hot pan and fry gently on the lowest setting. I usually fit 3-4 pancakes in the pan at once.

When you start to see bubbles forming on top, flip the pancake over.

Fry until each side is golden brown and the edges are a little crispy.

Serve immediately with jam or any other topping of your choice.





These pancakes transport me back to my childhood; I've never had them anywhere else except at home with mum.

She would make them every now and then as a treat, just as her mum did for her children (all 10 of them!) when they were growing up in Nuku'alofa, Tonga during the 1950s and 60s.

Despite the many options for treats growing up here in NZ in the 1990s and 2000s, these pancakes were well loved in my household. Once they were fried up they didn't last too long - usually eaten within hours with some jam, butter, or cream if we had it.

I always remember these pancakes being transparent in colour compared to other pancake recipes due to the minimal ingredients. A minimalism that reflected the kind of lifestyle my mum and her siblings grew up with, as well as my grandmother's resourcefulness.



Sanchita & Sudeepta's

Shoreshe Salmon

pr. Shaw-shay

Salmon in Mustard sauce -serves two hungry people

A medium fillet of salmon, cut into roughly 2 inch x2 inch pieces

Yellow mustard seeds : 1.5 to 2 teaspoons depending on how much you love mustard

Turmeric : 1/2 teaspoon

Garlic : 3 to 4 medium cloves

Green chillies : as hot as you like it or can skip

Fresh and chopped coriander leaves: a handful

Dessicated coconut: half cup

A teaspoon of tamarind paste or pulp. If you don't have this, use two teaspoon lemon juice

Salt to taste

Mustard oil: optional

Method:

Add a little salt and turmeric powder to the salmon and let it rest.

In a blender, powder the mustard seeds and then add the rest of the stuff with a tablespoon of water or yoghurt and whiz it. Use your grinder/blender-any gadget you use to make a fine paste.

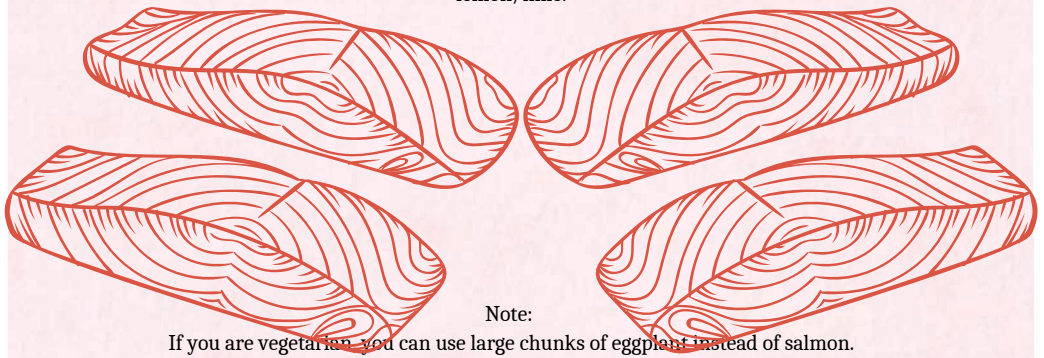
Coat the fish with this paste and add it all to a flat baking tray/dish/bowl.

Cover with foil and bake at 180 C for 12- 15 minutes.

Uncover and let it sizzle for a few more minutes.

Pour the raw mustard oil over the top once you bring the tray out of the oven.

Serve on a hot bed of brown or white rice and garnish with fresh coriander, green chilli and a slice of lemon/lime.



Note:

If you are vegetarian you can use large chunks of eggplant instead of salmon.

The last step of adding mustard oil is very native to Bengali cuisine. You can skip it.

Lastly, if you are feeling lazy, you can substitute the powdered mustard with two heaped teaspoons of English mustard from the bottle.

My mother visited me from Bombay, India after my father's death in 2019 and her five month summer sojourn turned into a year-long stay thanks to COVID.

It was great to hang out with her for such a long stretch after over 30 years!

Mum originally belongs to a part of India where fish is eaten daily and possibly, at every meal.

Much against the popular notion, Bengalis (that's my community) eat most fish without much embellishment. No strong curries or flavours to destroy the pure taste of fresh fish, caught in the rivers and ponds. Most of the daily cooking is a simple stew with few spices and veges.



Mum used the fish available in New Zealand and gave it a loving Indian treatment.

I fell in love with Bengali style fish recipes again as I watched mum make one dish after another.

Mum is back in Bombay.

She left me with her treasure trove of fish recipes and memories of her gentle nurture...

My favourite recipe is presented here...the king of all fish - Salmon.

It's used here to replace the famous Hilsa of East India.

Hilsa is possibly worth its respect in gold.

Known as Illish in Bangla language, it is an oily fish and a distant cousin of the Herring; found in fresh waters in India, Bangladesh and surrounding countries.

Let's say, if there was a god of fish, its name would be the Hilsa.

CHAR SUI PORK & PORK BUNS

I found myself cooking so much bread in lockdown, and bbq pork buns was always something I wanted to try make. I figured lockdown was the best time for it because I had so much free time.

The Marinade

MIX TOGETHER:

1/4 CUP SUGAR

1/2 TSP CHINESE 5 SPICE

1/4 TSP WHITE PEPPER

1/2 TSP SESAME OIL

1 TBSP RICE WINE

1 TBSP SOY SAUCE

1 TBSP HOISON SAUCE

2 TSP MAPLE SYRUP

1 TSP BROWN SUGAR

1/8 TSP RED FOOD CLOURING

3 CLOVES OF MINCED GARLIC

The Pork

CUT 1-2KG OF PORK SHOULDER OR BUTT INTO 3 INCH THICK SLICES.

MARINADE OVERNIGHT IN THE MIX ABOVE, BUT KEEP 2 TBSP FOR BASTING LATER.

PREHEAT OVEN TO 240°C BAKE.

LINE A TRAY WITH TIN FOIL WITH A METAL RACK ON TOP.

PLACE PORK ON RACK AND POUR 1 AND A HALF CUPS OF WATER ONTO THE FOIL BELOW.

ROAST FOR 20 MINS, FLIP AND ROAST ANOTHER 10 MINUTES. TOP UP WATER IF IT HAS EVAPORATED.

ADD 2 TBSP HONEY AND 1 TBSP HOT WATER TO THE BASTING MARINADE.

BASTE BOTH SIDES OF THE PORK AND COOK FOR A FINAL 10 MINUTES.

TAKE THE PORK OUT, BASTE BOTH SIDES AGAIN AND THEN SIT FOR 10 MINUTES BEFORE SLICING.



The Filling

FRY A FINELY DICED RED ONION AND SPRING ONION IN OIL ON A MEDIUM-LOW HEAT.

ADD:

1TBSP SUGAR

1TBSP SOY SAUCE

1 & 1/2 TBSP OF OYSTER SAUCE

2 TSP SESAME OIL

2 TSP HOISIN

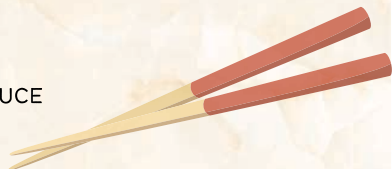
A SPRINKLE OF JAPANESE CHICKEN STOCK (OR OTHER KIND OF STOCK)

WHEN IT SIMMERS ADD 2TBSP OF FLOUR, STIRRING UNTIL IT FORMS A PASTE.

THIN WITH WATER UNTIL IT TURNS TO GRAVY CONSISTENCY.

REMOVE FROM HEAT AND ADD DICED CHAR SUI PORK.

IF TOO THICK, ADD WATER.



The Buns



MIX TOGETHER 100G HIGH GRADE AND 200G PLAIN FLOUR IN A BOWL.

MAKE A WELL IN THE FLOUR AND ADD 2TBSP SUGAR AND 1 & 1/2 TSP YEAST.

POUR 2 TSP SESAME OIL, 3 TBSP SAKE AND A PINCH OF SALT OUTSIDE THE WELL ON THE FLOUR.

SLOWLY ADD 1/2 A CUP OF ARM WATER, MIX BY HAND. KNEAD ON A FLOURED SURFACE UNTIL SMOOTH (ADDING OIL OR WATER IF NECESSARY FOR TEXTURE.)

PLACE DOUGH IN A OILED BOWL. IN A LARGER BOWL, POUR WARM WATER, CREATING A BATH FOR THE DOUGH BOWL TO SIT IN, SO THAT IT ONLY JUST TOUCHES THE SURFACE OF THE WATER. COVER WITH A DAMP CLOTH OR GLADWRAP AND REST FOR 1 HOUR IN A WARM AREA. THE DOUGH SHOULD TRIPLE IN SIZE.

PUSH OUT 2/3 OF THE AIR IN THE DOUGH AND ROLL INTO A LOG. DIVIDE INTO 16 PCS.

COVER AND REST FOR 10 MINUTES.

START BOILING WATER FOR STEAMING.

ROLLS THE PIECES INTO SMALL 10CM CIRCLES AND TOP WITH A HEAPED TSP OF THE FILLING. HOLD IT IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND AND BRING THE EDGES OF THE DOUGH TOGETHER AT THE TOP, PINCHING AND GATHERING INTO A BUN SHAPE. PLACE ON A SQUARE OF BAKING PAPER. REPEAT FOR ALL PIECES OF DOUGH.

TAKE THE STEAMER OFF OF THE HEAT. PLACING THE BUNS INSIDE FOR 20 MINUTES TO RISE. WHEN RISEN TO APPROX 1.5X THE SIZE, STEAM ON HIGH FOR 10-15 MINUTES.





Fun and Funky



When you're stuck at home with nothing to do, you need a creative outlet. For these people, their outlet was food!

Fish and Feijoa Curry:

Ingredients:

700G firm white fish - chopped into 2/3 cm cubes

Blend the below ingredients and mix through the fish and set aside (level of chilli is optional):

- 2 cups fresh coriander
- Zest of 2 limes
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- 1/2 tsp chilli powder
- 1 tsp cracked black pepper
- 1 tbsp hot sauce
- 1/2 cup canola oil

Curry ingredients:

- 1 large red onion
- 6 garlic cloves
- 50g ginger
- 1 tsp fresh chilli
- 4 tbsp canola oil
- 2 tsp cumin seeds
- 2 tbsp hot curry powder
- 1 tsp fennel seeds
- 1 tsp chilli flakes
- 1 tsp garam masala
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp caster sugar
- 1 tbsp fresh lime juice
- 1 x stick cinnamon
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 1 cup fish stock
- 1 cup feijoas - scooped out
- 500ml coconut milk
- Salt to season & taste

Method:

- Roughly chop red onion. Blitz in food processor with a little water to make a paste. Remove from food processor (no need to wash it yet).
- Blitz garlic, ginger and fresh chilli in food processor to make a paste.
- Heat oil in a pan and set over medium heat.
- Put the cumin seeds, fennel seeds, chilli flakes & cinnamon stick into the pan.
- Stir occasionally and let it all mingle and pop together (about 30 seconds to a minute - when you start to smell them).
- Now add the red onion mixture. Stir until the water evaporates.
- Add the garlic/ginger paste and stir.
- Add garam masala, curry powder, turmeric & sugar. Stir together.
- Then tip in the tomatoes, coconut milk, fish stock & lime juice.
- Cook on medium to high heat for about 10 minutes without a lid until mixture starts to thicken.
- Now add the feijoas. Stir through.
- Finally, add the fish. Cover the pan with lid and cook for 5 - 10 minutes.
- Give it a taste and season with salt to your liking. If you like - add more chilli and lime juice to boost spice and acidity
- Serve with rice and/or breads (roti, naan, pappadams) .



This curry was made on the last day of level 4 lockdown in NZ - it was my flatmates birthday and they were feeling depressed because it was their first birthday in Te Whanganui-a-Tara after just moving back and they wanted to spend it with their loved ones. I wanted to make them something special and memorable for dinner to mark the occasion.

At our flat there are two feijoa trees, a peach tree and two pear trees - these were absolutely popping off during lockdown and we spent a lot of time finding different ways of using the fruit so it wouldn't go to waste.

I am not a huge sweet tooth so was always looking for savoury options for using the fruit. I love when savoury recipes use bits of fruit to provide brightness to a meal - R and S Satay Noodle House on Cuba Street make an Assam Laksa, which has fish, cucumber and pineapple in it and is a great example of this. If you love fish then I highly recommend this dish - it is very fishy!

This is where the idea for the curry came from and after a bit of googling I came across this Lucky Taco recipe: 'Spicy Fish, Feijoa and Banana Curry'. I adapted it slightly based on the ingredients that were available to me and I have emulated what I made on my flatmates birthday in this recipe.

This curry is bright, tangy, wholesome and delicious.

I love to cook and if I had the means I would spend every single day sourcing and foraging ingredients for whatever meal I would make that day. Lockdown provided the time and space to do this. We foraged porcinis from the park nearby, picked fruit from the garden, grew leafy greens, baked bread, made our own paneer and swapped recipes with friends. My flatmate and I documented what we made everyday and I still refer to our lockdown recipes often.

Cooking was a necessary therapy for me during lockdown. I have ADHD so it is very difficult for me to sit still and relax, which is particularly hard when you have to remain in the same space most of the day. Doing something tactile and using my hands really calms me down. It makes me feel productive while my mind races at a million miles per hour. Cooking for me is my creative outlet and the way I show love, and unfortunately I can't always put in the time and effort to make something really special. Sometimes I find myself dreaming of a little touch of lockdown so I can once again dedicate my days to preparing for what I will make for dinner that night.

Quince-ci-dince

Ingredients

1.5kg quince – cored
and roughly chopped
1 lemon – zest
removed and sliced,
juice
3 ltr water
1 – 1.5kg sugar



Place the chopped quinces, lemon zest, and lemon juice into a large heavy bottomed saucepan and cover with water. Bring to the boil over medium high heat. Reduce the heat and simmer gently uncovered for 1 ½ hours. The quinces will be very soft.

Remove from the heat and carefully mash the fruit using a potato masher until pulpy. It should look a bit like thick apple sauce, you may need to add a little more water if too thick.

Line a colander or strainer with muslin cloth and place over a large heatproof bowl. Gently pour the hot pulp into the lined colander and leave to strain for several hours or overnight. I like to tie the corners of the muslin together and hang over the handle of a large wooden spoon and suspend over the bowl.

Never squeeze the pulp or your jelly will go cloudy.

Measure the liquid and pour into a large heavy bottomed saucepan, add 500g sugar for every 600ml juice. Ensure your saucepan has plenty of room for the juice to bubble up as it cooks.

Bring slowly to the boil, stirring until the sugar has dissolved. Increase heat and cook until temp reaches 105°C on a thermometer. If you don't have a thermometer place a saucer into the freezer and test by placing a teaspoon of hot jelly onto the cold saucer, put back into the freezer for a minute then run your finger through the cooled jelly. If the jelly wrinkles up and doesn't run back together it is ready.

Pour into hot, sterilized jars and screw on the lids. Leave to cool, store in a cool dark place for up to a year.

While the world scrambled for toilet paper, flour and yeast, I headed for Rewa to my brother's farm to forage for anything I could preserve. The kitchen has always been my happy place, and what better place to pass the time while in lockdown, right!?!



When I was a child my grandmother used to cook quinces to have on breakfast cereal or with pudding. There was a great tree in her back yard, she would bottle them and they would be offered all year round. I was not a fan of the gritty texture and used to dread staying at her place in case it was on the menu!

You got it, what a coincidence! That is exactly what the tree was, a magnificent tree completely laden in with the pale yellow, lumpy, hard fruit.

Quinces are often referred as “the ugly duckling of the fruit world”. They look like a pale yellow, lumpy pear shaped fruit, when ripe they have a gorgeous floral fragrance. Inedible raw but when cooked they are transformed from the hard, sour, gritty pale yellow fruit into a delicately fragrant rose coloured preserve.

I was up for the challenge to give this fruit a second chance, there was going to be plenty of time to experiment with recipes. We gathered a box of the quinces along with a selection of other fruits and veggies and I headed home, back to lockdown.

The next day I made a batch of Quince Jelly, fabulously easy recipe, just three ingredients. It was surprisingly easy to make and the finished Jelly was amazing. I was surprised by the beautiful rose colour the finished jelly was as it starts off as a white fruit.

We tried it with cheese that evening and it was outstanding, it has a delicate floral flavour that complemented the cheese extremely well. We went on to make crumpets, scones and bread to have it with. We couldn't get enough of it through the day and of course with the wine and cheese came out in the evening.

I made so many batches of quince jelly over the weeks and would drop jars into my friend's and neighbor's letterboxes while out walking. It almost became like a form of currency, exchanging the jelly for eggs and other produce.

Brandon would drop boxes of the fruit to the end of my driveway early in the morning on his way to the supermarket, I would leave jars of jelly for him. I was preserving like a machine!

What a Quince-ci-dence that a fruit that haunted my childhood would end up being such a delicious, delicately flavored jelly that brought so much pleasure to make and share during such a difficult time. Food has the ability to transport you to times and places, good and bad. I can say that I have a new found love of this under rated fruit of past. I have since bought my own tree and look forward to sharing the fruit.



Pear, Honey and Tahini cupcakes

"I developed this recipe on a chilly Autumnal day in Los Angeles. It was inspired by a bowl of emerald green pears sitting on my kitchen table, which had been perfectly ripened by the sun pouring through the window, and a jar of hulled tahini I had recently purchased at the farmers' market."

For the cake:

80g / $\frac{1}{3}$ cup hulled tahini
100g butter
100g light muscovado,
coconut or soft brown sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup liquid honey
1 tsp vanilla extract
3 free-range eggs
100g ground almonds
100g spelt or plain all-
purpose flour
2 tsp baking powder
Generous pinch of sea salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup unsweetened full-fat
Greek yogurt
2 ripe pears, peeled, cored
and cut into 2cm cubes

For the tahini glaze:

3 tbsp hulled tahini
1 tbsp liquid honey
3-4 tbsp boiling water
Pinch sea salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp vanilla extract

For the decorations:

2 tbsp sesame seeds, lightly
toasted

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 170C fan bake. Place liners in or thoroughly grease 12 holes of a cupcake tray.

In the bowl of an electric mixer, cream the tahini, butter, sugar and honey until pale, light and fluffy. Add the vanilla and then the eggs, one at a time.

In 2 parts, mix in the ground almonds, flour, baking powder and salt. Finally fold in the yogurt. Stop your electric mixer once all of the ingredients are combined. Be careful not to over mix.

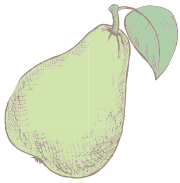
Evenly divide the batter between the 12 cupcake holes and dot some pear pieces into each, pressing them down lightly.

Bake for approximately 20 minutes or until golden in colour, springy to the touch and a skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean. Allow the cakes to cool for 10 minutes before turning out onto a cooling rack.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl make the glaze. Mix together the tahini, honey and enough water to get the glaze to a drizzling consistency.

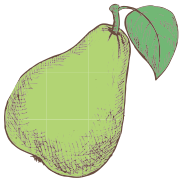
Once the cupcakes are completely cool, drizzle over the tahini glaze and decorate with a sprinkling of sesame seeds.

Serve at room temperature.



"As the little cakes turned golden in the oven, my kitchen filled with the most comforting aroma. My day was instantly better. That's the power that cake has afterall, it brings joy every step of the way - from the mixing, the baking and the cooling, to the devouring, sharing and devouring again. Cake is happiness.

My sister and I thoroughly enjoyed eating these not-too-sweet, pillow-soft cakes for breakfast alongside a cup of hot, black coffee."



"You could easily adapt this recipe and use berries (I think blackberries would be delicious) or apples, chunks of banana or no fruit at all! You could make a whole cake instead of cupcakes if you prefer - just increase the bake time to around 40 minutes if doing this :)"

Enjoy!
X Jordan, The Caker



Divinely Inspired

*From literature to our own
subconscious, inspiration
for food can come from
anywhere.*



Deborah Rundle's

Saltlick Potatoes

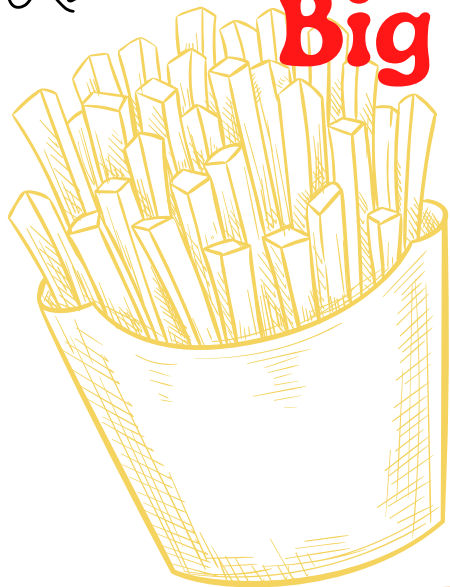
Cooked and eaten on Day Two of the Level 4 Lockdown, following being summoned from the sea at Pt Chevalier Beach by two uniformed officers. I found comfort food was a necessary salve to the indignity of being dressed down, whilst dripping in my bathing suit for misinterpreting 'safe recreational activity'.

Extracted from the
sea
Blue serge
Times two
Not marched
beckoned
Naked
not quite
Youth
Eyes down
Instructs me
to leave
So
to the kitchen
I cycle

Saltlick Potatoes
Potatoes
console
A Fact
Boil 6
still tender
To the push
3 cloves
garlic
to ward
Blade
turned to side
smoosh
with
salt of sea
to paste
More warding
parsley
big bunch
chop
Press down
Hard
Mix all
Together

Hidden within the words of
Deborah's poem is a recipe for
delicious garlicky, salty potatoes!
A creative way to share her
recipe!

Robbie Handcock's **Big Mac Sauce**



- 1 cup (300g) mayonnaise
 - 1 tbs gherkin relish
 - 2 tsp white vinegar
 - Pinch of white pepper
 - 2 tsp mild mustard
 - 1 ½ tsp onion powder
 - 1 ½ tsp garlic powder
- ½ tsp sweet smoked paprika (pimenton)

Combine all the ingredients in a bowl, season with salt and chill until ready to use.

It was a period of no uber eats and the flat was fiending, so we made "McDonald's" pretending we got some illicit Uber Eats. All we wanted was takeaways and we were so happy we vlogged it.

"Our flat went loopy and so did our cooking..."



Shania's Matcha oatmeal

Ingredients (one serving)

Half a cup of oats

Half a cup of water

Half a cup of milk (any is fine)

A pinch of salt

1-2 teaspoons of matcha powder

Maple syrup (to taste)

Any fruit of your choice!

In a pan, combine the oats, water, milk, and a pinch of salt

Cook on medium heat for 5-10 minutes, or

until the oatmeal is cooked to your liking

Turn off the heat and add a teaspoon or two of matcha powder, depending on how strong you want the matcha flavor to be.

Make sure to mix thoroughly, as the matcha powder can get clumpy!

Add as much maple syrup as you prefer - I

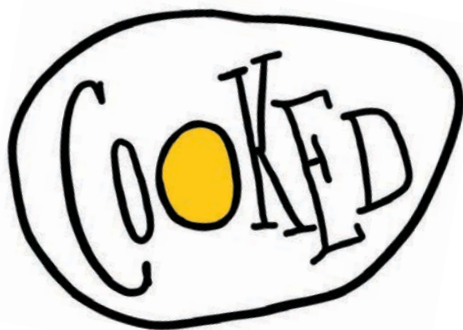
usually do one tablespoon - and mix well

Transfer to a bowl, and top with any fruit(s) of your choice! I usually add blueberries or bananas.

Just before NZ went into level 4 lockdown, I had a dream. I was in an abandoned city, running through empty buildings until I ended up in a supermarket, and the only thing I bought was a tin of matcha powder. The next morning, I made my dad take me to the nearest supermarket so I could buy a tin of matcha for real. I've been drinking matcha lattes and putting matcha into smoothies ever since. I used to always be indifferent to oatmeal, but putting matcha in it made me like it more!

Like a lot of people, cooking in lockdown helped me feel calm and distracted from how difficult of a time it was. It helped give me a sense of routine, as I had to put down all my uni work and actually get out of bed to feed myself. At the same time, it gave me a strong sense of accomplishment - being able to put things together from scratch and make food that I genuinely enjoyed helped me get through my most difficult days.





**GUS
FISHER**
GALLERY

This project is a public
programme for the exhibition
From Our Beautiful Square,
showing at Gus Fisher Gallery
26 June - 4 September 2021