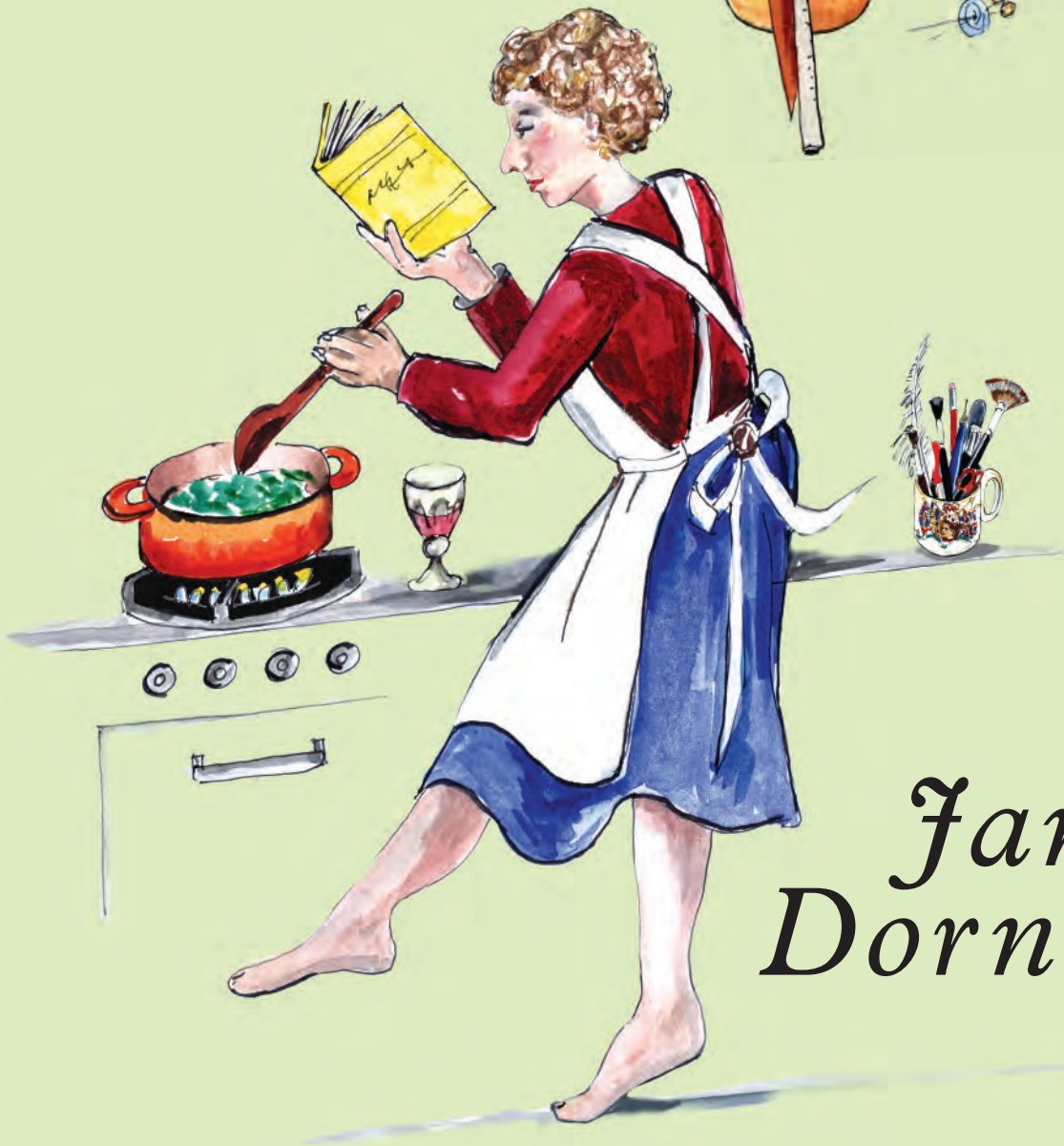


# A LIFE IN 490 RECIPES



*Jane  
Dorner*



# A LIFE IN 490 RECIPES



JANE DORNER

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*dedicated to*

**STEPHEN**

*for family & friends*

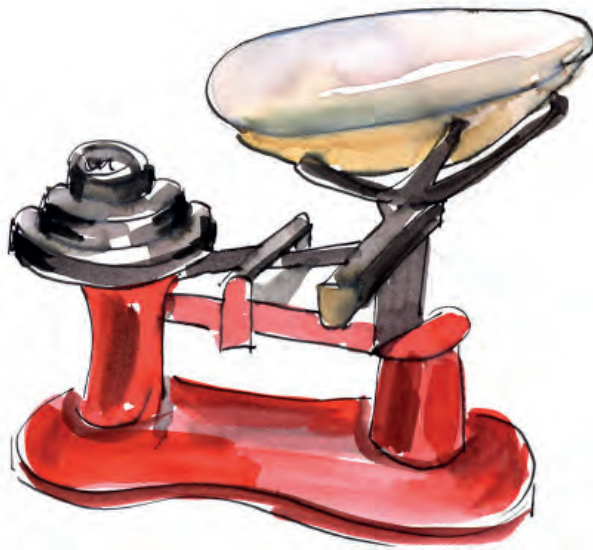




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*Quick conversion reference*

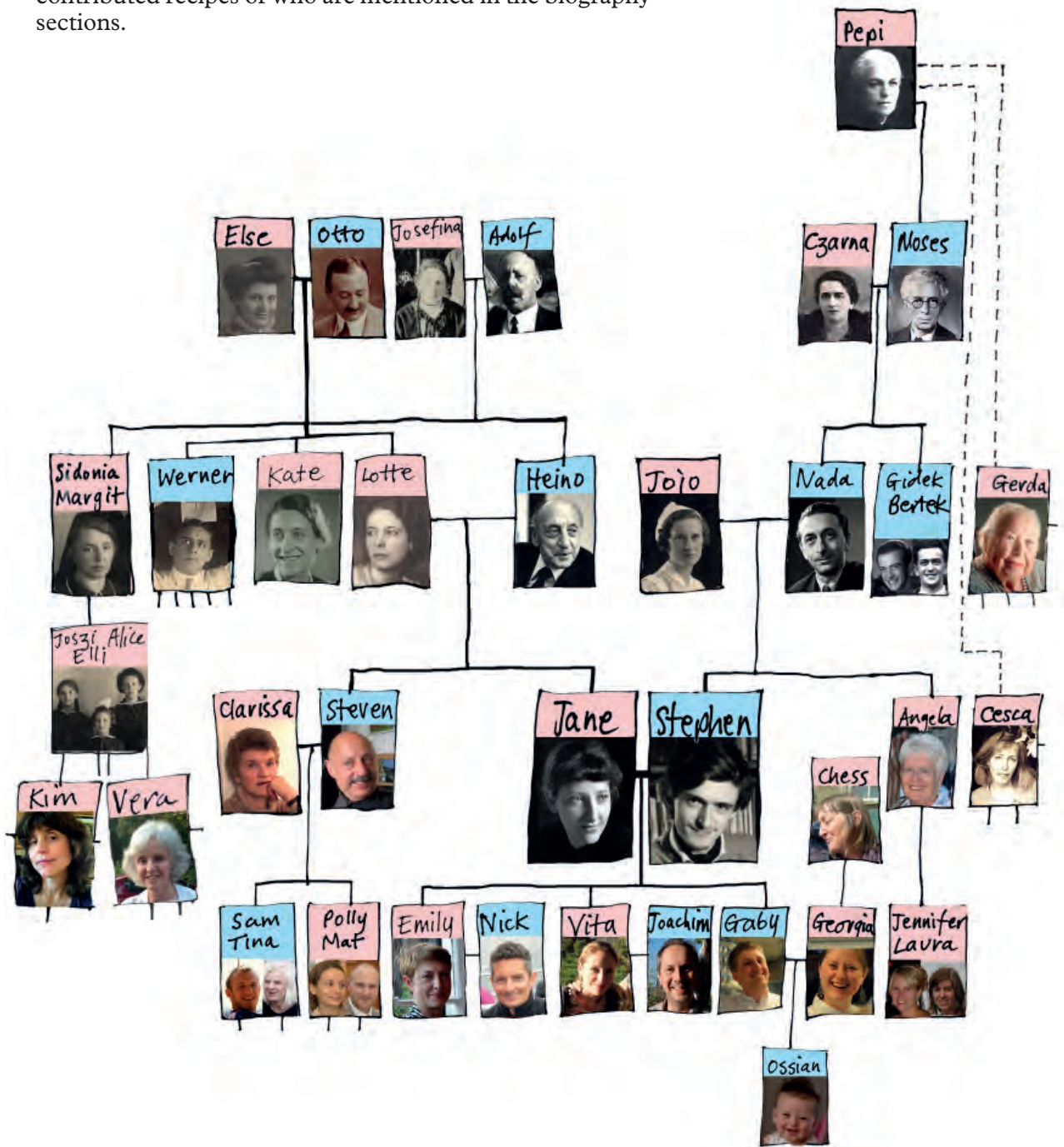
8 oz = 250 g = 1 cup  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  pt = 280 ml = 8 fl oz = 1 cup

$\frac{1}{2}$  oz = 3 tsp = 1 tbsp = 14 g  
2 oz = 4 tbsp =  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup = 56 g



# Family tree

Showing relationships of family members who have either contributed recipes or who are mentioned in the biography sections.





# 1

## Introduction

---

This book celebrates my 70th year in seven times 70 dishes. The number has a special magic. It symbolises a multiplicity of good fortune. There are seven colours in the rainbow; seven seas; seven wonders of the world; seven notes in a diatonic scale; seven talents in mythology; seven pillars of wisdom; seven ages of man. It is a number to make a fuss over. The 70 years I am marking are times in the kitchen where some 70,000 lunches, suppers, teas or dinners have been put to the plate – seven days a week. If it is true that you are what you eat, then preparing those plates tells my story.

The story is a mixture of recipes and reflections. Some evoke an occasion – like the pork-dressed-up-as-wild-boar that I made when Stephen first came to dinner. Or the terrines for our wedding breakfast that sliced into a hundred portions. Or the sweet-sour cabbage that came from a 1970s calendar and which was cheap, studenty and delicious. As the book grew, I saw that it was becoming a celebration of friendships, so I asked people who play an important part in my life to contribute – though in some cases it was like getting the meat out of a crab claw. If a recipe came from a friend – even if meticulously copied from a book – it's become 'their' dish (though where I do know the source, I've credited it).

That means a lot of characters are marching across the pages of this book. Mini biographies appear at the end, because these friendships are all nurtured by the breaking together of bread and so they are part of my story of cooking and being cooked for. I also wanted to give background and context, so each section carries a part of my life as it relates to the theme of the chapter. The book is a self-portrait – in recipes and stories relating to food. Maybe I have a future great-grandchild in mind who just might be interested. Or maybe it's that stage in life when you want to account for yourself.

Ironically, one's nearest and dearest are the hardest to write about, and I couldn't ever do justice to how much I love them all, and they are a strong presence all the way through the book. Chronology only lightly seasons the section order and for the reader who does not already know who we all are, there is a family tree on page vi to help. Most readers will know that Stephen died before this book was printed and I had to alter the last chapter. For the rest he is there in the present tense, which is historically and emotionally right.



I did not learn cooking at my mother's knee. She had maids in her childhood so did not learn at her mother's knee either, but she had a cookbook she favoured whose opening sentence was something like: 'When you come home, put on a saucepan of water. Why? I don't know why, but you will certainly need it'. She used to quote this: it amused her. It occurs to me years later that it must have come from Eduard de Pomiane's *Cooking in Ten Minutes* first published in France in the 30s and surely translated into German. And that was her style – everything plunged in boiling water. I'm not saying she was a bad cook, but cuisine it wasn't.

I remember with absolute clarity the day I saw unfold before my eyes what cooking actually was. The light-bulb moment occurred when Sarah Westwood made a vegetable soup in my basement kitchen in Islington when we were both at Hornsey Art School at the end of the 60s. Watching her chop and then sweat vegetables in butter and olive oil, onions first, then carrots, sliced Brussels sprouts and whatever else went into it, and then add *cold* water and a stock cube was a complete revelation. I copied her and learnt. At that time, Robert Carrier had a restaurant in Camden Passage – three minutes from our shared house. One of the boys in the flat upstairs (who turned up later in life as my sister-in-law Clarissa's brother Bun) worked at the restaurant and would occasionally come home with some delicacy that couldn't be sold next day – do I remember my first artichoke hearts from that time? Something, at any rate, that made me buy Carrier's *Great Dishes of the World* (1963) and I learned from that.

My collection of books has grown since then, but one reason for compiling this collection is my theory of the Law of Recipe Books, which states that in every book there are about six dishes that any one person cooks regularly and the rest sit in the book untried. Additionally, there is always a favoured book that is adored for a few months and then goes back on the shelves with the others – not forgotten, but waiting its turn to be harem queen again. If this is capricious, then that is because it is in the nature of cooking that you want to surprise those you cook for with something new and different. Many food writers seem to have their own style – whether they use butter and cream in everything; or aubergines and pomegranates – and one wants to ring the changes. After a while, an old favourite becomes special again. But often I've forgotten about it; and if I remember, am not sure which book it was in. Sauerkraut is one such: I simply couldn't find the one I'd done before, so looked it up in all my books and cobbled together something based on all of them and on my memory (page 122).



After marriage in 1970, each stage of life had its particular cookbooks. The 70s were no doubt dominated by fish fingers and alphabet spaghetti with the light relief of prawn cocktail if we weren't too exhausted by child care in the evening to have visitors to supper. One book sings out, though, and I am on my second copy of it as the first fell to pieces, and that's *The Cookery Year* (1973), photographed by our friends Barbara and Phil and featuring our painted Easter eggs and a few borrowed plates. Whenever I do a stuffing, it is based on the one for the crown roast of lamb in that book (page 84). And I used to (but no longer) make the Christmas cake and pudding and the marmalades from it. The painted Easter eggs continued and the collection is another sort of autobiography as each one pictures a salient feature of that year (the self-portrait on the right dates to 1983 and the one of Stephen on page 76 to 1972).



In the 80s, Sainsbury's had the imagination to publish some little booklets for 85p written by writers who clearly had children and described dishes they liked in a way that made you want to try them. Josceline Dimbleby was a favourite at that time and has remained in my adapted repertoire. Then there were Jane Grigson, Marguerite Patten and Claudia Roden – all of whom I have raided. Delia Smith probably dominated the late 80s and 90s for most people, though I wasn't a particular devotee; except that I did later buy her *Winter Collection* (1995) at the Waterloo Bridge second-hand stall (and it does have *the best ever* marmalade and bread-and-butter pudding in it – see page 181). I didn't acquire anything for a while until *Moro: The Cookbook* by Sam & Sam Clark (2001) bearing the dedication: 'To Jane on her 2003 birthday, for her pleasure, and ours...Danièle and Peter'. How sweet is that!

At the time of writing (2013-4) the Ottolenghi books are the fashion – and I have some favourites, but they all look too complicated on the page so I have condensed and simplified the ones I like: for perfection, I can always return to the originals. Of a similar ilk, though acquired afterwards, are Diana Henry's *Crazy Water Pickled Lemons* (2012) and Silvena Rowe's *Purple Citrus & Sweet Perfume* (2010). In certain moods, I thumb through looking for ideas, shut the books and do something combining ideas from all of them.

Some of my books still have food-stained slips of paper in them or corners turned down: sometimes I've even annotated them to say what I did differently. And whether they were good or not. My friend Sophie, who is a more meticulous cook than I am, with a finer palate, does that too. She also pencils in 'Do' to recipes she hasn't made yet, thus slightly disproving my Law of Recipe Books, as she has a secondary half dozen waiting for their turn. Sophie says you should always do the recipe word-for-word from the book first and then make it up the second time. That is why she is the better cook.



Now and again I get the urge to do ‘drizzle cuisine’ – i.e. fiddly stuff arranged prettily on individual plates. My personal style is to have a colourful array of help-yourself dishes in craftsman-made pottery, with perhaps one offering that isn’t strictly needed but adds to a sense of welcome and plenty.

Perhaps Emily, Vita and Gabriel have learned a bit from me. And just as I am a better cook than my mother, so they have surpassed me. They all three use ingredients and combinations I haven’t heard of – or rather, hadn’t heard of but know about now: I remember some years ago pretending to know what lemon-grass was. Their forays into preparing food coincided with the surge of fusion cuisine, which I think became dramatic from the 80s onwards. And I don’t know quite when foodie programmes on television became so popular, but all four of us became devotees. We’d watch and soak up little tips. And buy mograbieh, za’atar and hibiscus salt from the internet.

Stephen’s cooking began with *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* (1966), which he and Stephen Greenwald followed with meticulous attention to the weighing scales. Sally and I were always hoping to be treated to their legendary four-day cassoulet – which is not in this collection, because (with a few exceptions) this is not about complexity: it’s about gathering together the stuff of informal dinner parties and home suppers.

Books are all very well, but I’ve probably learned most from other people. Many in this collection are recipes given to me by friends – or cobbled together afterwards from a vague memory. I’ve noticed that when people have transcribed a recipe for me they’ve sometimes said where they got it from, but usually adding that they did not follow the original exactly and that the method they are giving me was what they did. Sometimes I have put in a foodie memory instead of a recipe, because a particular person should figure in this compendium as it tells the story of years of friendships alongside the practicalities of cooking.

It’s a personal collection as well, in that it is biased towards my family’s tastes. It is light on pasta, which is a staple for lots of dishes, but not a favourite in our house. I do like risotto (it’s relaxing stirring in the flavours in a figure-of-eight motion while listening to the radio) but, with a few exceptions, I don’t think recipes are necessary for a risotto. Stephen doesn’t like anything hot (I do) so I’m light on chilli. And he’s not keen on spicy Indian, so no curries here either. Beetroot appears just once: a childhood experience put me off it for life.

I also can’t boil an egg, make a cup of tea or succeed with Yorkshire puddings, Czech dumplings or oeufs Florentines.

Normally I am the sort of cook who tends to work from memory once I’ve got the idea, so I’ve reduced recipes to a minimum. I want to be reminded at a glance what the combinations of ingredients are, and not read too much. This book is for people who know the basics and don’t need *every step* given in detail. Some general assumptions follow.



## Some things to make the recipes shorter

---

creaming sugar and butter together until they ‘form the ribbon’ – i.e. go from yellow to pale cream and drip back from the beater into a ribbon formation.

beat till pale

it’s thought to be best to cook with unsalted butter, because butter makers take more care over the flavour, which can be masked by salting, but I don’t always have it. Where it makes a difference, I have specified, otherwise not. Échiré butter from Poitou-Charentes is supposed to be the best.

butter

obviously always free-range.

eggs

*sweet:* Pavlova, meringues, almond or coconut macaroons, marzipan, royal icing, sorbets, angel cake, baked Alaska, omelette Rothschild, chocolate cake mousse.

extra egg whites

*not sweet:* freeze them in ice trays (1 large egg white is about 2 tbsp and weighs 25 g), egg-white-only cheese soufflé, egg-white-only latkes, a lighter soufflé, egg-white salad, egg-drop soup dumplings, spinach & egg-white frittata, egg garnish, salt crust for baking chicken or fish, in potato pancakes, frosting to look like snow, rice bowls, face pack, glair.

mayonnaise, Hollandaise, Béarnaise, aioli, ice-cream, quiches, sweet pastry, thickening sauces, custard, egg garnish.

extra egg yolks

some recipes are very specific – me, I can’t see why put in  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the zest of a lemon; why not chuck in the lot? And why  $1\frac{1}{4}$  tsp of one spice and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  of another? I think these things are a matter of feeling.

flavouring quantities

sauce flour for sauces; high gluten for bread; 00 for pasta, cakes and sweet pastry. Shipton Mill in Gloucestershire do some very nice speciality flours, and, though my son says ‘What’s wrong with Sainsbury’s Basics?’, I think good quality flour makes better breads and cakes.

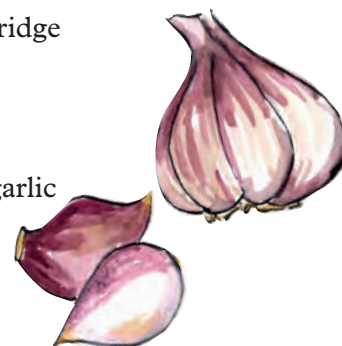
flour

tomatoes, aubergines (other veg too, I dare say) don’t like being kept in the fridge: they lose flavour. Cabbage, however, in a sealed bag in the bottom of the fridge, can keep squeaky fresh for a week. So can mint.

fridge

usually means as many peeled cloves as you like; then crushed with sea salt, chopped, or pressed through a mincer. I don’t see the point in being precious about how you chop them. Recalcitrant cloves are easier to peel if you soak in warm water for 5 mins. Take out the green shoot in the centre as that is what repeats on you.

garlic



gelatine 6 sheets of gelatine is the equivalent of 3 tsp of powdered gelatine or a 10 g packet. This is enough to soft-set 1 pt of liquid. Soften first, but I don't bother to cut it up. And it loses its setting qualities if heated to boiling.

herbs herbs can always be à choix. To keep them fresh: Freeze hard herbs such as rosemary, sage, thyme, and oregano in ice trays topped up with olive oil. For soft herbs such as mint, basil, tarragon, and dill, wrap in kitchen roll and put in a clicky box in the fridge. Or grow your own.



oil the best extra virgin olive oil for salads. A bit of sesame or pumpkin oil is sometimes nice for a different taste. For cooking, usually a light olive oil and a knob of butter – sometimes sunflower, hemp or whatever my current fad favours. Truffle oil for special. Sunflower for chips (kept in a separate bottle). Walnut is quite nice; almond and hazelnut aren't as good as they sound.

onions always best if cooked very slowly, and remaining transparent, before all the other ingredients go in. A little tip I discovered by accident: if you sweat them for 10 mins and then leave the lid on (heat turned off) and go away, they go on slowly cooking and go very transparent indeed.

oven temperatures this book says, low, medium or high because everyone knows their own oven and it doesn't matter if you keep checking and adjusting. Some ovens will need pre-heating; others don't – so we'll skip the 'heat your oven' bit. Some techniques – like making crackling for pork, for example – work best with the oven heating from cold. Where it's critical, I do give °C.

parchment baking parchment, greaseproof paper, parchment paper, or silicone matting. The term 'parchment' is used whenever a tin



needs lining: cutting silicone ‘paper’ into shapes to fit your own tins gives best non-stick confidence.

*garlic*: buy a soft silicone tube and roll each clove; magic. Or soak in water for 15 mins.

*onions or shallots*: cut off top, bottom and outer papers, fry for a little while, leave to cool and then you can peel off the tighter inner papers very easily.

*peppers and aubergines*: cook as directed, then put in a plastic bag hot, seal the bag, allow to cool and then the skin slides off.

peeling tips

I’m not a pinger cook: I don’t set timers to tell me when things are ready or need the next bit of attention; that’s why timings in this book are a bit sloppy. I’m sure it’s a fault, but most of the stuff I cook is fairly forgiving of longer or shorter cooking. A sixth sense, and looking and tasting, are useful.

pinger

like making a béchamel sauce are pretty standard and everyone has a favourite way of doing it (in my case the one requiring least washing up) so I haven’t spelled that sort of thing out.

processes

are in a rough 4 to 6 amount, though 2 people can Hoover up all of it sometimes.

quantities

I have a feeling for how much salt to use when I flick a Saxa salt container over a saucepan. I’m trying to train myself to only use sea salt or kosher salt – anything without additives. It’s a bit late to retrain the synapses, so I now put the fine sea salt in a Saxa carton.

salt



aubergines and courgettes – not so much to draw the bitterness out of them as to relax the flesh, which means they will soak up less oil.

salting

salt and freshly ground pepper go in pretty much every savoury dish, whether the recipe says so or not. Abbreviated as s&p.

seasoning

unless specifically stated otherwise, this will be caster sugar.

sugar

diversity rules in this book – though I did convert the Dutch measurements to ones we recognise. Most measuring devices show imperial and ‘digital’, so I couldn’t see the point of making everything consistent. Where the original had a choice, I’ve gone for pounds and ounces, because I grew up with them and they have more meaning for me. I dislike cups, but have kept them in where the original seemed to demand them, as conversion isn’t always straightforward. I don’t really weigh things out or measure spoonfuls. See page v for standard conversions.

weights & measures

# 2

## Menus

---

**P**lanning a social occasion begins with considering the menu. My technique is to browse through a few books, make shopping lists that include various possible menu choices and then go off and get a selection of ingredients. The menu will change as I shop, while unpacking what I've bought, and even up until just before the guests arrive. I might have been over-ambitious and have to pare down; or if they are late, I might fiddle about and produce an extra starter or side dish. This isn't indecisiveness, it's just the way I do anything creative – by allowing an organic growth until it feels right.

Menu-planning is where it all starts, so I am going to start with the 'menu' that went into the planning of me: my forebears.

### *My forebears*

---

I know much more about my maternal side of the family than about my paternal heritage. This is either because she talked more than he did, or a natural function of seeing less of one's father because he was not there so much. And, just maybe, he was more interested in his work and in the present than he was in the past. Most of the bits of paper that remain are in German (Gothic script at that), which I do not read; some are in Czech: letters and postcards that I can't access. Steven took most of the paperwork from Oakwood Road (I didn't want to know) and has deposited anything interesting in the Jewish Museum in Berlin.

One item in English that I did come across is a sort-of-a family tree in my father's hand with little bulletins about his forebears – mere paragraphs. His grandfather lived in Slanica, Ostrava and here's something I don't understand. Word-of-mouth lore had it that the grandfather's village was flooded to create a reservoir and the family were forced to move to Trstenà where Heino (diminutive for Henrik) was born on 22 August in 1902. Just the church spire allegedly poked up from the water. I've been there and seen it. But what did I see? According to Wikipedia, Slanica was indeed flooded to make a lake along with four other villages, but that was much later under the communists. That the grandfather was forced to move without compensation is probably true, but why is less certain.

Steven and Clarissa, and Stephen and I went to Trstenà in 1991 and stayed in the Roháč Hotel, which was a run-down dump where out-of-work youths sat about drinking beer at breakfast. Fortress-like concrete communist housing blocks surround what must once have been a quiet village tucked away beside the Oravica River, surrounded by the High Tatra mountains and forests. It didn't look like the idyll of his sentimental reminiscences: I wished I hadn't gone there.

In the description of his own father (with the unfortunate name of Adolf) my father writes that he was apprenticed to a shoemaker in Budapest, returning home to marry once he had become a master shoemaker shortly before Hungary celebrated its 1000 years' existence as a kingdom (in 1896). The railway had come to his village (it was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire then, Czechoslovakia when I went there, and is now Slovakia). The railway workers needed boots and had the money to pay for them. He prospered and built a house. But with the First World War, it says in Heino's hand: 'in came Bata [sic] with cheap shoes distributed in their own shops mushrooming everywhere ... and ... everything changed'. Things changed even more after the Second World War: ironically the synagogue my father went to is now a shoe shop. His family were not orthodox, but they did observe the Sabbath.

Heino's mother died in the Spanish Flu epidemic of 1918 – I was aware it had been a terrible blow for a boy of 16, but he never spoke about it. He did tell an anecdote about a suede hat his mother gave him to wear for a particular Jewish festival, but not before. Unable to resist, however, he had gone out in it, but had been overtaken by rain before he returned home. Mortified by the huge dark splotches ruining his new hat, he had hidden it in terror only to be astonished next morning that the marks of his crime had disappeared and the hat looked as good as new. I have the impression he told this as a moral tale, though I no longer know what point he was making. In my mind it is about guilt and mothers, and who knows – maybe he bore a burden of guilt about her death, as he probably did about his father's some 25 years later.

If cooking was not in my mother's background, it would have been very much part of my father's. Every Friday, his mother would have taken a chicken under her arm to the butcher to be killed in the kosher manner for the Shabbat dinner; the chollah dough she would take to the bakers to be put in his oven, and thence to Scheiman's grocery store to buy a bottle of seltzer water. Everything was made at home: noodles, jam, gefilte fish, soused herring. There would have



been cakes to fit every occasion. There are one or two in this compendium, passed on from Heino's nieces who came out on the last Kindertransport. His family had a maid to help with tasks like milking the cows and lighting the stove: she was apparently a gentile country girl. At night the top was taken off the kitchen table and the base pulled apart, converting it into a bed where the maid slept. Her living quarters were not just sparse, but non-existent: there was an attic reached from a ladder that descended into the kitchen, where she hung her clothes and stored her possessions in a box.

Somehow, my father succeeded in getting an education. He really wanted to become a doctor, but *numerus clausus* meant his options were limited and so he had to study chemistry: this was at the technical university in Prague from 1920-24 where he obtained the degree of Engineer of Chemistry. (Before that he attended the Liptovský Mikuláš school, in the Žilina Region, where he boarded out with a family, becoming temporarily engaged at 18 to the daughter of the house.)

Before formally finishing his studies, he became a director at Piešťany Spa, near Bratislava, initially as a technical consultant but rising to right-hand man. I still remember some triangular-boxed mud packs my parent had in the under-the-stairs cupboard with a picture of a man breaking his crutches across his knee, and quantities of letterpress-printed leaflets with a hideous pictures of a dog's gall bladder before and after treatment, which were given to me to use the backs as drawing paper – a nasty shiny surface that didn't have enough bite for the spread of coloured pencils.

The sample boxes under the stairs contained a dried charcoal-grey compressed block with a slight musty and sulphurous smell seeping through its wrappings. This would change to grey-blue-black and grow hot when you added warm water. Wounded animals knew where to find the hot pools on the thermal island on the river Waag, where the spa mud originated: the packs just replicated that by holding good bacteria *in statu nascendi*. It was crumbly grey stuff that could become butter-soft and hot, so you could wrap it round you in a warm blanket and hug it to you and feel better. A pity there wasn't one left under the stairs when we cleared the house out.

In 1931, he was put in charge of a new office in Berlin where he met his future wife, dividing his time between the troubled capital and a research laboratory set up for him in Piešťany to investigate the properties of the mineral water and the mud with other specialists: their findings were published in 1933 and are probably in an archive somewhere at the Spa. By 1937, not yet married, Heino had seen the need to get out of Germany earlier than many others and opened a London office at 310-12 Regent's Street (tel: LANGham 4214). Before emigrating, he used to stay at the Savoy when he visited (tel: TEMple Bar 4343). On Tuesday 5 April 1938 he had: 'pleasure in



inviting you and your friends to a Reception and Lecture with Lantern Slides on the Springs, Treatment and Social Life at Pistany [sic] Spa to be given at the Savoy Hotel (Embankment Entrance). Tea and Cocktails, 5 p.m. Lantern Lecture 5.45 p.m.’ This was to show how Piešt’any mud treats rheumatic disorders through heat treatment. Beethoven had been there in an earlier era; rich Arabs go there now.

He must have had thousands of office letterheads printed, as all sorts of notes and drawings exist on the backs (including a Christmas card dated 1946 when the address was no longer current as the supplies of mud that my father, with great foresight, had had shipped out ran dry in 1942). I still have maybe 100 sheets; 8" square, foxed at the edges, which I try to use as scrap paper, but somehow fail.

As an alien and a refugee in England, he had a hard time making his way, working for a time for a lemonade manufacturer (Messrs Mornington Products) for 30/- a week, and later as a lab assistant at King Alfred’s School. In various bids to better his situation he must have written dozens of letters, since a small folder of replies survives amongst the very few documents I can actually read – from the Ministry of Labour and National Service entering his qualifications in the Central Register of Aliens; from the BBC and the Cavendish Laboratory declining his services; from the Home office, the Air Ministry, Aerodynamics Department, 10 Downing Street and the Port of London Authority thanking him for his suggestions for inventions to help in the war effort but indicating that such proposals either ‘would not appear to be novel’ or that his idea was ‘ingenious’ but ‘unlikely to work’. Heino eventually became a Director of Chrome Alloy Company and was somewhat litigious on their behalf when it came to protecting patents – which I think he enjoyed. I probably inherited a slight legalistic bent from him.

One patent in the small file of archival material that still exists dates back to Berlin, 1934, and is stamped by the Reichspatentamt for a series of toiletries of which the main component was a laxative amusingly named (in English) ‘Happy End’. It was renewable in 1944, by which time there were no happy outcomes for anyone Jewish living in Germany.

My mother, Lotte, was born in Bremen in 1906 on the date of Mozart’s birthday, and exactly 150 years later – no one in her acquaintance was ever to forget that she had a special relationship with Mozart, as if he were her own private property. She was the first child born to Else and Otto Simon, nouveaux riches, Jewish and more Prussian than the Prussians. Else is billed as the spoilt youngest child of a family



of six. Her two older brothers – Eduard and Paul Wertheimer – owned a silk factory in Bielefeld that employed 600 people, and took Otto into the business as part of the marriage settlement.

The story goes that after a few years the brothers offered to take him into partnership. When Otto produced a contract, the brothers remonstrated, saying that a simple handshake agreement between brothers was enough to seal the bond. Imperious with rage, Otto wrenched his young bride from a family which had doted on her and moved to Berlin. Thus began the Family Feud. My aunt Käte recalled how, at the age of three, Else took her to the family house when her own mother was mortally ill, only to have the door slammed in her face by one of the brothers. I've a hunch that what Else never forgave was that she was denied the ultimate drama of a death-bed reconciliation scene, rather than a wish to make her own peace with her mother. The picture of Else's guileless innocence in all this doesn't quite add up. The spoilt darling of the family turned out later to have a taut-lipped, unforgiving nature.

I was dimly aware of the Family Feud all through my childhood. It mouldered on, in whispers, because family money was involved: a complication in one of the brothers' wills, the expediency of finding an English heir to get the money out of Germany at all, my brother (just a baby) being one of two born-in-Britain claimants. Litigation and resentment featured in all this and to this day there is one swathe of my much-dwindled family of which I know nothing. What one might have learned from the Family Feud is that family ties are not sacrosanct.

There were other wills, one being that of Justitzrat Salomon Heinemann, my great-uncle by marriage who committed suicide, childless, on Kristallnacht and left his estate to his wife's family (Aenne, my great-aunt). How much of a will can be resolved when 'stolen' property is involved I do not know. I like to think that technically I am still one of the beneficiaries and therefore part owner of a colour study of 'A girl with a red flower behind her ear' by Renoir, which is the only painting in Heinemann's estate that we know about. I have a black and white photo of it (left). We have registered it with the Lost Art Internet Database in Magdeburg, but to no avail. My father had earlier done his best to track it down, and when last heard of in October 1953 the picture had probably been in the possession of one Helmut Vieweg, then living in Chemnitz and therefore uncontactable behind the Iron Curtain. Steven and Clarissa went to Chemnitz in 2011 hoping to reopen the trail, but the relevant office was closed and Chemnitz too dreary a place



to tempt them to stay longer. A curator at the Chemnitz art gallery tried to help, but couldn't find a record of the study and remarked that anyone owning art in Communist Germany would have to have kept it secret. Herr Vieweg apparently died in 1978; it's a fairly common name and the trail seems to have gone well and truly cold.

During my mother's youth, Otto was well established in Berlin – at first, curiously, in the lottery business, then as 'Chef' of Department at Ullstein publishers, later as a leading forwarding agent to the Hamburg-America shipping line, and later still as an entrepreneur. Do I inherit my own dilettantism from him? The Simons were part of a lively intelligentsia in the Berlin of the time. They rubbed shoulders with famous politicians, poets, painters, collectors. They dabbled in poetry themselves (dire sentimental jingles). There were spontaneous 'at home' recitals where my mother learned her love of music – sitting on the stairs outside the nursery while the muffled strains of Mozart or Beethoven wafted up. At these soirées Else presumably ordered whatever refreshments were offered and had them brought in. I know she cooked herself only on the maids' nights off and that her children dreaded those occasions. Which explains why I did not learn cooking from my own mother.

Performance, both in public and private life, was a feature of their lives. Otto, a handsome, genial, original, ambitious and inventive bon viveur, was totally uncompromising and had no patience for lesser mortals. Stories of outrageous behaviour abound, much of it centred on practical jokes – one has the punchline, 'but I thought it was spinach', and something both inconsequential and unkind to the utterer gave rise to a remark which somehow involved a bowl of soup and spoiled clothing. There was admiration in my mother's voice when she recounted anecdotes whose extremities left me wondering how much I would admire a man with such apparent disregard for other people's feelings.

Else, like her husband, was headstrong, stubborn, grossly egocentric and self-indulgently active. She thrived on emotional drama and would always raise the pitch so that simple disagreement would escalate into full-scale quarrelling, complete with punishment, remorse and reconciliation. This is a pattern that has been repeated in my own life. My mother could only believe in feelings if they were dramatised; in love that was expressed as hatred, or rows that indicated that those around her had *some* reaction to her. One was always on guard. As a result I learned to be quick on the draw, my blades at the ready. Friends can sometimes be disconcerted when I'm thoughtlessly sharp.

Amateur dramatics were also de rigueur: the three children had to concoct some sort of show on Mütterchen and Väterchen's birthday. On these occasions, the birthday 'child'



was always centre stage and had to be fussed over. This pattern is repeated in our house on the insistence of my own three children, who sparkingly delivered a cabaret for me on my 50th birthday, a surprise party on my 60th and this is the year of my 70th which I am celebrating with this book.

Their own birthdays are invariably special days; quite often, but not always, held in the family home with a ritual of smoked salmon breads on a Kangxi charger served with champagne, while the birthday presents are ever-so-slowly opened.

As the firstborn, my mother should have been a boy, and was, therefore, a disappointment to her parents. They named her Lotte: Otto, it would have been. She always said: 'That's not even a whole name, it's half a name'. Sometimes I've seen official letters addressed to Charlotte and wonder who added the other syllable to the name. I called her by her name from the age of 12: 'mummy' was too close a word for the distance needed.

It was not until the third child that Else got her longed-for boy. And doted on him until her 93rd year with unswerving adulation. It cannot have occurred to her, as a spoilt darling herself, that there was anything untoward in expressing favouritism for one child. The two small girls evidently would hear the sweep of Else's flounced skirt as she brushed past their bedroom to read bedtime stories to little Werner. There was laughter in his room, no doubt kisses overheard too, and then the skirt would brush past again, not stopping at their door.

Werner – as the boy – was also encouraged academically: he did Latin (my mother would secretly pore over his books) and then went on to study engineering. I think my mother would have liked to go to university, but there was no question of wasting education on a mere girl, who would get married anyway. So her artistic bent was encouraged and she was allowed to go to art school. She studied art at the Staatliche Kunstschule and did a further diploma in handicrafts in Potsdam. She went on to teach at the Theodore Herzl school in Charlottenberg and by the time it was forcibly closed down in 1939 she had already sailed for England. There the art teaching continued and she made great efforts – successful ones too – to inform herself on the importance of children's art. From her I learned (as a young mother myself) never to draw on a child's picture nor to draw anything at their request, lest it inhibit their own self-expression. There are some typed notes on understanding children's art and why the mother in a family is always painted larger than the other characters; what high walls and shut gates mean; the relief of tension in expressing hidden feelings in concrete form and how this helps parent, teacher and child in realising their own problems. But it's all in half sentences: a breathless attempt to capture some truths.

Art may have been a life-saver, who can tell. For in painting Lotte was able to express and transform many of the feelings



that had no outlet elsewhere in her life. It also got her into a bohemian crowd which was enormously influential in her life. My guess is that Otto and Else quite liked having an artistic daughter and did what they could to support her, but I cannot recall a single story that bears this out.

Only one strand of memory really glows for both Lotte and Käte: the country house in Oerlinghausen near the Teutoburger Wald between Detmold and Bielefeld. This is a place of romance and freedom; somewhere where the sun always shines, where imaginative games are played, cornflowers strew the meadows and the redcurrant bushes are always heavy with fruit. Here the leaden hand of Prussian morality gives way to Rousseau and the pursuit of nature. They love the place right from the start — when it is a large rambling ruin covered in ivy with a water spring gurgling out of the walls. Otto has just bought it because he can divert the spring to the cement factory nearby that he now owns. The family used to spend the whole summer there.

In Lotte's stories Oerlinghausen is a magical place, made even more special by the legendry her parents created as they converted it from a ruin to a country estate. Otto wrote a long poem in which he imagined it as a place chosen by God's children. In a hollow nearby is devil's ground and there the wild hunter sleeps. As the children begin to build, the wild hunter awakes and delivers a curse: no one will sleep content until he leaps above the wall towards the sun setting in the west. So, with the aid of an artist cousin of Else's, they make a cement relief of the huntsman on his galloping steed and bolt it to the wall. That night a storm brews up and the family tremble indoors fearing lest Otto's poem should become real, but the hunter is not shaken and there he stays giving the house the name 'Der Wilder Jäger'. There is laughter in that house, candle-lit suppers and charades; visitors come from Berlin and leave poems and little drawings in the visitors' book. Outside the Wild Hunter stands guard.

He was still there many years later when my aunt and her husband visited the area again. The house, confiscated by the Nazis of course, had become a convent. I don't know if anyone remembers what the Wild Hunter symbolises. And I wonder if the nuns slept happy in their beds. Steven, who is more active than I in ancestor research (but, after all, he does speak German), went there some years ago and thinks it is now a religious retreat.

Der Wilder Jäger, I somehow think, belongs to the two sisters. It was where brother Werner found the frogs to slip down their dresses, and in return he might have had to act



stooge in their imagination games. Maybe he was taken round the cement factory and maybe that developed his scientific turn of mind. In later years he manufactured metal wires and would boast that his products had gone to the moon.

By the outbreak of war Else and Otto were estranged and she'd been living in rented accommodation in Berlin. Otto had been found out as a philanderer; was it with Frau Keller or Frau Meyerchen before her? At any rate, when Else began to suspect the affair she locked the larder and refused to give her husband food (a metaphor perhaps for something else she had refused to give him?). She also made Werner spy on the couple until her evidence was incontrovertible. Legend has it that she leapt up onto a table-top at a local, well-known restaurant and denounced him at the top of her voice to the assembled company, brandishing a chain. I do not know if my mother was present at this appallingly embarrassing occasion, or to what extent her own imagination embroidered it afterwards. She would have been in her 20s at the time and still impressionable. It would have been an element in her unquestioning reliance on absolute fidelity in her own marriage; a concept I too drank in with my mother's milk.

My grandmother never mentioned Otto's name again and acted from that point on as if he had never existed. I tested this out myself on one of my rare visits to Sheffield (where she lived) as a teenager by crassly asking her about him. A steel wall came down and she carried on from a previous conversation as if nothing had been said. Here was a woman who denied love for her mother, her brothers and her husband and who quarrelled incessantly with her daughters. Only her son remained firmly under the thumb where she had placed him, and remained there till his death. Just three of his five children survive and I have absolutely no interest in them or their families. Mark's son James is a possible exception, having returned to his European roots, perhaps to escape from his father, who resides in the California State Penitentiary because he has 'anger issues' which he has twice visited on the police (strange to have a jailbird in the family alongside a drawing by Caruso dedicated to our joint grandmother).

Lotte and Heino met through Otto. There is an irony in this. Rebellious as Lotte was, nothing could be further from her mind than to pay any attention to a young man brought home by her father. She was, however, commanded to be at home to help entertain this new acquaintance that Otto had met at a casino in Juan-les-Pins near Monte Carlo. Sullen and (as ever) unable to disguise her disdain, she attracted my father because he felt they had a common bond – neither of them wanted to be there. Besides, he rather liked a challenge and he may well have seen in Lotte's



youth, innocence and boredom an opportunity for his not-inconsiderable flirting skills. She was wearing a yellow dress, which is a surprising colour for her, and it captivated him.

Not a handsome man – perhaps even joli-laid – he had the sex appeal of gallantry, intelligence and a warm love of womankind. He would charm the ladies at tea-dances in art nouveau splendour and whisper to them across the amber-beaded fringes of the winter lampshades. He was 32 at the time they met and experienced in love; she was 26 and fashionably naïve. The first great love of her life had been with an older woman; perhaps the mother she didn't have. Elisabet Tiessen was married to Heinz Tiessen, a well-known composer and professor of music, and took a special interest in Lotte the child until she was old enough to become a friend. I don't think I am reading anything in when I say there was some extra element in the relationship. I remember, distantly, the theatrically anguished grief when Elisabet died. Had Lotte lived with today's mores, she might have found some real peace in an all-absorbing and reciprocated love relationship with a mother-substitute.

I recall a story of a Gretchen or a Hildegard (does it matter?) who once propositioned my mother, oh so delicately, on a country walk, and how my mother recoiled and was thereafter treated with some animosity by the said Gretchen (whose brothers were without doubt in the Hitler Youth). I heard this story several times and my mother was always scathing about gay pairings (whom she insultingly called 'homos' in the same seemingly broad-minded, not-meant-to-be-derogatory lowered voice that she used when she called all non-Europeans 'coloureds'). She always held that only the male-female bond, with its promise of procreation, can lead to a successful sexual relationship. And yet methinks the lady doth protest too much.

At any rate the relationship with Heino was tempestuous from the start. It was several times off and then on again, with gaps of months, even a year's break at one time. From meeting to their marriage in 1937 took six or seven years – while Berlin jazzed to the tin-pan sounds of the Brecht-Weill gang, the lipstick of *Cabaret*, Jugendstil excesses zazzed up design, and political banners drew red blood signals across the landscape.



# 3

## Breakfast

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**E**ntertaining for breakfast (brunch in effect) is quite hard work. Everything has to be co-ordinated so it is all ready and hot at once, with the toast hot-buttered and the coffee steaming with the frothy milk all ready to go, and the orange juice only-just squeezed. And there are lots of things to put on the table: butter, sugar bowl, salt cellars, jams, marmalades, segmented grapefruit halves, stewed fruits, smoked salmon, caviar, sour cream, croissants, Danish pastries, the Sunday papers – and all the elements for a full English. Plus Bucks Fizz. A proper entertainment breakfast – like a proper picnic – is ideally an *embarras de richesses* that lasts the rest of the day and requires just a tomato and some toasted cheese for supper.

Everyday breakfasts are a mixture of crunch and pap (granola, muesli, toast, porridge) all of which is a childhood-like start to the day. Most of my chapter-starting memory flotations flit across decades in no observable order, but this one starts rather neatly at the beginning.

### *My early years*

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My birth (26 October 1944) was not an easy one: I was premature and a caesarean – from ‘my mother’s womb untimely ripped’, I always liked to say. One lung wasn’t functioning and I was whisked away to spend my first six weeks in an oxygen tent. Just look at me now – who would have thought I started life underweight! But a fighter, I must have been.

My brother Steven, six years my senior, had allegedly ‘ordered’ a little sister and I was conceived in Aspley House in Aspley Guise in Bedfordshire, built by a disciple of Wren in 1690. I know this because Steven’s progressive school was evacuated to the house during the war and my mother was one of the teachers there. (This was Fortis Green School, founded by Beatrix Tudor-Hart, the nursery of which still remains round the corner from where we live now. I went to that nursery too. And so did Gaby.) Heino came from London at weekends, and one November he made some home-made fireworks tapering in twists of blue paper that fizzled bravely when lit and maybe let out a coloured spark or two. Steven’s initial pride turned into embarrassing disappointment.

‘Ordered’ I may have been, but Steven is said to have remarked, ‘Too much noise in this house’ when he came

back to London after the war. I was eight months when it ended, which is too young to have a memory that lurks. And that is of an air raid and I can picture my mother and myself hiding under the oak round table. That's all. There was a radio programme some years ago on how far back memories can go which appeared to disprove the accepted theory that most people can't remember things before the age of three. There was some theory that if you saw yourself hovering above the memory-scene then it was likely to be something you had reconstructed later from being told about it. But if you pictured yourself as being within it, then it might be a 'real' memory. Still, I don't think I can have grasped round-table-ness at eight months, let alone air-raid sound. Does the fact that I experience that moment as a memory make all my other remembrances suspect? Probably it does. Which is why court cases with conflicting eye-witness accounts are so interesting, and why I hold my annual Wittgenstein Poker dinner parties where I present duck-rabbit stew and we all share ambiguous interpretations of an object or event in memory of an occasion when Wittgenstein either did or didn't threaten Popper with a poker in Room H3, King's College, and the 13 people present each gave a different version of the same 10-minute episode (see page 205).

And what of memories that one does not want to revisit because they conjure up a time of distress or unhappiness – or simply that you don't want to experience again that person you once were. Or for reasons of privacy, there are disclosures that even the most honest person will not make. Memories are nebulous phantoms: they only tell some of the story.

I remember many happy childhood occasions: imaginative birthday parties – one with a Hansel and Gretel house stuck with liquorice allsorts, another enacting a Grimm fairy-tale as a shadow play with me playing the princess wearing a tall crown like a Breton head-dress. Creativity was encouraged. Sometimes my mother would give me coloured glass beads to thread on strings and then she would sing the pattern created. I loved that. There was papier mâché, clay, sugar paper and pastels, glue, scissors and collage material on hand at any time. I remember salt blocks that you could buy at the grocers and that she brought home so I could do my 'Michelangelo' sculptures scraping away at the salt with a nail file – a slave, I remember, that sat on a shelf somewhere and gathered dust. Another time she cut a red cabbage in half and gave me purple ink to draw the patterns that it made.

Foodstuffs for art, then, but creativity in the kitchen wasn't rated. The first foray that I remember are some appalling buns, and it is surprising they didn't put me off cooking altogether. I imagine my mother was making something and I think I wanted my own bowl and my own ingredients and I was going to make buns. But there was still sugar rationing then – it must



have been before rationing ended in 1953, so I would have been about eight – and my mother (understandably) didn't want to waste sugar on what she thought of as me playing about with dough. So she gave me salt. It looked the same: I didn't know. What I do remember was that the buns went into the oven and came out again, a little hard, but we could have managed that. What I was not prepared for was the overwhelming saltiness and disappointment. I don't know what happened next: she must have wished she'd given me the sugar.



I did, however, shine at art and won quite a lot of art competitions, the most dramatic being when I was 12 and won the Girl/Eagle/Swift first prize of a Mediterranean cruise to Malta, Palma and Casablanca. Lotte's pre-war German 'exchange' had become Lieutenant Governor of Malta. As the P&O liner we travelled on entered Valetta harbour, the Governor's flotilla came out to fetch me before everyone else had disembarked – but whether I felt chuffed or embarrassed or even quite took it in, history does not relate. I remember being fussed over, and not altogether liking it. I still have the menus from the *SS Iberia* – fancy concoctions with an impressive array of potato dishes linotype-set in lightly embossed small caps on the menu card in pairs: bataille and quelin potatoes; rissolées and Anglaise potatoes; mignonnette and savoyarde; brune and boiled; mousseline and sauté; Cretan and menthe; alphonse and mashed; château and delmonico; julienne and dauphin; allemande and noisette; columbine and snow; bordelaise and fondant potatoes. Just listing them makes me realise anew how wasted the whole experience was on me. It's not just that I long to know what all these potato extravaganzas were, but that this is a metaphor for the lacunae of my childhood and for all the opportunities that passed me by.

Like many first-generation Brits I strove for conformity. I cringed on school outings at what was in my sandwich box. I wanted the neat triangles of cucumbered Wonderloaf and Lyons' individual fruit pies that my friends had; not doorsteps of rye bread thickly smeared with liver-sausage knocking up against a blackening banana. I rejected the art alongside a rejection of what my mother wanted for me. I struggled against her, as children do, and I am sure I have been half-successful and half-not.

Lotte was regarded by her friends as gifted, artistic, warm-hearted, generous and cultured, but underneath, she was an unhappy child who regarded her children as extensions of herself and tried to live the life she wanted through them. She thought I was a difficult child and took me to see the renowned Dr Winnicott, who took one look at the situation and told her, 'It's not the child, my dear; it is you', and found her a psychoanalyst from among his pupils. The analysis lasted for 13 years. There's a case history in Dr Margaret Little's book

*Transference Neurosis and Transference Psychosis* (1981) where my mother appears as Frieda. It makes interesting, if not exonerating reading – if the analyst found her ‘overbearing and a busybody’ what chance had I? I think Dr Little’s methodology might be questioned by present-day analysts. Not only was my mother given a copy of the book but she was invited (or permitted?) to translate the case history into German. The psychoanalytic hour was nibbled at the edges and strayed into a ragged social space in which the good doctor was referred to as ‘my friend Margaret’. Dr Little allowed too much invasion of her own privacy: it would have helped me if she had made it clear to my mother that boundaries do, and should, exist.

These sessions often entailed my coming home from school to an empty house, which I claimed at the time to prefer; now it seems odd that they couldn’t have been earlier in the day. Maybe because she was not paying the full psychoanalyst’s fee and so had to make do with a part of the day when other mothers wanted to be at home to listen to the ups and downs of the school day. There can’t have been any regularity to this, because sometimes there would be a note on the front door which just read ‘Khalifa’: this meant that the front-door key was in the pocket of an old raincoat made of elephant hide that lived in the outside loo, which was down a side passage to the back of the house, and I was to let myself in. Had she not worked out in the morning that she would not be at home at 4 o’clock? And why did I not have my own key? I couldn’t say analysis made her better: she was difficult and domineering. We had an uneasy relationship – which is a shame because we share many characteristics and I am more like her than I care to be.

I probably should have gone to art school, but I wanted to do better than that. Girls at that time didn’t go to university as a matter of course, so that is what I was going to do. Not only that but I would jolly well read Philosophy as my brother Steven had – what a mistake: it was Oxford school and all logic and I didn’t really understand any of it. Later, when I got into computers, a latent logic seam was tapped and I began to see the point. By the time I did go to art school (in 2007) it had become a university, but was not at the time. The norm in my youth was for girls to do art or music or secretarial courses or get sent off to France for a year to be au pairs and learn French. Women’s magazines were entirely about how to catch your man and, having caught him, keep him. This in the early so-called swinging sixties. My 1960s didn’t swing: I was a dreadful square. I’ve got four years of a scrappy diary kept from 1960–64, which give an insight into progress with o-levels and what I thought about boys (what a mercy there were no other diaries) and I come across as priggish, a bit of a snob, quite well read, and longing for friendship.



Not that I didn't have friends at school, but none endured – although I re-met a couple in later life and we formed new friendships all over again. The yearning was for complete understanding and soul-mateship and whether I found that in a girl or a boy was initially immaterial.

My school years were cocooned and safe – exactly what my parents would have wanted after the turbulence they had gone through. Hampstead Garden Suburb primary school provided a good English education: we did maypole dancing in the spring, played skipping games all the year round, were all given coronation mugs for the Queen's Coronation (it still holds my pens and paintbrushes), and went out into the playground with smoked pieces of glass to watch the total eclipse of 1954. The school's motto was *Per ardua ad astra*. Someone very famous came to give the whole school a talk on the Everest expedition. One teacher there was inspirationally outstanding and I owe him a lot – Mr Offord, who left banking in order to teach. After the Eleven Plus he took us in groups round all the major sites of London, taught us their history and showed us how to love the city we lived in. We were divided into four groups: I was a St Catherine's docker and we went to the working docks, complete with cranes and banana boats.

So cocooned was I that I didn't even know at the time that I had been borderline in the Eleven Plus and nearly sent to a secondary modern school. My parents had rattled a few cages and put it to some authority that you couldn't expect children of non-native English parents to know that a stitch in time made nine, or that you had to be as sharp as two pins, or that a bird in the hand was worth two in a bush (part of one paper was devoted to filling out the second half of a whole string of sayings and proverbs). Their intervention swung the needle in favour of Hendon County Grammar School and I came top in my first term and stayed in the top three for years. That was more because I liked learning things off by heart than that I had learned to think for myself (that came much, much later) and also I had nice handwriting. That counted. And enabled me to best Mark Freedland, who later became a professor of employment law at Oxford, was always streets brighter than me, and whose budding legal brain baulked at handwriting counting as of academic value.

I found myself opposite that school not long ago when it loomed unexpectedly out of the mist, the road name having been obliterated from my memory, and I experienced a wave of white dread that reminded me of how much I had hated the place, good education though it may have delivered.

A few moments stand out. One was being permitted to design the scenery for the school play, which normally the senior art mistress would do, only to find she had taken credit on the programme and I was merely listed as one of the







and this was my introduction to perfectly formed canapés, including miniature choux buns with chocolate and coffee piped icing, all served with tea or coffee. My mother was always good at being friendly to the girls who served the tea and hired two of them to serve our wedding breakfast. Occasionally we would be invited ‘upstairs’, which was where the current director lived, and there wine was served and my mother would be in her element, mixing with the great and the good. She would sometimes contrive these treats by positioning my father at invitation-distance from the director’s wife just as she was about to retire upstairs. Heino was a member all the time he lived in England – it was his club and invitations to join him were special, and therefore memorable: mostly it was his oasis of Friday-night escape from the family. We had a small plaque put up there to him when he died, to support a fund-raising initiative. Last time I visited, this wall of individual plaques had been quietly removed to make way for one grand sponsor. I tried to find out what happened to the disdained predecessors, but no one at the Royal Institution is ‘coming back to me’ and I have not persisted.

This scientific bent came back to me years later when I did my first certificate in glass and found the technology of it very interesting. Before that, everyone had been surprised that I took to computers very early on. Certainly Heino would have shared that interest and he would have marvelled at, and enjoyed, the technological revolution. One thing he did understand about me was how much I hated school. And on the first day of term he would present me with a little bag of fudge to sweeten the pain: it became known as Fudge Day. I did the same for my three – though only Vita was ambivalent about school so it wasn’t strictly necessary. The recipe I used is in this book (page 250) – though I’m not including confectionary as a general principle.

School dinners were pretty terrible; there was no choice; no escape from eating what was on your plate (a tapioca that we called ‘frogspawn’); no cafeteria-style service and everyone fought not to find themselves at the head of the table because then you had to serve everyone else. That must be why, even today, I will happily present food and bring it in style to the table, but I really don’t like dishing it up.

I suppose there must have been some packed-lunch dispensation, but you had to have a reason. Over half the pupils at that school were Jewish, so they had the kosher excuse. But I couldn’t run with that as I attended Christian Assembly and took some pleasure in going to school on Jewish holidays: we’d usually do quizzes and subject-specific games on those days, and it was all rather fun.

They were also days on which I knew I could rely on my friendship group – the little foursome I was in had one member who liked to divide and rule so you were never quite

sure who was going to be your best friend from one day to another. She was always absent on Jewish holidays – later in life I discovered that her parents were well-known collectors of children’s folklore, more involved in their collection than their own offspring, and that she and her sister never speak to each other. She must have been practising on us. Perfidy amongst friendship groups was something I learned to put up with.

But perfidy in the staff was another matter. I remember a feeling of absolute outrage on coming back from holidays to a new term and being told that a rule about French grammar we had learned the term before wasn’t completely true and that there were exceptions. How could the French teacher have lied to us so? And on another occasion the headmaster had stopped me in the corridor and said to me that he was very sorry I had not been announced as a prefect in Assembly that morning, but not to worry as I would be one in the next batch.

I wasn’t. But my Head Girl moment was to come in another context.

## *Breakfast specials*

### *Granola*

This quantity goes a long way. Any dried fruits and nuts are nice. Sour cherries give it a zing (but are expensive).

1. Combine all the dry ingredients in a large bowl, except the raisins and salt.
2. Melt the rest gently with the salt and then pour over the dry ingredients and stir to coat.
3. Spread the mixture evenly over two baking trays lined with parchment.
4. Bake with the ‘toasting’ function for 20 mins until toasted, stirring half way through.
5. Add the dried fruit and store in large jars.

### *Nada’s apple compote*

Just eating apples sliced up and stewed gently in honey, cloves and cinnamon so they retain their shape. What could be a better breakfast than that?

### *Toast*

#### *Daily toast*

There always has to be toast. Toast stacked in a toast-rack made from cello bridges (spoils from the Aubert Bridge factory in Mirecourt from my violin-maker-based article-writing days).

#### *Cinnamon toast*

I’ve still got a shaker in which I keep a mixture of cinnamon and caster sugar in a rough proportion of 1:4. Its original purpose was

4 lb rolled oats  
12 oz each of wheat germ and oat bran  
8 oz each of: sunflower seeds, chopped almonds, chopped pecans, chopped walnuts, hazelnuts, brazils – or any combination of some of these  
1½ tsp salt  
4 oz brown sugar  
tsp cinnamon  
a mixed ½ pt of maple syrup and honey  
½ pt vegetable oil  
tsp vanilla extract

*to put in after cooking*  
raisins, dried cranberries, dried apricots, papaya – any combination and quantity (generous)



for cinnamon toast for children's Sunday breakfasts, but when our old-fashioned cooker with its eye-level grill went to the Great Cooker in the Sky in 2001 I stopped doing it. Nothing to it, but oh so comforting. And if you are Dutch (as we now are married into) then you can do this with schprinkles (the Dutch equivalent of roos and roosjes). Or grated chocolate.

1. Toast one side of the bread.
2. Butter the other side.
3. Dust with the cinnamon and sugar mix.
4. Toast that side so it bubbles up.

### *Pain perdu*

White bread (or brioche loaf) soaked in a mixture of beaten egg, sugar and orange juice. For a feast-day variant, use egg-nog as well.

A Sunday special traditionally served with maple syrup brought to us from Canada on Angela's visits over here, but runny honey is very nice with it too. And this is the place to mention the years when Stephen garnered our own honey from the beehives he kept on the allotments down by the children's primary school. I think he was quite passionate for four or five years, until they sadly died one particularly cold winter.

1. Fry in butter.
2. Dust with cinnamon.
3. Serve with maple syrup, and orange or mango slices on the side.

### *Soft-boiled eggs*

1 or 2 eggs per person



I have never mastered the perfection of the soft-boiled egg. There are many theories about boiling the egg in the water from cold, or adding it when the water has boiled, or pricking the egg first, or 'frightening' it in cold water as soon as cooked – but I think in the end it is just instinct. My sister-in-law Clarissa has a theory: 'I do eggs 8 mins from cold when using gas. They are usually from the fridge, large ones and pricked. This doesn't work on induction cookers, too quick, so I reckon 4.5 mins from boiling. I think my reputation comes from an added element of intuition which I can't describe'. Gaby and Stephen always planned to do an egg chart (with timings and measurements) but never did. A perfect egg is a fine thing as the opposite is so disappointing. And in our family tradition, a boiled egg is best eaten with special egg spoons (I think Lotte had some ivory ones): sadly I didn't rescue Käte's German mother-of-pearl spoons before the house clearance.

Delia says:

#### *Method 1*

1. Have a small saucepan filled with enough simmering water to cover the eggs by about ½".
2. Gently lower the eggs into the water, one at a time, using a tbsp. Now switch the timer on and give the eggs exactly 1 min's simmering time. Remove the pan from the heat, put a lid on it and set the timer again to:  
6 mins for a soft, fairly liquid yolk and a white that is just set but still quite wobbly;

7 mins for a firmer, more creamy yolk with a white that is completely set.

#### Method 2

1. Put the eggs in the saucepan; cover them with cold water by about ½".
2. Place them on a high heat and, as soon as they reach boiling point, reduce the heat to a gentle simmer for:
  - 3 mins if you like a really soft-boiled egg;
  - 4 mins for a white that is just set and a yolk that is creamy;
  - 5 mins for a white and yolk perfectly set, with only a little bit of squidgy in the centre.

### *Oeufs en cocotte*

This is another simple dish that is surprisingly difficult. It's just an egg cracked into a well-buttered ramekin and cooked in a bain marie for about 15 mins. But to get the whites gently firm and the yolks a bit runny is really difficult with normal eggs, even if they are fresh and free-range. I think the only time I did manage this dish was when we had our own hens – Carmhen, Henrietta and Minhen – and you could watch at breakfast time when one of them came out of the laying cage and run out and get the egg then and there.

The secret might be to get the oven good and hot first and to put a bit of crème fraîche on top to stop the top of the yolk going hard. Nice also, Florentine – with spinach at the bottom, but so hard to get right.

1 egg per person

### *Eggs Benedict*

See page 132 for the Hollandaise sauce.

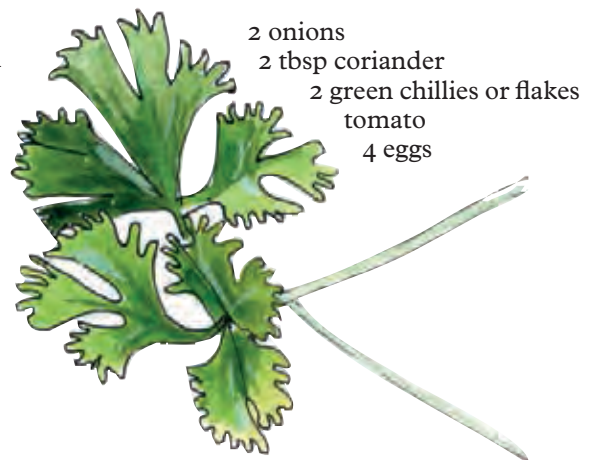
1. To poach the eggs properly: bring a pan of water to the boil. Add a dash of vinegar and reduce to a simmer.
2. Crack the eggs one at a time into a small bowl and gently tip into the simmering water. Poach for 2-3 mins. Remove with a slotted spoon and dry on a kitchen towel.
3. Toast the muffins, put a slice of ham on each half, then the egg and cover with a blanket of the sauce.

2 poached eggs per person  
1 toasted muffin each  
slices of good ham or smoked salmon – or why stop there? A dollop of crab instead!  
Hollandaise sauce

### *Gail and Dari's akoori*

We only know one couple who are a marriage of Jewish and Zoroastrian and this is their favourite breakfast dish.

1. Fry onions, finely chopped, in oil till soft but not brown.
2. Add chopped fresh coriander, chillies finely chopped (optional, adjust to suit taste or leave out altogether) and chopped tomato.
3. Beat 4 large eggs in a bowl, add to onion mixture and beat well. Add a large tsp salt.
4. Return pan to fire and scramble to desired consistency. Serve on or with toast.



2 onions  
2 tbsp coriander  
2 green chillies or flakes  
tomato  
4 eggs

- 2 eggs per person
- onion
- green pepper
- tomatoes
- bacon bits
- thin Polish sausage (can use chorizo)
- paprika

## Krakow eggs

We had something like this when we were with Steven and Clarissa in Krakow on our sentimental journey to visit the birthplaces of our two fathers in Trstenà and Przemyśl. Although my father's village is now very close to the Polish border, there was no public transport to take us across it. I think we got a taxi there, walked across the border and then got on the next bus to Krakow. At the hotel we had something like this for breakfast and it became known in our family since as Krakow eggs. Stephen thinks you scramble the eggs separately and then add them – but that's more washing up.

1. Sweat all the chopped vegetables.
2. Add the sliced sausage and then pour in the beaten eggs and scramble.

## Valentine eggs

We make this for each other for Valentine's breakfasts sometimes.

1. Separate the eggs.
2. Fry the yolks and the whites separately in a small non-stick pan.
3. Put one on top of the other and cut out a heart shape through both layers.
4. Put the white heart inside the yolk circle and vice versa.
5. Serve one to each person with appropriate accompaniments.

2 eggs



- 2 sheets of A3 paper
- 6 sheets of A4 paper
- a roll of sellotape
- 10 elastic bands
- 1 egg



- 1 tsp instant yeast
- 1 tbsp milk
- 8 oz buckwheat flour
- 8 oz flour
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 pt (or more) warm milk
- 1 tbsp butter
- butter and icing sugar to serve

## Another sort of egg

This is a kind of a recipe: an ice-breaker exercise designed to make a new group of people engage with each other. We did this at the International Glass Centre in Brierley Hill on our first day there. The forty-odd of us were divided into two teams and each group given the 'ingredients'.

The task was to create a construction so we could drop the egg from the top of the stairs onto the floor without breaking it. The staircase was a rather grand sweep with a long stained glass-window at its bend and a banister rail at the top that dropped to the hallway of what had at one time been a Victorian library. We had a notional 20 mins (later extended) to collaborate. Someone, in such circumstances, has to steer the group, and though I held back at first, my own recent experience as a board chairman edged me into that role. My team made a parachute which successfully sailed down the stairs, cushioning the egg's landing in a crumpled paper basket. The other team suspended the egg inside a structure that had cone-shaped landing points all round to buffer the drop. Both teams won.

## Adrie's poffertjes

We've had them in Amsterdam since, but Adrie made them for us first. He, of course, had a proper poffertjes pan with indentations of just the right size, but for the rest of us it's guesswork – Lakeland has a silicone mould for blinis which is about right if you want them perfectly formed.

1. In a small bowl, dissolve the yeast in the milk. In a separate bowl, combine the buckwheat flour, flour, eggs, sugar, salt, half the milk and the dissolved yeast.
2. Whisk smooth and add the remaining milk, beating again.
3. Cover the bowl and rest for an hour.
4. Melt butter in a frying pan. When it sizzles, add tspfuls of the batter in circular movements to create mini pancakes.
5. Turn the poffertjes over as soon as they have set, using two forks.

## Waffles

I've got two waffle irons: a traditional oblong one from Brussels and a heart-shaped one bought in Norway. If you don't use these things regularly they don't work very well, and the batter doesn't turn out. But fun on the odd occasion.

1. Mix the flour, baking powder, salt, cardamom and sugar. Add the eggs, cream, milk and lastly the butter, mixing till smooth.
2. Rest it if there's time.
3. Preheat the waffle iron on a medium heat.
4. Put a medium ladleful of the batter mixture in the waffle iron, making sure not to overfill. Cook both sides until golden-brown and cool on a rack so that they don't steam up and get soggy.
5. Nice with syrup, fruit, or schlagsahne for wicked occasions.



8 oz plain flour  
 2 tsp baking powder  
 ½ tsp salt  
 ½-1 tsp ground cardamom (optional)  
 2-3 tbsp sugar  
 6 eggs  
 250 ml cream  
 250 ml milk  
 7 oz butter, melted and cooled

## Jennifer & Laura's blueberry pancakes

Jennifer and Laura cooked these when they came with Angela in 2012. It reminded us of the time Emily ate all the extra blueberry pancakes the morning we went to Hearst Castle on our wonderful American trip in 1987. They'd given us four each – far too many, but she couldn't bear to see them go to waste. I'm surprised she didn't explode.

a pancake mix using self-raising flour and buttermilk so they puff up (like drop scones – see page 165)  
 blueberries  
 very thin bacon fried to a crisp  
 maple syrup

## Apfel im Schlafrock

My mother's version of 'apples in their dressing gowns' was a simple pancake batter with rings of tart apples sliced in. You'd make sure they were coated in batter and distributed over the flat pancake surface and then fry and turn over in the usual way.

When I googled this, it turns out to have a much heavier version involving marzipan and puff pastry, but this is about my personal food memories so I am sticking with the simple pancake. Stephen's mother, Jojo, did apple fritters that were a bit like this but they were smaller, using one apple ring per fritter.

1. Make the batter by eye and then leave to stand.
2. Add sliced cooking apple rings to the batter as you fry each pancake.

some flour  
 2 eggs  
 some vanilla sugar  
 milk  
 melted butter in at the end  
 an apple sliced into rings

## Mehmet's Ottoman eggs

This is one of Anna's from her travels in Turkey and she says it was the sultan's favourite breakfast, and that the onions would be slowly cooking for 6 hours. In our case, 20 mins has to do.

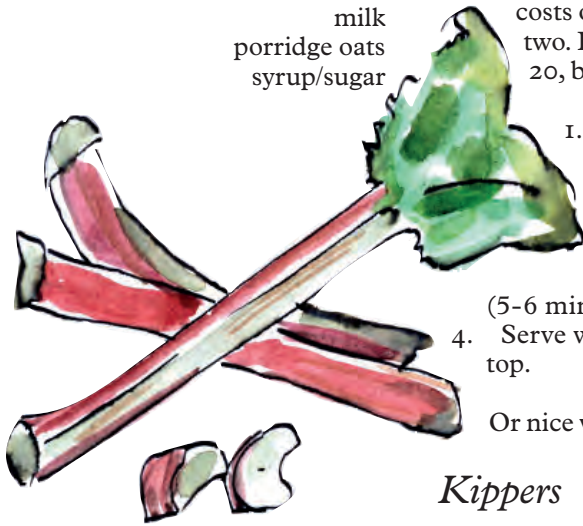
2 very large yellow onions  
plenty of butter  
salt  
4 eggs  
bright red chilli flakes

1. Peel, halve and then thinly slice the onions and coat them in melted butter.
2. Cook in a shallow pan on low heat for as long as makes sense. The idea is to end up with soft onions which are beginning to caramelize, but are neither brown and sweet, nor crispy. It may help to cover the pan for some of the cooking. Stir occasionally.
3. Taste and season; then make 4 indentations in the onions and crack an egg into each 'nest'.
4. Continue to cook until the whites have set but the yolks are still runny.
5. Sprinkle some chilli flakes (or sweet paprika, black pepper or chopped parsley) over the dish.
6. Serve with toast.

## Porridge

Not a regular in our house as Stephen hates it. Käte always made it – the Scottish way, with salt. Lotte did it with sugar (and in the depths of winter I do it very occasionally as it sets me up for the day). You can buy little pots to which you just add boiling water for almost exactly the price of 1 kg of Quaker Oats. But why? It is so easy; costs one 20th the price and takes maybe 10 mins instead of two. For one person (and ought to be referred to in chapter 20, but I couldn't see where):

milk  
porridge oats  
syrup/sugar



1. Half fill a standard mug with porridge oats (about 1½ oz); top it up with cold milk and a spoon of sugar.
2. Leave to stand while you potter about doing other things.
3. Put onto the heat and gently let it thicken, adding a bit of boiling water if it goes too fast (5-6 mins).
4. Serve with golden syrup and/or brown sugar sprinkled on top.

Or nice with rhubarb.

## Kippers

Heino would sometimes buy kippers for Sunday breakfast, and it was always a treat. I'm not talking boil-in-the-bag here, but good old-fashioned kippers smoked in a way that has probably been health-and-safetied out of the window now. It was a treat, because it took so long to eat them and the technique of parting the bones from the flesh had to be mastered. That's what fish knives are for.

1 kipper per person  
milk  
brown bread and butter

1. Poach kippers (10 mins at most) and serve.
2. Butter the bread.



## *Matt's bacon, eggs & grapefruit*

Ruby is his pet pig (kune kune crossed with wild boar). She is not for eating, but Pixie (ginger and black spots) might make the breakfast plate. Matt is not squeamish about rearing food to eat. He also has a huge number of chickens (black rocks and bantams) and four Khaki Campbell ducks who lay an egg a day all year. They might be dinner one day. The bantams lay tiny beautiful eggs (I've blown one for a future Easter egg). There are lots of other animals on their small-holding (including three children) and lots of home-grown vegetables. Matt (with whom I have collaborated on four glass and metalwork projects) came up with this for breakfast, which he called Ruby Frappé or Pig over Ice. Rachel answers his emails so maybe this is her title not his: the original came from an old Australian magazine.

1. Take the flesh of the grapefruit. Remove any seeds, segment and place in blender jug along with the strawberries.
2. Add honey, mint leaves, ginger and ice. Blend or process until smooth. Serve immediately.
3. Crush ice by putting a scoop of ice into a tea towel and bash it with a rolling pin.

3 ruby red grapefruits  
1 punnet strawberries, hulled,  
or 2 cups frozen strawberries  
1-2 tablespoons honey  
1/3 cup fresh mint leaves  
1 tablespoon finely grated  
fresh ginger  
2 cups lightly crushed ice

## *Patum peperium*

Otherwise known as Gentleman's Relish and very favoured by my particular gentleman. I used to make little pots to give away at Christmas until we discovered that it doesn't have as good keeping qualities as the posh stuff from Fortnum & Mason's. But you won't want to keep it, as it's delicious spread on hot toast for breakfast.

1. Soak anchovies in milk for an hour.
2. Remove and pound all ingredients.
3. Find a nice pot. Fill and cover with a pretty paper label inscribed with curlicues.

50 g can anchovies, drained  
a dash of anchovy essence  
2 oz unsalted butter  
pepper

## *Second breakfast*

Let's not forget coffee and freshly-squeezed orange juice in the first breakfast. And a memory from Stephen's father is the second.

Grandmother Pepi would greet us with the words 'one fried egg or two; on cheese?'. The reference was to a hard white cream cheese which came straight from a peasant's cottage in an oblong slab, a foot or so long and some ten inches wide and two inches thick. One or two eggs fried in fresh butter would be placed on top of a slice half an inch thick of this cheese, served with a slice of the standard brown bread with butter spread thickly and, within minutes, this dish would be placed before you to catch a glimpse of heaven. There would then be a chaser of sour milk, cool and delicious. At 11 a.m. this repast was known as 'second breakfast' and in sheer gluttonous expectation it left all other meals well behind.



# 4

## Soup

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Sarah's already-mentioned vegetable soup was the start of my love affair with cooking. She didn't follow a recipe and for most soups – once you have got the general principle – you can make it up from whatever ingredients are to hand. Sweated vegetables with stock and beans or pasta added at will; chunky zuppa di verdura, thinner soups blended with cream, or meal-in-itself soups where the spoon stands upright in the bowl. At one time my bible was Hannah Wright's *Soups* (1985) and I used it a great deal when Stephen's father was dying of bone cancer and we were trying to give him strengthening, easy-eat repasts.

In the winter I tend to have a lunchtime bowl of something I make on the first day which lasts three or four lunches and gets added to depending on what leftovers there are. Sometimes a beef stew becomes a goulash soup. Other times I chop up some vegetables and add a tin of Heinz tomato soup. If I think of it as a minestrone, then it has to have some shredded cabbage or sliced sprouts to qualify.

The recipes given here have come from friends and are combinations I wouldn't have thought of for myself – and so are worth recording. One reason why there are not very many in this section is that I almost never serve soup at dinner parties: there's something of the nursery about spooning up soup that doesn't work with grown-up conversation; the scraping of the spoon and the slurping noises some people make, how you tip the bowl – better avoided. Chilled gazpacho is an exception (page 136) because you can hand round little bowls of chopped extras to add in, making it a sharing activity with colour and drama.

### *Heritage*

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Astonishingly, this book had reached 90,000 words before I remembered good old archetypal Jewish chicken soup. Certainly it figured in my father's childhood, along with Friday night candles. What else is staring me in the face that I haven't remembered? Forgetting this soup is undoubtedly because the whole 'Jewish' thing, and my own relationship to it, draws forth the under-the-carpet sweeper. I haven't satisfactorily worked out what being Jewish means to me. On the one hand, I'm proud of an interesting heritage and I love the humour; on the other hand it's a club I don't particularly choose to be in.

There's no help for that; I just *am* in it, but I don't pay my dues or go to its meetings. I don't seek out the fellowship of other club members, and technically speaking – but only technically – I didn't marry one. In actual fact, Stephen, though Jewish officially on the wrong side, is more 'jewish' than I am.

On his father's side, Stephen's pedigree leads back in direct line to Israel of Ruzhin, rabbi of Zadagora, who had gold-plated dishes, sparkling silver cutlery, rare porcelain and crystal. He, as zaddik, lived in a palace and travelled in a gilded carriage drawn by four horses in magnificent harness. This was within a Russian tradition that required the saintly leader to live in a spectacular style of pomp and splendour, like King Solomon, and in this way to restore to the Jews the dignity and honour lost in millennia of oppression. The story told in Stephen's home of this illustrious great-something-grandfather, was of an incident when he was passing in his gilded carriage through an elegant street in Vienna and spotted a shop selling meerschaum pipes. Bidding the coachman stop, he walked into the shop and waited, tapping his long fingers on the counter.

The assistant was in no hurry to serve a Jew, however fine his clothes and proud his bearing. When at last he ambled over, he seemed unwilling to produce the superb pipe in the window, and showed an assortment of other pipes instead. At length, roused to a pitch of fury, the zaddik demanded to see the proprietor. Yet still no one appeared willing to sell him the one pipe he had set his heart on. In the end the magnificent object was produced. By this time the zaddik was in a towering rage. He threw the pipe on the floor, crushed the remnants underfoot, demanded the bill, paid the prodigious price and swept out and into his gilded coach, leaving the shopkeeper gawping in amazement. Ludek and his two brothers adored this story and told it often. I'm not sure I admire it so very much.

Stephen's father was a romantic Zionist and, had he not married a Canterbury gal, probably would have emigrated to Israel. He talked about it unceasingly (and tediously) and, had he not died at the far-too early age of 72, we might have found it difficult to talk to him about 21st century Israel and Palestine. He might have endorsed the Israeli treatment of the Palestinians: we emphatically don't.

As a child, growing up in post-war England to parents who had no religious connections, but plenty of cultural ones (my mother's secular lead prevailing), what I really wanted was to be like all my school-fellows. I wanted to assimilate. In this I am a statistic: there are lots like me – others in my family before me. My maternal grandfather who had been a Delegierter of the Red Cross during the First World War, and wore a smart Prussian uniform complete with gold braid



and polished buttons thought no one could possibly touch *him* as his influential friends would protect him. He died in Sachsenhausen – his children believed of diabetes; my brother and I think not. We saw the gas chambers in Auschwitz and heard of the letters describing illness people were forced to write home.

Three of my grandparents and two of Stephen's went to equally untimely ends – the word in my childhood was 'perished', which swished in undertones at parties my parents would drag me to for want of a baby-sitter. These evenings bored me with a passion, but now I should like to rewind the clock and look around the room. Musicians who would fill the Royal Festival Hall were in abundance and also I think Alexander Korda, Wolf Suschitsky, Ernst Gombrich (who came to Lotte's 90th birthday party), Nikolaus Pevsner, Ernst and Anna Freud, George Weidenfeld, Vicky, Berthold Lubetkin. There were many thickly-accented émigrés who mingled with new acquaintances like Jeremy Hutchinson, Christina Foyle and Lord Harewood. I think the reason I hated these events so much was that the rooms dripped with incomprehension – an unspoken 'Vy are vee here?' – palpable survivor guilt that as a child I found disturbing. I recollect people hastily pulling down a sleeve if I came near, to hide a tattooed number that someone, with pained fascination, had asked to see. Maybe that's why when Vita had a fish tattooed on her shoulder I couldn't quite hack it. Not even an artistic fish. Sorry Vitz.

In the one-page note about his father that my father wrote to accompany the family tree, the last line reads: 'He was deported in 1942'. Deported? Shot in the woods is one possibility. Another is that he went with the rest of the small community who were rounded up on 6 June 1942, transport number 42, and sent from Žilina direct to Sobibor, where the path to the gas chambers was referred to as the Himmel Straße. That's all we know.

Those of us who grow up with holocaust stories flowing in our blood recognise a shared history in each other and there is a tendency to bond with people who have a similar background. It's true that a lot of my friends are Jewish, but when I tallied up my who's who of contributors I found to my surprise that the overwhelming majority are not, by about three to one.

The one time the whole Jewish Question really exercised me was when Gabriel wanted to do his bar mitzvah. Half his school friends were being coached for it: the birthday presents were an attraction, and he was keen to learn a new language (inheriting a facility with languages from both his grandfathers). I think he also wasn't quite happy at school, feeling neither a part of that community nor outside it. The upshot was that Belsize Square Synagogue, with its continental

liberal leanings, took him on. Rabbi Rodney Mariner said, when I mentioned that Gaby wasn't circumcised, that he hadn't heard that: and then paused and said it wasn't an issue anyway, and some famous Jewish spy in Nazi Germany hadn't been circumcised either and how useful that had been. So they taught him Hebrew and they taught him his bit of text, and they taught him what being a good Jew was.

That's where we came a cropper, because being a good Jew means being part of a Jewish community. In other words one of his parents would have to join the Synagogue. Easiest if I did, as I was incontrovertibly the real thing, but I could not. Friends said: 'You won't do this small thing for your son?' But it wasn't a small thing – it was an impossible hurdle. I weighed in with Hamlet's, 'To thine own self be true ...' but lots of people didn't understand. Gaby himself at the time probably didn't, but now so absolutely does.



It fell to Stephen to 'regularise' as they termed it: he wouldn't need to 'convert' to what he already half was, but he would have to go to instruction classes. For a time, he grew interested in these and would say to me when I steadfastly refused to go with him, 'My dear [how I hated that condescending term], you should come; you might actually learn something'. And so I might have. And so I didn't. It was a relief, then, that when it came to it, Stephen found that he could not go to Cardiff where he would have had to swear in front of five Rabbis to be true to the faith. Why Cardiff, I am not sure, but I am glad that it was a distance away and therefore inconvenient and something to think about. He thought. And decided against.

With neither parent joining, Gaby could not do his bar mitzvah. At the time, it angered me that he should be denied an experience and expression of hard-earned learning; that it wasn't his fault if neither Stephen nor I wanted to join the club. Subsequently I have understood that it *is* a family affair and generations sharing a heritage in a certain manner are part of what it is all about. I would comfort myself by saying that if Gabriel really wanted to, he could do his bar mitzvah at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem at any time. He didn't and I don't think he ever will. Just one legacy of that time remains: every autumn he fasts, and then feasts on Yom Kippur.

There are no Yom Kippur dishes in this book – just chicken soup, and without its matzo balls.

### Chicken soup

I was tempted to title this ‘chicken soup with rice’ after the Maurice Sendak ditty – ‘I told you once, I told you twice, All seasons of the year are nice, For sipping chicken soup with rice’ – but actually I like mine with vermicelli, peas and Chinese egg flower.

No recipe needed. Just simmer chicken bones in water with onion and carrot for about an hour and season. Any dish cooked in wine (such as coq-au-vin) makes a good rich stock. I’m not ashamed to say we scrape everything off plates into a big saucepan and make a bouillon, so the freezer is always full of stock. Well, it’s boiled up so there aren’t any germs. Purists will say you have to have a broiling chicken with its feet – but never mind that.



### Erbensuppe

This is another childhood memory – simply because it features in *Struwwelpeter* where Kaspar won’t eat his soup and wastes away and dies. I’m not even sure the picture does show pea soup, but in my memory it does.

That memory might be confused with a childhood drama when I refused to eat my peas and they were served up again (cold) for the next several meals. That was how my mother had been brought up and I supposed in a rage, she tried the technique out on me. I think some physical violence was threatened as well. I got over it and pea soup is rather delicious, can be made from store-cupboard ingredients and is worth remembering about.

8 oz split peas  
2 small onions, halved  
4 oz frozen peas  
¼ pt milk  
bit of cream  
butter  
s&p  
speck or bacon or smoked  
sausage (optional addition)

1. Soak the split peas if they need it; otherwise simmer with the onions till tender and add frozen peas.
2. Whuzz, using as much liquid as needed.
3. Reheat and skim off any scum, then add cream, butter, maybe some mint, maybe bits of bacon, etc.

### Robin’s parsnip soup

Robin was rather shamefaced about this, but I’ve adopted it ever since she served it to us. The secret ingredient is the Korma sauce, but if I don’t have that then I add curry powder at stage 1.

3-4 parsnips  
butter  
half a jar of Patak’s Korma  
sauce  
lemon zest

1. Cook chopped and peeled parsnip in the butter for a few mins.
2. Add the lemon and korma sauce with water and simmer till soft.
3. Purée, thin down to taste and season.

Nice with a dob of sour cream and flat parsley to lift the colour.

## *French onion soup*

The trick to this soup is time. The onions need to cook and caramelize slowly – for up to an hour. And once you’ve added the stock, let it simmer for another hour before serving. This is the time to use real beef or chicken stock, which I always have in my freezer.

1. Cook the onions slowly over a low heat in the oil and butter, with a pinch of salt and sugar. Stir often and let the onions soften completely before taking on any colour (about 40 mins). Aim for soft, caramel-coloured, sweet onions.
2. Bring the stock to a boil.
3. Stir the flour into the onions and cook for another few mins. Add the boiling stock and wine, season and simmer gently for 45 mins or more, stirring occasionally.
4. Add the brandy to the soup and check the seasoning.

Serve in warm soup bowls with grated cheese and croutons/ garlic bread.

3 big Spanish onions, peeled and thinly sliced  
3 tbsp olive oil  
75 g unsalted butter  
1 tsp white sugar  
s&p  
2 tbsp plain flour  
2 or so litres good stock  
1 large glass of dry white wine  
3 tsp brandy, or to taste

squares of fried bread croutons and some grated cheese (or garlic bread with the cheese melted on top)

## *Eva’s celeriac and apple soup*

1. Cook chopped and peeled apple and celeriac in the butter for a few mins.
2. Add stock and simmer till soft.
3. Purée and season.
4. Serve with diced apple on top and a dusting of paprika.



1 oz butter  
2 lb celeriac (roughly)  
3 dessert apples  
2 pt stock  
pinch cayenne and paprika

## *Lotte’s mushroom soup*

This was one of her classics – she also did a tomato soup in the same way but with stock, not milk (I blanch the tomatoes first and pierce the skins so that they are easy to peel).

1. Any quantity of mushrooms and some fried onion. Cook both, put in a blender with a tbsp flour and some milk and whuzz.
2. Adjust for texture and heat through.

## *Käte’s cauliflower soup*

How can any of us forget Käte and her cauliflowers? The soup was made from the water that the cauliflower had been boiled in for supper the day before. Often this would be served at 4 o’clock when we were fresh off the train from London to Dumfries and she’d have a meal ready whether we wanted it or not. The soup consisted of a white sauce thinned with cauliflower water and a bit of lemon tossed in, and maybe a bit of mashed leftover cauliflower as well. She asked for this at the pub lunch on her 102nd or 103rd birthday. I wonder what they gave her.



1 lb carrots  
 ½ lb sweet potato  
 1 onion  
 4 oz cashew nuts (dry roast till  
 brown then roughly chop in  
 blender)  
 2 tsp ground coriander  
 2 pt stock

### *Vicki's cashew carrot soup*

I did something vaguely similar: not carrots, but butternut squash; not sweet potato, but 2 pears; not those spices, but a spoon of curry powder. And no cashews. But otherwise same principle and very winter warming and comforting.

1. Chop & sauté the veg. Add to stock with coriander s&p. (Vicki used some daramsala spices already mixed: coriander, ginger, cumin & cloves.)
2. Bring to boil, then simmer 20 mins till veg are soft. Whuzz to purée soup. Add water if necessary.

Sprinkle with chopped nuts.

1 lb braising steak  
 ¼ lb ham  
 2 partridges and a mallard (can  
 use pigeons instead)  
 2 chopped onions  
 6 sliced carrots  
 1½ pt strong stock  
 50 chestnuts

### *Ivan's chestnut and partridge soup*

I think this is the most divine 'soup' I have ever tasted – it's a ragout really. This makes quite a lot. Make a day in advance. Adapted by Ivan from Hannah Glasse.

1. Brown all the meat. Add the onions and carrots.
2. Pour in the stock, cover and simmer for about 2 hours until steak is soft.
3. Remove the meat and take everything off the bones, reserving the meat on a plate.
4. Cook the bones in water for another hour and add the strained liquid to the main pot.
5. Add the chestnuts and make sure they are cooked through.
6. Blend and add in the plate of meat and mixed herbs.

Serve with a fried French roll on top.

onion  
 courgettes and leeks *ratio 2:1*  
 ground cumin  
 s&p  
 lemon zest  
 bits of smoked chicken or  
 smoked salmon or a prawn or  
 two

### *Sara's coffee cup soup*

Like me, Sara just looks at lists of ingredients to get ideas and then follows principles she knows or makes up something on the basis of what she has around that's similar. She served us this after a cinema performance *Clemenza di Tito* live from the Met in little coffee cups decorated by Suzy Cooper. It was just the right quantity at that time of the evening and was pretty and smart.

1. Liquidise the cooked vegetables and add the 'bits' if using.
2. Serve it hot or cold.

2 lb leeks, white part  
 1 lb potatoes  
 2 oz butter  
 1 stick celery  
 1 pt chicken stock  
 1 pt milk  
 nutmeg, salt  
 double cream

### *Vichyssoise*

This is another oh-so-70s chilled soup that I had forgotten about until riffling through the pages of *The Cookery Year*.

1. Sweat the diced vegetables in butter for a little while.
2. Add the liquids and seasoning and simmer for 25 mins.
3. Cool and then liquidise, adding the cream.
4. Chill 2-3 hours.



## Tuscan bean soup

This is a stew really and given to me verbally by my hairdresser Laura one day when I said, Can't decide what to cook tonight [sigh] to which she replied, Tell me about it! [eyes to the ceiling]; I'm doing Tuscan bean soup. No quantities but I got the idea and it sounded a more-than-for-two ragout. How many did she cook for? Oh, there were always people coming and going in her house so she would make sure there was something around just in case.

So I called up Sonja and Paul and said a waste to have a bean stew and a nice hairdo and no one to share it with. They came and shared. Last minute 'what-are-you-doing' invitations are always fun. This was enough for more than 10 and with Stephen's home-made walnut and pine nut pesto (page 121) to follow made a terrific supper.

1. Start by soaking the beans (or cheat with tinned). My patent quick-soak if overnight isn't possible is to boil them for 10 mins and turn off the heat with the lid on and leave as long as you can before cooking.
2. Cook the onions and celery; then the (skinned) sausages.
3. Add the carrots, garlic, herbs and paprika. Cook, stirring, for 10 mins more until the carrots begin to soften.
4. Add the tomatoes and stock, then add the cooked beans, courgettes and cabbage. Simmer for 20 mins until the vegetables are tender.



2 or 3 onions  
4 celery sticks  
3 carrots  
6 sausages  
chorizo chunks  
3 garlic cloves  
fresh thyme  
fresh rosemary  
tsp smoked paprika  
chopped tomatoes – real or tinned  
2 litres stock  
a substantial 'throw-in' of mixed beans (soaked and cooked) – cannellini, flageolet and butter beans  
some of a Savoy cabbage  
2 courgettes  
pesto and crusty bread to serve



# 5

## Couvert

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When we were in Japan, at cherry-blossom season, during Gabriel's post-Cambridge year there (1999), we were invited to the home of a well-to-do family who served us a magnificent banquet of many courses. They had a wall cupboard, the length of a large room, with serving dishes and place settings in a huge array of shapes, sizes and different kinds of pottery. At each change of plates, great care was taken in selecting the complementary vessel to suit the morsel it was to hold. The meal took hours and was a real sensory pleasure.

### *Stuff*

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High class restaurants also marry together aesthetics and flavour with fine crockery that enhances the cuisine. Life is too short and my kitchen too small for such finesse at home, but I do think it is important to have several sets of dinner plates, starter dishes and dessert bowls for different moods. And you can't have too many serving bowls and platters for the arrangement of colour combinations. On ordinary supper evenings we choose from four piles of plates: only one set has enough for ten diners.

If you grow up with fine tableware you learn to be careful with it. We had KPM (Karr-Pay-Em) Königliche Porzellan-Manufaktur tableware – plain white porcelain dinner plates and delicate tea-cups with ribbon-thin handles designed with Bauhaus minimalism in 1930-32. The set is called Urbino and a tea-cup and saucer as I write costs £74 – serving dishes are sky-high. The china is on view in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. My parents had the complete service down to the sauce-boat and egg cups. My brother and I divided what was still left, and I have all mine, some of which were 50s or 60s replacements. Interestingly, in its earlier years this now prestigious company had produced expensive wares (but inferior to Meissen) and Frederick II of Prussia decreed in 1769 that Jews had to buy KPM for their dowries from the royal factory to bump up his revenues. I wonder now if that had become a tradition that my mother unknowingly followed.

There was decorative tableware too. The multi-floral Villeroy and Boch Alt Strasbourg set that Lotte and Käte had in their childhood was replenished in both their homes when they travelled abroad: it must have been discontinued relatively recently and replacements can only be found on eBay (£22 a soup bowl). Käte always told how she would hope her plate would be the one with the tulip when meals were dished out. Emily has the last of these now.



The drinking glasses were Lobmeyr, from the Patrician service, designed by Josef Hoffman in 1917 – tissue-thin and offering the mouth a whisper of a barrier between the liquid and your lips. My father once bit into one and allegedly the bite mark is still to be seen in one of the eight remaining glasses I still have today (though knowing what I subsequently came to know about how glass behaves, this seems an unlikely explanation for the damaged rim). I've seen these in the shop at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris for £70 a white wineglass. My two remaining champagne flutes come out on champagne occasions (every birthday; every Christmas), and the wines very rarely. I am more liberal with my 18th-century English opaque twists, which are much more robust (and between twice and ten times as expensive); they had an airing at 11 dinner parties last year. My two balusters – c. 1700 and 1717 – are each 500 times the price of Habitat's best Burgundy glasses. No wonder my friends look on nervously as I twiddle a sensuous knopped stem.

My childhood silverware is Bruckmann & Söhne set Nr. 6550 'Jubiläum', designed in 1930 and has my mother's initials engraved on every piece – I've seen the exact same service in the Bröhan Museum in Berlin. There were 12 settings of everything and I have the 152-piece set almost intact (five small spoons missing, a cake fork and maybe a fish knife). A 63-piece service failed to reach its reserve at an auction in 2004; the estimated mid-price being £3,000 – so let's say my set is 'worth' £7,000, except that this is the sort of thing most people don't value anymore: it's tedious to clean and I only do it at Christmas or on really special occasions. You can't put the knives in the dishwasher; but nor should you our David Mellor set either.



The inherited tablecloths and napkins are damask and are embroidered with the same monograph of Lotte's marital initials as the cutlery. Not long ago I came across a thin copper template: the outline must have been pounced through onto the table linen and then embroidered by hand over the markings.

The point of giving today's prices is: if they are expensive now, so must they have been then – perhaps that is why nothing got thrown away and everything was mended. It was

all part of my mother's dowry. The story goes that one of her wealthy uncles, partner in the J. Wertheimer silk factory in Bielefeld – it has to be the unmarried Onkel Eduard – invited Lotte to dine at a restaurant of her choice to discuss what she would need upon her marriage to Heino. When she chose the Berlin equivalent of the Ritz (most probably Kempinski's in Unter den Linden), he is said to have trebled the dowry, 'because, my dear, I see you are a woman of good taste'. And so a good collection of furniture, silver and linen was shipped to London in 1938 while Jews were still allowed to export. The largest item is the antique, and probably genuine, 16th century Gotischer Schrank or Gothic cabinet once made to hold the household linen. Its architectural carved oak frontage, cured of its woodworm, spreads with the weight of generations across a wall of our front room: I cannot find a use for it nor get rid of it.

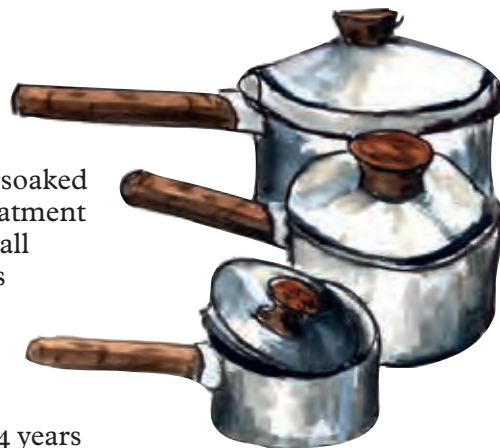
I imagine the whole dowry went direct from the shop straight to England, as the newly-weds never set up home together in Berlin. This sounds generous of Onkel Eduard considering the silk and rayon factory had been 'acquired' by Unilever two years before, in 1936, for what must have been a derisory sum. His younger brother, Paul, had wasted no time and set sail for England as the forced sale was completed: Eduard (dispossessed of his family manor in Detmolder Straße as well as his business) stuck it out another six years in Bielefeld before poisoning himself. Maybe somewhere he knew that in providing my mother's trousseau he was also buying himself a measure of immortality. Small consolation that the street that bounded one side of the plot where the silk factory had stood has been renamed Wertheimerstraße.

The trousseau objects were an important part of my own aesthetic when growing up. I was a snobbish purist, appreciating only pure and simple lines. Plates must be white; cups thin; glass unadorned. When I went up to Bristol University in 1965 I detested the willow pattern plates we had in Hall at Clifton Hill House and had long conversations with my (then) new friend Susanna about how I wanted to smash them all. Too busy, I would say, you cannot see your food for the weeping willows. I am willing to bet they were nice old ones too – unlike anything that would be in a hall of residence nowadays.

I wouldn't mind an English willow pattern set of plates as one of our everyday choices to match the motley of serving dishes I have collected over the years. Now, I have a passion for blue-and-white china – whether English, Chinese, Japanese or Dutch. We have several chargers on which the Christmas and birthday smoked salmon sandwiches always make their rounds. One of the Kangxi plates was bought for us for 15p at a Women's Institute Bring-and-Buy sale by Jess – that couldn't happen in today's Antiques-Roadshow society.



What the trousseau did not include were cooking implements of any kind: no saucepans, casseroles or baking dishes. Food was not regarded as an art form and such tools as it required were not treasured. I recall a motley selection of battered and dented pans, most of which had endured many rounds of burnt food, soaked and scraped out of them. Slapdash, too-busy-to-care treatment on high-heat gas cookers led to what we would politely call ‘caramelised’ food nowadays – but the blackened carrots and bullet-hard peas that I remember were not fancy chargrilled vegetables, but boiled down to a cinder. By contrast, the quality set of Swiss stainless-steel saucepans that Jojo gave us as a wedding present are still well-kept and serviceable. They no longer gleam, after 44 years of use, but, with their new gun-stock walnut handles, are still treasured.



What you cook with, what you eat off and what you drink out of are all part of the aesthetic experience of food. A prettily arranged individual plate is part of the theatre of dining out. Is it for the home dinner? I flirt with it a few times a year. If you are going to plate up – and in my tiny kitchen I don’t really have the space, and it’s only in moments of too much watching of Masterchef that I want to anyway – then the centre of the plate does need to be white so that your artistic drizzle patterns and tower arrangements can be seen.

This is particularly true of starters.

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## *With the drinks*

I generally announce that nibbles with drinks is Stephen’s business as guests arrive hungry and chomp their way through piles of crisps, while I want them not to blunt the appetite so as to be attentive to some tasty starter to follow around half an hour after they have arrived. But he thinks a drink without a nut is like a fish without a bicycle. I have a small repertoire for when I can be bothered. Jennie and I used to joke about a friend of hers who kept smoked salmon on mini blinis in the freezer ready to whip out and microwave for the unexpected cocktail guest. Nice idea – but not my style.

### *Emily’s canapés*

Our Emily is Queen of Canapés, not just because she has made some spectacular ones over the years, but because she enjoys doing them – pretty platefuls of bite-sized mini works of art. I’ve a feeling she isn’t going to give me recipes for these as she makes them up as the occasion demands. This is what it demanded on one spectacular feast occasion:

1. mini BLTs with garlic mayo
2. gorgonzola, pear and walnut croustades
3. stuffed eggs with capers and anchovies
4. smoked salmon, sour cream and caviar on blinis
5. mini open burgers with homemade red onion and tomato relish





6. pesto and sun-dried tomato mini palmiers
7. chorizo with white bean purée
8. mini fish cakes with sweet chilli dip & garlic mayo
9. prawn and wasabi crème fraîche croustades
10. mini Christmas puddings (sausage meat with prunes and figs) with truffled cheese sauce, with a holly decoration made of pink peppercorns and a thyme leaf – her own invention

On another, she made salmon cornets from *The French Laundry Cookbook* (1999) – a very troublesome two-page recipe. Basically ‘ice-cream cones’ made of a mustard-seed encrusted biscuit, shaped into a cornet while still hot and filled with a minced red onion crème fraîche with minced shallots and chopped salmon tartare on top with a chive spear ‘straw’.

When she took me for a surprise weekend to Barcelona (2014) we found some cones in the fabulous Boqueria Market for making pinxtos, and bought them. We had some fabulous pinxtos, the best being:

1. broccoli cream (possibly whuzzed and sieved, and lightened with egg white) served in shot glasses with smoked mussels.
2. a chocolate egg-half filled with hazelnut chocolate covered with coconut cream and topped with mango purée somehow congealed within a sac so it burst like an egg yolk as you bit into it.

### *Sarah J's parmesan lollipops*

I think Sarah found these on YouTube, but for me they are hers and always produce the ‘wow’ factor they elicited when she served them to us.

3 oz parmesan cheese, finely  
grated  
1 tsp poppy seeds  
1 tsp sesame seeds



1. Toss the cheese and seeds together in a bowl. Line two baking trays and sprinkle a small handful of the cheese mixture into a chef’s ring. Lift off to reveal a neat-edged disc of parmesan and lay a lollipop stick (or toothpick) on top, with the tip of the stick touching the middle of the disk.
2. Repeat with the remaining cheese and sticks to make 10 in total (leaving about 3 cm spaces between them to allow for any spreading during cooking).
3. Cover up the part of the lollipop stick with some more parmesan mix.
4. Bake in the oven for 5 mins, swapping the lollipops to a different shelf halfway through. The cheese should be lightly golden-brown and bubbling.
5. Remove from the oven and slide the paper off the baking trays and onto a rack to help speed up cooling. Leave to cool for 1–2

mins, or until the lollipops have become crisp. Very carefully remove each one with a palette knife.

## *Baba ghanoush*

Emily is a great fan of this for starter dips and picnic accompaniments. She says she doesn't run the aubergine under the tap as that takes off the juices. She does the putting-it-in-a-plastic-bag-hot trick (also useful for peeling roasted peppers): seal the bag, allow to cool and then the skin slides off. She also adds a spoonful of water.

1. Burn the aubergine on top of the stove, cool under a tap, peel and mix with the rest by hand or in a blender.
2. Nice with sliced black olives and parsley on top.

1 or more aubergines  
olive oil  
good dollop of tahini  
a lemon (juice)  
garlic  
crushed cumin (optional)  
seasoning

## *Two Tom ideas*

Tom described two starter or canapé ideas that he had at Shrubland Hall, Suffolk. The cucumber one was a bit slidey, but nice and fresh on a summer's day. Quick to do if you are waiting for guests to arrive and find you haven't got any nibbles (which is regular for me).

### *Cucumber slices*

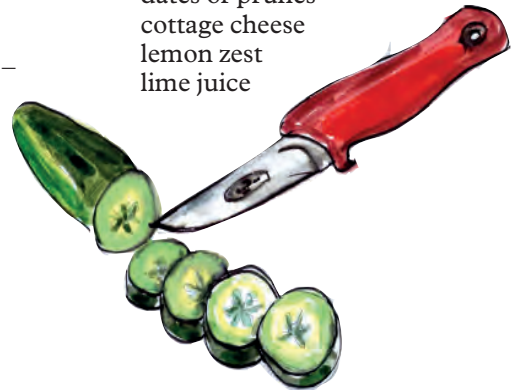
1. With an apple corer, remove the centre from a whole and fairly wide cucumber.
2. Stuff it with peanut butter (preferably crunchy, not smooth).
3. Slice into quite short lengths (say, 1 cm) and arrange in patterns.

cucumber  
peanut butter

### *Cucumber arrangement*

1. Take a head of celery apart. Arrange the leaves on a plate – Tom said eight leaves arranged like sunbeams.
2. Take medjoul dates or Agen prunes, and stuff them with a mixture of cottage cheese and finely shredded lemon zest.
3. Place a slice of cucumber between each pair of celery leaves; put one date/prune on each slice of cucumber. Sprinkle with lime juice to taste.

cucumber  
celery  
dates or prunes  
cottage cheese  
lemon zest  
lime juice



## *Roasted nuts*

### *Anna's almonds*

Spread almonds on a baking sheet, sprinkled with fine and coarse salt, a little sugar, chilli flakes, pepper, olive oil to coat and lemon juice (1 lemon per large tray), then mix them up and roast in a hot oven for about 15 mins until nicely toasted, mixing them around every 5 mins. They crisp up more as they cool so don't worry if they're not crisp when they come out of the oven.

almonds  
lemon  
chilli flakes  
olive oil

### *Sophie's toasted walnuts*

Cook walnuts in a little olive oil, a pinch each of sugar and salt, some finely chopped fresh rosemary and a sprinkle of hot smoked paprika.

walnuts  
salt, sugar  
rosemary  
paprika

## *Gail's chopped herring*

Herring fillets – easy if you can buy the herrings already salted or you can use rollmops. If not soak skinned herring fillets in 50 g salt to 1 pt water for two hours and then wash off salt.

- 1 large onion
- 3 large pink lady (or golden delicious) apples
- 6 large hard boiled eggs

1. In a magimix chop everything a bit coarsely.
2. Add ½ tsp caster sugar and leave in fridge to meld.
3. Gail puts it on buttered matzo crackers. It will freeze if necessary.



## *Angels and devils on horseback*

Something easily rustled up at the last minute if you are ready before the guests arrive and no one bought any nuts and olives.

*Devils* – prunes wrapped in bacon, grilled and skewered with a toothpick, or dates stuffed with blue cheese (or goat), wrapped in bacon and baked until crisp.

*Angels* – oysters wrapped in bacon and grilled until crisp.

## *Gaby's bourecks*

I don't even know if that's how you spell that. Certainly his signature dish when he was quite young – he learned to make them at school. They are little cheese pasties and I remember we often got him to do them when guests were coming and I expect he was allowed to stay up and hand them round too.

- puff pastry
- cheese
- 1 egg

1. Puff pastry cut in rounds.
2. Grated cheese placed in one half.
3. Egg wash on the other half.
4. Pinch together and bake.

## *Vita's toasties*

Vita was a Fashion Fringe Finalist in 2012 and had an exciting four months putting together a collection of 12 'looks' that we proudly watched paraded down the catwalk at Somerset House that autumn – just three designers chosen from over 1000. What a proud moment that was – she'd made this for us shortly before it all happened.

- a handful of broad beans
- 1 tbs of peas
- half a mozzarella
- s&p
- lemon zest, fresh mint and a
- glug of olive oil
- some pecorino and fresh peas to
- garnish

1. Rip up some fresh buffalo mozzarella, grate lemon zest and keep aside.
2. Blanch the broad beans before easing them out of their shells. Bring the pan back to the boil and cook the peas. Drain and keep a handful of whole cooked peas aside.
3. Mulch the rest of the peas and beans together in a pestle and mortar or with a fork leaving some chunky and others as a purée. Season.
4. Toast slices of sourdough bread, rub a garlic clove over one side and heap the pea and broad bean mix on top.
5. Add ripped pieces of buffalo mozzarella and freshly ground black pepper and ripped fresh mint. Add the lemon zest and grated



pecorino on top. Finally, drizzle some olive oil and finish with a few fresh peas on the top.

Serve straight away with a chilled glass of Riesling.

### *The Master's anchoiade de Croze*

Made for Brethren of the Art Workers' Guild by the Master George Hardie (in 2013) when we visited him in his fine Sussex garden and much praised by everyone there. He said it was from Jane Grigson's *Fish Cookery* (1998) and in his variation he leaves a few figs unpounded, just chopped so it isn't too sludgy. Served on toastlets. The AWG is an important part of our lives – Stephen being a Past Master and then Honorary Curator and I the Honorary Editor.

1. Mix the first 5 ingredients and pound the next 4 into a paste.
2. Combine the mixtures and season with the oil and juices.
3. Spread on brioche or finger rolls or bruschetta. Or serve as a dip.

2 oz chopped parsley, chives, tarragon  
2 sprigs fennel or dill leaves  
2 crushed garlic cloves  
1 small chopped onion  
3 chopped dried figs  
1 small diced red pepper  
12 blanched almonds  
12 anchovies in oil  
12 anchovies in brine, washed  
4 tbsp oil  
lemon juice  
1 tsp orange-flower water

### *Leithal canapés*

Susanna's niece Laura made these (she'd just finished a course at Leith's) at a summer dinner party held at St John's Villas in 2003. The whole meal was wonderful, but I only recorded these: I was so impressed I did them for months afterwards. And then, in common with other recipe ideas, forgot about them.

1. Baked potato shapes (I think they were small long ones cut into slices, but mini ones halved longwise are just as good).
2. Spread with sauce Béarnaise or aioli (page 132).
3. Top with bits of smoked salmon or caviar.

baby potatoes  
sauces  
salmon or caviar

## *Starters*

Most of the vegetarian, salads or picnic dishes could work as starters, but because I favour the groaning table (or picnic rug meze) approach, they are in amongst the rest. Now and then it is fun to plate up something pretty; and there are some things that deserve a solo appearance either because they go in individual dishes or because there's an element of drama to the serving of them. These are some and other starters are listed in the index.

### *Artichokes*

Not so much a recipe as a reminder that these were once obligatory every 19 September as Gaby's birthday starter, but as our family increases in size that's becoming a bit unmanageable as well as expensive. Good too for a leisurely picnic that doesn't involve too much carrying.

1. Serve with sauce Hollandaise (page 132), a French dressing (Stephen's on page 154) or brown butter. Melt butter in a saucepan until it goes darkish brown, but does not burn.



1 cooked artichoke each  
or arrange the pulled-off leaves  
of 2 or 3 in concentric circles on  
a large platter  
1 oz butter (optional)

## Tomato essence

This is totally magic and a wonderful thing to do with a glut of tomatoes. Sophie introduced me to it in Raymond Blanc's *Kitchen Secrets* (2012). It is the basis of a tomato symphony and variations that I do when I have time. It freezes well so good for a second, or even third, occasion too.

½ kg cherry toms  
½ celery stick, chopped  
1 shallot, chopped  
½ fennel bulb, chopped  
1 garlic clove, sliced  
5 sprigs thyme, stripped and  
chopped  
5 g chopped basil leaves  
1 tarragon spray  
2 tsp sea salt  
1-2 tsp sugar  
4 drops Tabasco, same of  
Worcester sauce

1. Combine all ingredients in large bowl, mix and pulse in batches, for 2 seconds only.
2. Leave covered in bowl to blend for at least 3 hours.
3. Then drip through a muslin bag to collect the golden liquid as it drips through – 2-3 hours. Don't squeeze the bag, and if there is some tomato sediment, let it drip through a coffee filter to separate it. Takes a bit of time but worth it.
4. Use essence for soup, jelly, sorbet or risotto. Pulp can be used in soups or sauces (though it will need enhancing with a tube of purée if all the juice is taken out).

## Tomato jelly

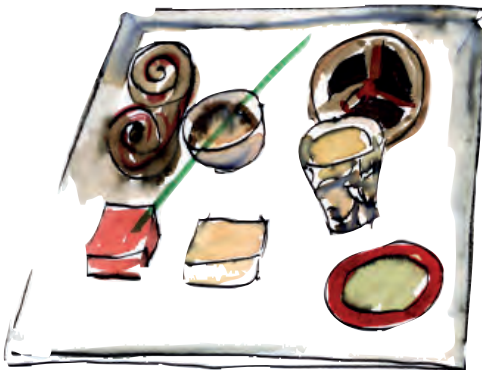
The *Secrets* recipe is frankly wrong – needs more gelatine. A little tip on gelatine got from somewhere (but is it true?) is that it loses its gelatinousness if you let it boil in the water when dissolving it.

200 ml tomato essence  
2½ leaves of gelatine (i.e. 1 leaf  
per 100 ml plus a bit for safety)  
delicate little bits of red pepper,  
tarragon and basil

1. Soak the gelatine (whole) in water.
2. Heat it with a little bit of the essence and mix with the rest.
3. Pour half into ice-cube shapes and leave for 10 mins.
4. Decorate with the little bits (*Secrets* says decorative tomato seeds but that's too much fiddle-faddle).
5. Cover with the rest of the mixture.
6. Leave for several hours or overnight.

## Tomato symphony and variations

I have done the following, arranging a combination of some of these prettily on a plate:



a shot glass of the essence  
a mini tomato stuffed with mozzarella  
baby tomatoes stuffed with goats' cheese and put under the  
grill  
2 cubes of jelly (one clear, one red)  
a scoop of sorbet made from the essence  
a tomato-red-pepper tartlet  
a sliced rolled pancake or omelette with sundried tomato  
pesto and cream cheese  
tomato palmiers with sundried tomatoes  
a slice of black tomato with basil essence drizzle  
tomato bread

## Mushroom parcels

This is so impressive – and easy, easy. Just toss mixed kinds of mushrooms – preferably some of them exotic and maybe a dried cep or two for flavour – in olive oil with cooked, diced salad potatoes, tarragon, chervil and double cream and divide onto as many squares of greaseproof paper as there are people. Bring together all the edges and tie string in a double knot at the top, trim and pop into the oven for about 15 mins. Serve them as they are, with scissors to hand so guests can cut the string to open the parcel.

This would work with different herbs and baby vegetables and I've done it with celeriac and hazelnuts instead of the potatoes.

In *Plenty* (2010) Ottolenghi adds Pernod, but I don't usually have any and I didn't think it needed it. Bayleaf liqueur worked quite well on one occasion.

## Fish parcels

This is out of my Magimix pamphlet and is like the mushroom parcels but this time you tie up the baking paper at each end so they look like boiled sweets, with the paper join at the top so that it will open out to form a little bowl when served. Andrew and Roz gave this the thumbs up when I tested it on them, but thought it best to decant the fish out of the 'sweet paper' onto the plate.

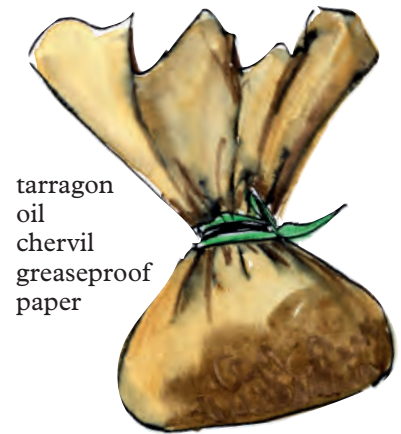
1. Sweat the juliennes briefly.
2. Place a portion in the middle of a square of parchment.
3. Put the fish on top and sprinkle with white wine, dill and lemon.
4. Wrap up the parcels tying at each end so it looks like a boiled sweet.
5. Bake for 25 mins on medium oven.

## Christmas crackers

This was for years my speciality. Not sure where I originally got the idea from – a fancy magazine I daresay. I have a feeling the original used mincemeat, egg and brandy, but the seafood version was the one I used to do – transporting them on trays down to Catherington when we had a Hampshire Christmas with Steven & Co. There must be a way of incorporating a joke and a few trinkets in each cracker.

1. Make the filling of fish cooked gently in butter with a dash of cornflour, then add cream, egg yolk and white wine to thicken. Let it be quite thick when cooled.
2. For each person, paint melted butter sparingly over 2 sheets of filo to stick them together.
3. Put some filling in the middle at the bottom and roll up, sealing ends with more melted butter. Pinch cracker shapes at each end and clip together with strips of silver foil (several folds). Cut ends in a zig-zag pattern.
4. Bake in medium oven for 10 mins (keep looking as they can suddenly burn).
5. Decorate the top with shrimp and parsley + a squirl of lemon. (Or for a sweet version, some crystallised fruits and pinked rice paper tucked into the cracker ends.)

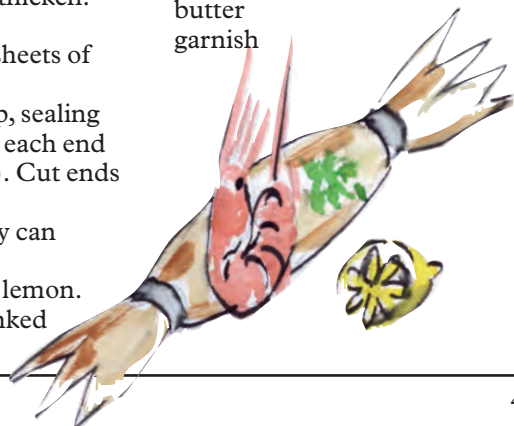
mixed mushrooms: 4-6 oz per person  
potatoes: 2 oz per person  
double cream



tarragon  
oil  
chervil  
greaseproof  
paper

juliennes of carrots, courgettes,  
& red peppers  
fillets of hake, salmon, perch or  
other  
white wine  
lemons  
dill

filo pastry  
any seafood filling – scallops,  
prawns, monkfish  
butter  
garnish



## Stephen's Russian zhulien

He originally got this out of Lesley Chamberlain's *The Food and Cooking of Russia* (1990) but I haven't checked at source. We've met Lesley through both Dan and Vivienne on various occasions.

small chopped onion  
button mushrooms  
flour  
white wine  
sour cream  
dill (or fennel)

1. Sauté onions, then add the mushrooms and cook until they give up their liquid.
2. Toss in flour and add white wine.
3. Then add the sour cream and bake in buttered ramekin dishes with chopped dill or other seasonings.
4. Serve hot (also quite nice cold).



## Julia's sweetbreads

This is reconstructed from memory as I can't find the version she wrote out for me many years ago. I learned about them from her – and so many other things as well.

2 lb sweetbreads  
vinegar and water  
a few chopped shallots  
flour  
butter and a little oil  
parsley & almond flakes

1. Soak in several changes of cold water and a few drops of vinegar for a few hours.
2. Remove all membranes and tubes.
3. Slice each sweetbread in half crosswise.
4. Dredge the sweetbreads in salted flour.
5. Heat butter and oil until very hot and add the sweetbreads and shallots, but don't move them around.
6. When they are a light golden colour on the bottom side (about 3 to 5 mins), with tongs, carefully turn them over to sear the other side until that side becomes a light golden colour.
7. Garnish with parsley and almond flakes and serve with toast.



## Potted shrimp

Another old-fashioned British classic that I was sure I did from Mrs Beeton, but it turns out that the referring contents page is torn in my copy so I would have had difficulty finding it. It was on the internet, of course (with the anchovy an addition). This is perhaps the place to mention that my Mrs Beeton is an 1874 edition. I inherited it from Jojo in a somewhat fallen apart state. When Stephen and I went bookbinding to West Dean in 2010, I restored it to much satisfaction.

3 oz butter, plus melted butter  
to serve  
2 blades of mace  
a pinch of cayenne  
freshly grated nutmeg  
14 oz peeled brown shrimps  
½ tsp anchovy paste or  
Gentleman's Relish  
hot toast, butter and lemon  
wedges to serve

1. Put the butter, mace, cayenne pepper, and a little grated nutmeg into a medium pan and allow the butter to melt gently over a low heat. Add the shrimps and stir gently, allow them to heat through and leave on a low heat for 5 mins.
2. Remove the mace blades, divide the shrimps and butter between ramekins and level the tops. Leave in the fridge to cool, and then spoon a thin layer of clarified butter over them.
3. Serve with hot toast and lemon wedges.

## Philip C's gravadlax (buried salmon)

My school friend Philip (now very eminent) makes this every year and catches his own salmon to boot. From other sources, I deduce that the amounts of salt and sugar are not critical and some people think the weights are not necessary. This makes quite a lot if it is sliced thinly on bread.

1. Take a middle-cut piece of salmon and split lengthways.
2. Mix all the ingredients except the salmon together. Spread the mixture over one half of the salmon fillet and massage it into the flesh. Put the other half-salmon on top, skin side up; thin end to thick.
3. Cover with foil, and put an inverted oval dish on top. Add a heavy weight (Philip uses an encyclopaedia) and leave in a cool place for 2-3 days. Baste the salmon once or twice with the liquid that forms. Turn the salmon over every 12 hours. The longer you cure it, the firmer the flesh will be.
4. Unwrap the salmon and pat dry with kitchen paper. Slice thinly, either vertically or horizontally, and serve with rye bread.
5. If you only need to use one half of the salmon, the other half can be left in the fridge for up to a week or stored frozen for longer.
6. Mix dressing to taste.

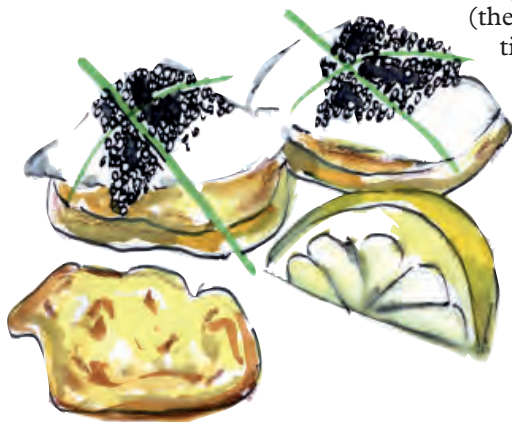
## Clarissa L's farinata

There something similar in *Plenty* – individual sizes and topped with onions and cherry tomatoes and sour cream.

1. Stir ingredients and leave to soak for several hours.
2. When ready to cook, add the olive oil, chopped tarragon or rosemary and (optionally) chopped sun-dried tomatoes.
3. Pour into a hot-oiled pan, let it bubble and turn over. Should be thin but firm. Cut into segments. You need a flat large pan; her farinata was a winner, but mine have never been quite as good.

## Blini with caviar

A great favourite both with us and the Greenwalds. Making the blini looks complicated on the page (they have to rise three times), but at one time I had it off by heart and it seemed easy. I'd look it up now in *The Cookery Year*. The only downside is that you have to fry the blinis while your guests are there and I don't like doing that any more.



2 tbsp white sugar  
2 tbsp coarse sea salt  
4 tbsp chopped dill  
1 tsp juniper berries (optional)  
4 tbsp mustard seeds or 1 tbsp caraway seeds  
4 tbsp gin (optional)  
plenty of white pepper  
1 kg salmon fillet, scaled and pin-boned but skin left on

### Mustardy dressing

2 tbsp dark mustard plus 1 tsp dried mustard powder  
1½ tbsp sugar (maybe honey instead)  
3 tbsp white wine vinegar  
150 ml olive oil  
loads of chopped dill

1 cup gram flour (chickpeas) – she sieved it but why bother  
add to 1¼ cups of water  
2 tbsp olive oil  
herbs or dried condiments

yeast  
flour  
onions  
sour cream  
lumpfish roe  
2 eggs  
milk  
chopped onions  
lemon segments

# 6

## Breads and pastry

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So to bread and pastry, which is the staff of life. Linked because they are made with flour which is the number one staple in our part of the world. Its political importance was even drummed into us at school with the Corn Laws and then the Repeal of the Corn Laws. Heady stuff that I dozed my way through. Perhaps this section should include pasta, but it isn't going to. I *have* made my own tagliatelli, draping them over a horizontal broomstick to dry – and yes, they were good and it was fun to do, but I'm not Italian and didn't learn the touch when I was five. And even Michel Roux went for the shop-bought fresh pasta on a blind testing, the other contenders being home-made and dried.

### *Friendship*

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The staff of life for me is friendship. I've been very lucky to have several close friendships – more than my fair share perhaps. And one's capacity for new and meaningful friendships does not diminish with age, though, inevitably, long years of shared experience count particularly.

At Fortis Green nursery school my special friends were boys, particularly Johnnie-boy. There was also Peter Philips, who wanted to marry me and could not understand why I said no. He had one of those red trundle cars you could climb into and pedal about. Everybody envied it: I would have that too if I married him. But I was already betrothed to Johnnie-boy. I was told Peter cried and his mother protested to my mother, who must have communicated either approval or disapproval of my lack of materialism, otherwise I wouldn't have remembered it. How old were we? Six?

The friend I have known the longest is Sonja, because we sat next to each other at primary school and were Best Friends for ages. Once, we pushed our mothers into buying matching dresses in pink and grey diagonal stripes with a frill at the sleeve (very fifties), which looked sweet on little Sonja and unflattering on big Jane. Then we went to different secondary schools, wrote to each other for a while, and lost touch until her youngest and my oldest were five or six, when we met again and instantly knew why we had been Best Friends the first time round.

The prize for longest serving *in statu oldfriendibus* goes to Susanna (or Gail) whom I met at university when I was open and ready for intimacy. This was the period of my short, and only, stretch of diaries and is documented in detail. Some years ago, I was on the point of throwing the four little books away, but Susanna persuaded me otherwise. Nothing embarrassing in their naïve charm, she said. (Stephen, too, has a couple of small Letts diaries where typical entries, to the amusement of his progeny, read: ‘Fed mouse in a.m.; nought of int. in p.m.’.)

Susanna and I were both eager for love – I confidently expected to find it in a boy, but my diaries maunder at length on how drippy the boys at university were and, having gone to a co-ed school, I hadn’t gone boy-mad as my friends from single-sex schools had done. There was the odd crush on a friend or two of Steven’s, also on Richard III, Michelangelo, Laurence Olivier, Mick Jagger and the like. I also had crushes on Mary Queen of Scots, Miss Raymond the art mistress, Ingrid Bergman and probably some Head Girl or other as that was a fashionable thing to do then.

My first ‘grown-up’ friendship was with Susanna and it has endured through some rocky times: now my family is her family. She was the first person I could talk to about art and music (I have said I was a square – I am slightly lying about Mick Jagger: ‘Painted Black’ was probably my favourite pop song and I had a vague feeling for him, but crush is too strong a word). Susanna was in her third year at Bristol University when I was in my first. We both had rooms in the Palladian original mansion of Clifton Hill House hall of residence in Bristol and met in one of its little kitchens. I was slightly starry eyed that a third year wanted to know me and she was attracted to my unusual-for-her background. We would talk late into the night in her superior room (the best in the house and now divided into two) and both of us felt new worlds were opening up. The Warden noticed – she’d observed Susanna for three years ‘alone and palely loitering’ and now no longer. She invited us both to sherry and perhaps some wise words were imparted, but I don’t remember what they were. More Keats was quoted, I rather think.

In Hall there were formal dinners on Tuesday and Thursdays which the Warden attended. You had to wear a dress – and the regulation student black subfusc gown. A list would be posted of those who had to sit at High Table and you had to excuse yourself to the Warden that morning if you were not going to dine; if you did not sign out by 9 a.m. you would not be excused and you would have to have your meal standing up and then bow yourself out. It was in my first year, when I was in Hall, that President Kennedy was assassinated – I



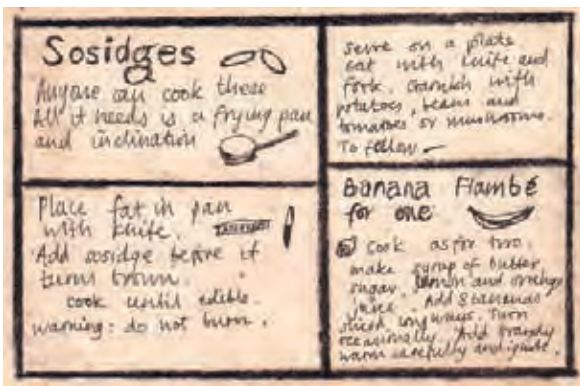
was in the university library when I found out: one of those needlepoint memories that is as sharp now as on the day.

Susanna stayed on to do an MA and we shared a spacious flat at 22 Richmond Terrace, just round the corner from the University Union, for something like £3 a week. Last heard of it was £250 a week. Average earnings (says the internet) were £1,250 a year in 1965 and £26,500 in 2012 – so that rent would have been a sixth of the average weekly wage, whereas the equivalent now is about half. A loaf of sliced white bread was then about 1/- (5p in new money) and now averages £1.35. And that's not as bad as fish and chips, which was 1/6 (7½p) in my youth and £8.20 (small) at Toffs in Muswell Hill in 2014. Maths was never my strong point, but how does this factor up? Bread hasn't moved much relative to income, but rents are absurdly higher and so is food generally. We were fortunate that the local authority paid our tuition fees and there was also a means-tested maintenance grant of £320 a year. I had a book grant of £40, which seemed generous at the time. We were well off compared to university students today, though we thought of ourselves as poor students; on one idiotic occasion we breakfasted at an upstairs haunt and I couldn't eat my scrambled eggs (dried, I feel sure), so Susanna – brought up on waste-not-want-not – picked up a naked handful and put them neat into her pocket for a later that never was.

She wasn't good at cooking (not then).

Nor was I – this is pre-Sarah-of-the-Soup era – however once, when I'd gone home for the holidays and she'd stayed in our flat, I made her some illustrated cards which we pasted up in the kitchen. Banana flambé was one; 'sosidges' [sic] was another. And she doesn't remember this, but there was some Ogden Nash in amongst the cards as well, notably: 'Parsley/Is gharsley'. I wonder now why he thought that, but I daresay I did as well since garnishing food wasn't at all what I was interested in.

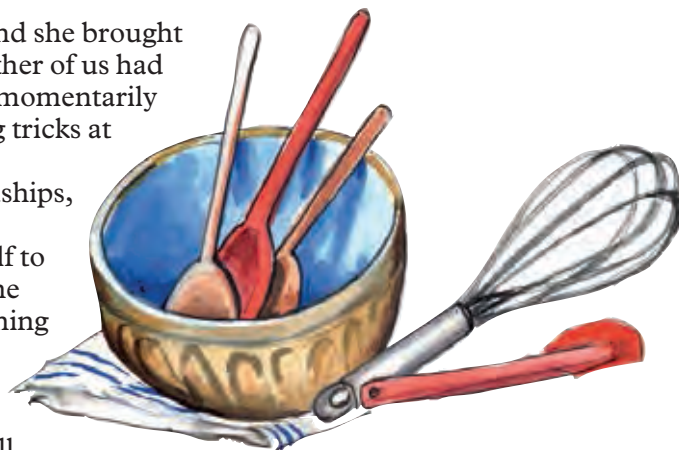
Everything was subservient to the quest for love and sex: I found both, but not in the same person. I minded that – being a romantic – but I'd completely pointlessly held back on sex while waiting for love and with some reluctance came to the conclusion that sex without love was better than no sex at all. Martin was my first. He was also the first of quite a number of people I was to meet later who had been brought up in ignorance of the fact that they were Jewish and who were shocked, intrigued and perplexed at discovering that this was the case and slow in coming to terms with why their parents had hidden it from them. Susanna didn't like him and found my affair difficult to endure – not then knowing her own proclivities – and the irony is that 40 years later, he turned up in Plymouth living round the





corner from her. They've become mates and she brought us together for a reunion tea, at which neither of us had the least interest in the other. I perked up momentarily when he said he and his wife did conjuring tricks at children's parties as a sideline.

There were other men and other friendships, and all the usual experimentation that university years bring. I apprenticed myself to a Bristol jeweller and used to practice in the tiny kitchen in Clifton Hill House – siphoning off the gas from the cooker, which could be dismantled quite easily. Once I had assembled an intricate piece to begin soldering when someone's loaf of bread fell on top of it from a higher shelf. Health and Safety? Not in those days.



In my second year there was a university-wide art exhibition judged by the sculptor Lynne Chadwick and I won the first prize with a silver and mother-of-pearl pendant (Vita has it). Art rearing its head, unheard, again.

I revisited Bristol at the 50th reunion of my intake year and stayed in my former room. Looking down from my window into the green curves of the landscaped gardens below and then across to the magnificent vista of Bristol, I thought, how did I manage to spend a whole year in this room and not notice this glorious view?

But that's being a student! I didn't notice all sorts of things I care about now. Somehow I also put in enough time to get a degree, though I am known for having turned over two pages at once of a long Wordsworth poem and not noticing that what was at the top of the page did not relate to what had been at the bottom of the one before. I was reading Joint Honours English and Philosophy, and the part of the course I enjoyed most was the Aesthetics paper. We agonised for hours over what a work of art was, whether it existed if no one was experiencing it, whether the author's intention mattered, the conundrum of value judgements, and who the work belonged to. I still have a file of notes in the attic written in sepia ink on tomato-coloured paper, which I no doubt thought very suave. Most of the hard-core philosophy was way above my head, yet I seem to have been able to answer questions such as 'Discuss the view that the Laws of Logic are the Laws of Thought' or 'What is the significance of the claim that language pictures reality?' (2 June 1964). It strikes me now that the second of these assumes we read Wittgenstein – which we did not – and now that I have been running the British Wittgenstein Society website for the last seven years I begin to have a glimmer as to what that question might mean.

Learning what friendship means and learning to think for oneself are the bread and pastry of life: the true essentials.

## Breads

1 pkt quick dried yeast  
12-14 oz white flour  
(or ½ & ½ with brown or spelt)  
1½ tsp sugar  
¼ tsp salt  
1 oz butter  
280 ml water



### *Basic breadmaker loaf*

My favourite kitchen gadget is the Panasonic breadmaker which mixes, kneads, rests and bakes – piling in the ingredients is quicker than going out to buy a loaf. Putting a spoon of tomato purée in with a breadmaker white loaf gives it a lovely golden orange colour (spinach or pesto for a gentle greenish contrast – but reduce liquid to allow for the water content of the spinach). Sparkling water gives a slightly more airy texture – the cheap carbonated sort will do. Load in the order on the left and turn on.

If time, it's nice to do a dough setting, and shape and bake separately. At that stage play about with adding almonds, walnuts, pistachios, cranberries, apricots, dates, raisins, cinnamon and cloves.

### *Fridge dough*

*For rolls, focaccia, pizza and pita*

This technique comes via Anna from Jeff Herzberg and Zoë François in their book *Five Minute Bread* (2011) and it is almost as easy as the machine and more versatile. Lasts a week and makes 3-4 breads. The downside is a bit of washing and drying of sticky hands and scraping down of work surfaces.

750 ml warm water  
3 tbsp olive oil (optional – good for focaccia and pizza)  
10 g dried yeast (1 tbsp) NB not the 'instant' or 'quick' kind  
20 g salt (c.4 tsp)  
1 kg white bread flour

1. Pour the water into a 5 litre-sized plastic box with a clicky lid.
2. Add everything else in order (easiest done on electronic scales you can reset to 0). Stir to dissolve the yeast first.
3. Mix with spatula until there are no dry patches left. Scrape down the sides.
4. Clip down 2 sides of the box. Leave at room temperature for around 2 hours until at least doubled in size.
5. Drop the box on the work surface a few times until the dough sinks down. Put in the fridge (still not completely sealed) and leave there for up to a week, using portions as and when needed to make the following (Anna dusts a 'peel' [wooden board] with semolina and shakes the shaped item onto a baking stone, but an upturned heated tin heated in the oven and the shaped breads on a thinner one works pretty well too):



### *Rolls*

1. Dust your hands, the work surface and the surface of the fridge dough with flour. Pull out small lumps of dough and snip off with scissors. Form each into a boule by folding in the sides and then swirling around under your cupped hand on a part of work surface which is barely floured, if at all. Go on till they are slightly floury and smooth, rather than shiny and sticky.
2. Let the rolls rise for 30 mins or so, until they spring back only slightly and slowly when prodded. Heat oven to as hot as it will go, around 240°C.
3. Either slide them onto a baking stone or put your thin tin on the hot one and pour some boiling water into a roasting tin underneath, shutting the door immediately. Bake for 10-15 mins.

## *Focaccia*

1. Line a roasting tin with overhanging silicone parchment so you can pull the focaccia out easily. Pour a good slug of light olive oil so the base is generously coated (I prefer it not too oily).
2. With oiled hands take out half a box of cold fridge dough – this will fill the tin with a ½" layer. Use your finger tips to ease the dough out, making indents.
3. Decorate with sage leaves, rosemary, olives, sun-dried tomatoes – making sure you half-bury them so they don't burn too much in the oven. Sprinkle over some coarse sea salt and leave at room temperature to prove for 30-40 mins until puffy.
4. Bake in hot oven for around 15 mins or until puffed, golden and cooked through. Let cool for a few mins and then ease out of the tray and serve while still warm.



## *Pizzette or pizza*

1. Use floured hands to take out balls of cold fridge dough, each the size of a tangerine and circle on the counter as for rolls. Let them rest 10-20 mins.
2. Using plenty of flour roll out one of the boules until pretty thin. Transfer to a wooden peel or cake-tin base and decorate with any standard pizza toppings.
3. Slide onto the hot stone or tray and bake for around 7 to 10 mins until puffed and golden brown in places. Serve immediately.

## *Pitas and flatbreads*

1. Make and bake just like pizzette above, except a) use plain dough not olive oil dough, b) roll thinner and take care to roll evenly, c) do not top with anything, and d) once baked wrap in a tea towel to keep soft.
2. If the pitas are rolled thin, even and round they should puff right up into balloons in the oven. Keep an eye on them as once they start browning they will crisp up and lose their softness.

## *Fougasse & calzone*

Same principle as the pizza, except the filling is inside, and the whole thing needs to rise before baking otherwise it comes out hard and crusty. Fougasses show the filling through leaf-like patterned slits, whereas calzone are closed packets. More on page 144.

## *Ossian's feeding loaf*

This is easy too, and really works. I got the idea from Anna's BBC Radio 4 programme called *The Kitchen Cabinet* and was able to track down the source as *Leon: Baking and Puddings* by Henry Dimbleby and Claire Ptak (2011). He (Henry) said he made it for his wife when she was breastfeeding, the ground seeds being helpful for lactation. I made three loaves for Georgia that came out of the oven at just about the exact time that Ossian Lewis Gottlieb-Black was born.

Quantities for 3 loaves (they freeze really well in freezer bags, but don't keep bread in the fridge as it goes stale more quickly). Originally for brown spelt, but I like the white spelt and a combination of white and brown flours in random combinations.

1½ kg strong flour  
2 sachets quick dried yeast  
2 tbsp crushed sea salt  
125 g pine nuts  
125 g pumpkin seeds  
125 g sunflower seeds  
*ground:*  
1 tbsp aniseed  
1 tbsp caraway seed  
1 tbsp fennel seed  
1 tbsp fenugreek

125 ml olive oil  
900 ml - 1 litre warm water

1. Butter 3 loaf tins. Mix all of the dry ingredients in a bowl large enough to knead the dough in. Add the oil then the water, stirring until the mixture sticks together. Knead in the bowl for just a few minutes until smooth. You can add a little flour if it is too sticky, but the maxim is – wetter is better. It doesn't matter if a little sticks to your hands.
2. Cut into three pieces, shape, then put into tins. Cut a pattern in deep gashes on the top and sprinkle more seeds into the gashes, sprinkling a little bran all over.
3. Put the tins into a large plastic bin bag which can be tucked under the tins to leave them enclosed with plenty of air (shower caps are ideal for this). Leave until the dough has doubled in size. This will take 2-3 hours in a warm place.
4. Bake at 230°C for 20 mins then turn down to 200°C for a further 20 mins. Turn out and cool on a rack.

### *Sophie's apple bread*

*bread mix*  
 ½ sachet of easy bake yeast  
 400 g bread flour  
 ½ tsp salt  
 50 g sugar  
 125 ml warm milk  
 50 g melted butter  
 2 beaten eggs  
 ½ tsp vanilla  
 zest of a lemon and grating of  
 nutmeg

*topping*  
 1 beaten egg  
 1 tbsp cream and more nutmeg  
 mixed together  
 3 chopped eating apples  
 1 tbsp each of caster and  
 Demerara sugar with ¼ tsp  
 allspice  
 icing sugar

Sophie gave us this for breakfast one time we stayed the weekend and I repeated it when Clarissa L came to us, so achieving the high accolade of Clarissa asking me for a recipe. Sophie says: 'It is a slight faff but really worth it, especially for lovely spicy smells in the kitchen in the morning'. It does mean, though, that the cook has to be up at least 40 mins before the guests come down to breakfast – which is not my strong point.

1. Before you go to bed either bung all in bread machine on a dough setting or mix the wet into the dry and knead it by hand and leave to rise overnight in the fridge or a cool place.
2. In the morning punch it down and leave somewhere to warm up while you prepare the topping.
3. Press dough into a tin – fairly long like a Swiss roll tin so you have to stretch it to fill the tin. Leave for 10 mins to rest.
4. Top with the egg-cream mixture first, then the apples and sugar. You can add some chopped or flaked nuts too at this point too if you fancy.
5. Bake for 15 mins quite hot then turn the oven down to medium and give it another 15 mins.
6. Make a runny icing with ideally, unrefined icing sugar and trickle it over the bread while still in the tin.
7. Leave to cool down slightly before eating otherwise the icing will just run off.

### *Harvest sheaf loaf*

I've made this several times, once when Vita moved into Curtain Road to welcome her to her new home. The original must date back to early marriage days because it is written on red paper, which I had a fad for in the days of being a Fiction Reader for Penguin. The fridge dough is too sticky for this.

white bread dough – double  
 quantity  
 large baking tray

1. Cut off ⅓" of the dough and roll into a sheaf base shape (like a section through a door knob). Prick and brush with egg.
2. Make about 40-50 wheat ears: roll out sausage shape; cut small

pieces off and make V-snips all over for the wheat seeds. Egg-stick these overlappingly all over the rounded part of the base. (Actually the ink in the original has run and I can't read it.)

3. Then make long sausages for the stalks going down the squarer bit of the base.
4. Make a plait with 3 strands of dough as the ribbon to bind the sheaf.
5. Pop in a small mouse with pepper-corn eyes and broom-handle whiskers.
6. Egg wash the whole thing and bake on high heat for 15 mins and down lower for 30 mins. Perhaps let it rise a bit first.

To keep longer, bake 2nd time on low for 45 mins to dry out.

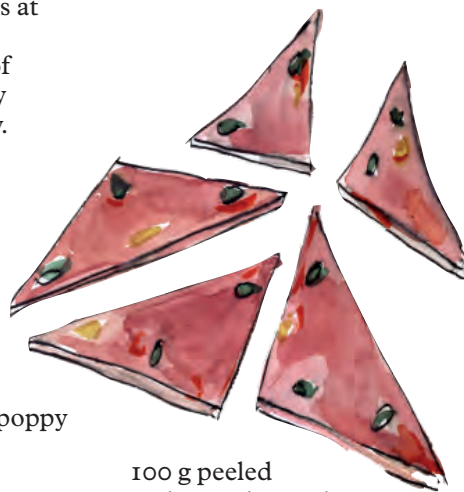


### *8-strand loaf*

Very effective looking loaf. I saw this on TV (made by Paul Hollywood) but I use the dough mix on my machine and then do the plaiting. The one tip I got was not to keep adding flour when you knock it back, but to work on an oiled surface so it doesn't absorb more flour but doesn't stick to the surface. Also to knock out air bubbles. Also that sea salt doesn't work as well as Saxa.

1. Divide the dough into eight equal pieces then roll out each piece into a strand about 16 in long.
2. Lay the strands out on the lightly floured surface like an octopus, fanned out from a central point at the top. Stick all the ends at the central point to the table with your thumb.
3. For the following braiding sequence, number the strands of dough from 1-8 from left to right. Every time you move any strand it will take the new number of its position in the row.
  - Step 1: place 8 under 7 and over 1
  - Step 2: place 8 over 5
  - Step 3: place 2 under 3 and over 8
  - Step 4: place 1 over 4
  - Step 5: place 7 under 6 and over 1
  - Repeat step 2-5, until all the dough is braided
4. Tuck both ends of the loaf underneath to give a tidy finish.
5. Place the plaited dough on a floured baking tray, and leave to prove for another hour, until risen again.
6. Brush the loaf with the beaten egg wash (nice with a bit of poppy seed on top) and bake in the oven for 20-25 mins.

basic white loaf dough with an egg (a 500 g quantity)



100 g peeled and grated parsnip (beetroot or carrot)  
 175 g white spelt flour  
 50 g porridge oats  
 30 g butter  
 1 tbsp nut oil or rapeseed oil  
 1 tsp salt  
 100 ml water  
 some pumpkin seeds (or chopped nuts or other seeds) to taste

### *Vegetable crispbreads*

Good with cheese and looks as if you've been to a posh deli. I once made all three (even the beetroot) and arranged them, striped and in cellophane beribboned bags, for a charity-fund-raising sale. Troublesome, but attractive. This comes from author Mia Kristensen (from Denmark), who teaches the Nordic classes with Anna.

1. Mix all the ingredients, except for the water and seeds, in a mixer or food processor. Blend for 1 min and then add the water, little by little, just until everything comes together as a dough.

2. Tip the dough out onto the table and knead in as many seeds as feels right. Wrap tightly in clingfilm and chill for at least an hour.
3. Roll out as thinly as possible and cut into serving sized oblongs or triangles.
4. Bake on a lined baking sheet for 15-20 mins in a medium oven until very lightly coloured, turning them over half way through baking. They should feel dry to the touch. Cool.

## Pastry



Elsewhere in this book I have said I'm quite a fan of short-cutting with the French pre-prepared circles – but in January 2013 I took Steven, Stephen and Clarissa off on one of Anna's cooking classes and we did a pastry course tailor-made just for us. I began to understand something about pastry-making and that my ready-made fixation was because I was frightened of it and had never known what I was aiming for. In explaining techniques, she demystified it a bit and I got braver until someone complimented me on my pastry and it was Waitrose's best. Quantities below are sometimes in a comparative form, from different sources. Several (but not all) are from Anna's course, and the general notes on principles are from her with additions culled elsewhere.

One thing I found helpful was to think of pastry as a long line with glutinous bread dough at one end of it and crumbly shortbread biscuits at the other (hence 'shortening') and various doughs and pastries as staging posts along the way.

### *Principles of pastry making*

1. Use the best butter (unsalted is usually higher quality).
2. Mix dries first; then cut/rub/process the chunks of fat according to the type of pastry (larger chunks for flakier).
3. You shouldn't have any flour on your palm when mixing – fingertips being the coolest part of your hand (I think Ivan does it with two knives).
4. Mix in just enough liquid (egg and/or water and/or cream and/or fruit juice) to form a dough that will stick together.
5. Don't over handle.
6. Bring together into a disk quickly, or 'fraisage' the dough first (smearing the dough with the heel of your hand along the worktop to incorporate the fat into the flour).
7. Rest the pastry for ½ an hour – Ivan says *not* in the fridge, but other sources all say cling-film it, bash to shape, and chill.
8. Roll in one direction and turn the pastry on a *very* lightly floured surface and line a tin.
9. Rest the tart case for ½ hour before baking.
10. Always cook on metal (removable bases).
11. Heat up the oven first and have a flat tin hot to put the pastry tin on as a heat conductor (or stone).
12. Prick base of tart shell several times with tines of a fork, line with parchment and fill with baking beans. Bake blind.
13. Brush with a little beaten egg and return to the oven for a few mins. This helps seal the base and keep it crunchy.



## *Pâte brisée – shortcrust pastry*

1. Chill a glass of water. Cut butter into ½" cubes and chill. Separate the egg and put the yolk in a small bowl in the fridge.
2. Measure flour, sugar (if using) and salt into a bowl. Toss butter in flour and then, working quickly and using just fingertips, a pastry cutter or two table knives, rub butter into flour. You should end up with pieces of butter no bigger than peas.
3. Mix 2 tbsp of chilled water with the egg yolk and stir into the mixture. Add 2 to 6 more tbsp chilled water – drizzling it one spoon at a time – until the mixture is just sticky enough to come together as a dough if squeezed. Be careful not to add too much water.
4. Dump mixture onto work surface and, using the heel of one hand, smear mix across the counter several times to incorporate butter into the dry bits of flour. Bring the dough together into a ball. Do not knead it, just quickly press it together. It doesn't matter if it has a few cracks and irregularities. Wrap in clingfilm and chill for at least ½ hour while you prepare your tart or pie filling.
5. Lightly flour the surface and rolling pin and roll dough until uniformly ¼" thick. Start by rolling gently and pinching closed any cracks that appear around edges. Keep moving dough around as you roll to check it's not sticking and so as to roll a circle. Use more flour to dust counter, pin and dough as needed to prevent it sticking. Work quickly so that the butter in the dough does not melt.

100 g unsalted butter  
180 g flour  
1½ tbsp sugar (omit for savoury)  
a pinch of salt  
1 egg

## *Pâte sucrée – sweet pastry*

Recipe from a pastry chef in California called Jennifer Altman who gave it to Anna, and it really does work. I make double batches to keep supplies in the freezer.

sugar-butter-flour ratio 1: 2: 3

1. Magimix the butter and icing sugar to form a smooth paste. Add the egg and whizz again until smooth. Add the flour and salt and process, stopping just as it begins to come together as a dough (i.e. not whirring round in a lump).
2. Scrape the dough out onto a very lightly floured surface and gently squeeze it together into a block. It will be sticky, so use lightly floured hands and work quickly. If you intend to make two tart shells, form it into two equal sized blocks. Wrap the blocks tightly in clingfilm and pat them out into neat disks. Chill for at least an hour, or overnight, before using.
3. As Step 5 above, but start by whacking it with your rolling pin all over to make it malleable and thin it out.
4. Chill tart shells for at least an hour before pricking and blind baking.

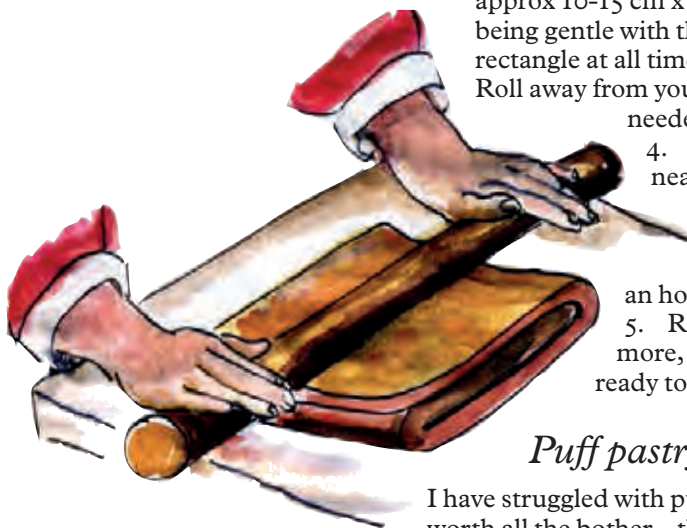
150 g icing sugar  
300 g unsalted butter, cut into 1" cubes, at room temperature  
450 g plain flour, plus extra for rolling out  
a pinch of salt  
1 large egg

## Rough puff pastry

flour-fat-water ratio 1: 1: ½

500 g plain flour  
5 g salt  
500 g unsalted cool butter, cut  
into ½" cubes  
approx 250 ml chilled water

1. Mix flour with salt in a bowl. Toss in butter to coat with flour then rub with fingertips until you have large buttery crumbs – the size of grapes. Don't let the butter melt.
2. Add half the water and start bringing the mix together into a dough. Add more water if needed – just enough to make a workable dough. Don't over-work it; seeing flakes of butter is fine.
3. Place dough onto a floured work surface and divide into two. Working with one portion at a time, roll it out into a rectangle approx 10-15 cm x 20-30 cm. Work quickly and purposefully, yet being gentle with the dough. Keep the dough in an even, neat rectangle at all times. Use just enough flour to stop it sticking. Roll away from you in one direction, rotating the dough as needed.
4. Now brush any flour off the top and fold it neatly like a business letter. Press down all over with your fingertips to seal it, then roll out and fold again in the same way. Wrap each piece in clingfilm and chill for at least half an hour.
5. Repeat the rolling and folding process twice more, then wrap and chill again. The dough is now ready to be used or frozen for up to a month.



## Puff pastry

I have struggled with puff pastry several times – it doesn't seem worth all the bother – though it's quite fun. I found Paul Hollywood's version (below) after watching him make it on TV and it's much easier than the version in *The Cookery Year*. Not much more trouble than rough puff, but you do need to think ahead and make it a couple of days before using.

flour-fat-liquid ratio 1½: 1: ½

150 g chilled strong white bread  
flour  
150 g chilled plain flour  
pinch of salt  
2 large eggs  
100 ml cold water  
250 g chilled unsalted best  
butter

1. Put the flours, salt, eggs and water into a large bowl and gently mix to an even dough with your fingers. Transfer the dough to a lightly floured surface and knead it for 5-10 mins until smooth. The dough should feel a little tight at this stage. Shape the dough into a ball and put it into a plastic bag in the fridge to chill overnight, or for at least 7 hours.
2. Flatten the butter into a rectangle, about 40 x 19 cm, by battering it down with your rolling pin. (You may find it easier to do this if you sandwich the butter between 2 sheets of clingfilm.) Return to the fridge for an hour to harden the butter again.
3. Roll out your dough to a rectangle, about 60 x 20 cm wide. Put the butter on the dough so it covers the bottom two-thirds. Make sure that it is positioned neatly and comes almost to the edges.
4. Lift the exposed dough at the top and fold it down over half of the butter, score the butter so you can lift it out and put it on top of the fold and then fold the bottom half of the dough up over



the top. You will now have a sandwich of two layers of butter and three of dough. Pinch the edges together to seal. Put it back in a plastic bag and chill for 1 hour.

5. Take the dough out of the bag and put it on a lightly floured surface with the short end towards you. Roll out to a rectangle as before, keeping the edges as even as possible. Fold the top quarter down and the bottom quarter up so they meet neatly in the centre. Then fold the dough in half along the centre line. This is called a book turn. Chill in the bag for 1 hour.
6. Take the dough out of the bag, put it on a lightly floured surface with the short end towards you and roll into a rectangle as before. This time, fold down one-third of the dough and then fold up the bottom third to make a neat square. This is a single turn.
7. Chill in the bag for another hour. Bring your dough out again and do a single turn as previously. Chill in the bag overnight.

## Choux pastry

1. Heat the oven to 175°C and line a couple of baking sheets.
2. Crack the eggs into a jug and whisk lightly with a fork.
3. Put the water, butter and salt in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Add the flour all at once and stir vigorously with a wooden spoon for a few minutes. It should look like mashed potato and start coming away cleanly from the side of the pan.
4. Do something else for a bit to let it cool, stirring occasionally.
5. Start adding the eggs, bit by bit, allowing them to emulsify in before adding more. Keep going until you have a smooth mixture the consistency of toothpaste.
6. Pipe or spoon the pastry into long or round shapes and bake for around 30 mins (depending on size) until browned and crisp.
7. Prick each puff to release the steam and put them back into the oven quite briefly.

½ pt water  
4 oz unsalted butter  
¼ tsp salt  
6 oz plain flour  
5 or 6 eggs

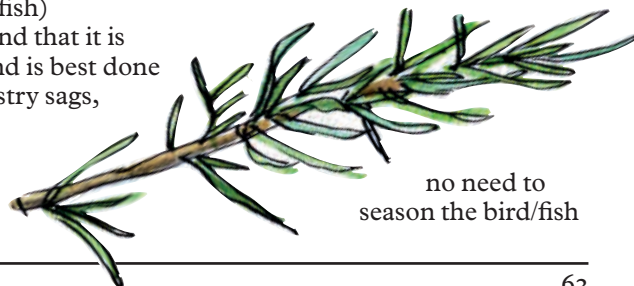


## Salt crust

Expensive on salt but a pleasing drama about it. This comes from a YouTube clip of Michel Roux making it round a chicken marinated in honey and paprika, and stuffed with chicken liver and sausage. By the time I came to test it, however, the clip had disappeared from the internet. I tried it with sage under the skin and a Seville orange inside and served it when Georgia's father came to lunch. Enough pastry for 1 chicken and 2 salmon steaks another day. Worth doing.

1. Mix the dry ingredients first and then mix the egg whites in with the water and add to form a soft dough.
2. Knead well for 5 mins. Wrap in clingfilm and refrigerate to rest.
3. When ready to use, roll out and cover the (bird or fish) completely, making sure there are no air pockets and that it is *completely* sealed. This is not as easy as it sounds and is best done just before you put it in the oven, otherwise the pastry sags, creating fissures around the protruding bones.
4. Bake for 1½ to 2 hours, depending on size, on a highish heat.
5. Rest for about 40 mins before cutting all round to remove the crust, like lifting a lid, for serving.

1 kg plain flour  
250 g fine table salt  
400 g coarse sea salt  
3 tbsp chopped rosemary  
2 egg whites  
450 ml water

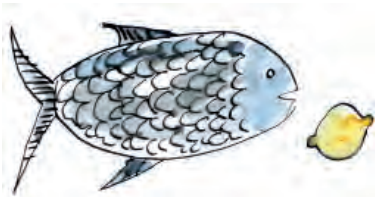


no need to  
season the bird/fish

# 7

## Fish

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**E**veryday fish cooking doesn't need recipes. There's often that business of the pans smelling of fish for days afterwards. I get round that sometimes by wrapping oily fish in silver foil and baking it in the oven. Even better is a fish wood burner on days when you can cook outside (the fish is oak-smoked – easy to make one's own smoker, though ours is bought). Barbecuing is nice for outside cuisine, but I have to ration it a bit as one neighbour tends to voice objections to the smoke.

### *The publishing years*

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After university I went out fishing: fishing for a job. I wanted to get into publishing. Not so easy – it was what half the female English graduates had in mind. So I gave in to my mother's persuasions and enrolled at Hornsey Art School to continue the forays into jewellery that had begun at Bristol. It wasn't hard to get into an art school. I studied under Gerda Flockinger and we didn't really like each other (though her style influenced mine, as is obvious from the pieces I made at the time). I didn't like being there either: you had to sign in and sign out; the head of college was a military martinet; rules abounded, and it didn't sit easily with me after the freedom of university. Disaffection was in the air as the riots and the sit-in of 1968 were just around the corner. I did however make some important friendships there – Sarah-of-the-Soup with whom I shared a flat in Cruden Street, Islington, and Catriona with whose first husband I shared a flat in Noel Road, Islington. I had a fling with one of the chaps on the course too, but I can't remember his name, possibly because one of us treated the other rather badly.

I stayed for six months, during which time I was applying for job after job in publishing. I also took (and completed) a diploma in art history at the Courtauld Institute. The publisher whom I finally hooked was Longmans in Grosvenor Street (they later dropped the 's' and later still they were completely dropped from the Pearson's conglomerate into which they had merged). I'd gone for an interview as an art editor. Most of my applications didn't even get to interview stage so I was desperate to draw them in and found myself saying: 'Look, try

me for a month without pay and then you can make up your minds'. The art director took the bait and I got the job. I was an art editor and picture researcher for only a short while, graduating to full editor just before the company moved to Harlow. My starting salary (1967) was £750 a year and it was the only time in my life when I actually managed to save.

In the end I was the last person left running the Far Eastern Department and would have been sent to Singapore had there not been race riots there just as I was about to be posted. I left in a pet of disappointment. Silly of me. It was still a family company then and the ethos was that you looked after employees. They would have found something else for me and I would have risen in the publishing ranks.

Or would I? I was still making jewellery. I had a Saturday stall in Camden Passage and for the first six months, when Longmans was in Grosvenor Street, I went every day after work to a venture called All Change Victoria in Pimlico, which was an agglomeration of craftsmen selling their work. The pull between words and craft has been present for a long time.

Longmans was the equivalent of a post-graduate degree; it was where I shook myself out of the chrysalis of childhood and started to look at the world around me. I learned history from the books I was editing, about publishing from the job itself, and about life from the hot-house of clever and talented people around me. Every year they would take one graduate trainee from Oxford and one from Cambridge (always men) and prepare them for management positions. This was the era of publishers' lunches and one of my duties was to take Ged (those were the initials of our department's best-selling author) out to lunch: he liked Brown's Hotel – shame I didn't realise how lucky I was. Publishers then thought nothing of two-bottle lunches (though I wasn't then the bibber that I am now) and it wasn't unusual to return from lunch at teatime. They threw lavish parties as well: Christmases at Stationers' Hall completely awash with gin, whisky and vodka. Ged had a valuable collection of Chinese snuff bottles. Later I would remember this when Stephen gave me a snuff bottle with a jade stopper as a wedding present.

There were various amorous pursuings amongst us all – and a lot of talking about this romance and that on the train to Harlow where the London set would meet each other at some ghastly hour of the morning. I was usually shopping about for talent, as were many others, though I had been nabbed early on by one of the Oxbridge graduate trainees, Paul, whom I liked intellectually but was never in love with. I'm afraid I did him a lot of harm. His father had been a jobbing cartoonist working for Disney – he would have to draw the animation frames to link one movement to another, but not a single mouse or duck were among his effects at his death, I later learned; Disney was far too smart to let any freelancers





keep a single frame. Apart from that artistic connection our backgrounds were too far apart to come together. As things have turned out for him, his two failed marriages and his current relationship appear to show a pattern of him in some sort of a carer role to women with low self-esteem. I wonder now if I too was just such a lame duck in his eyes. In many ways I was.

After Longman (with its now rescinded 's') I went freelance, copy-editing and doing picture research for a lot of publishers. I learned yet more history from the Kings and Queens of England series edited by Antonia Fraser for Weidenfeld & Nicolson – I found the pictures for several of those and also worked in-house on the paste-ups of these and other books whenever they needed someone extra. You got £1 per requested picture at that time and no Google to help: the going rate now is upwards of £15 a picture, with internet downloads making it glidingly easy. I spent many an hour at the British Museum Reading Room, the North Library, Radio Times Hulton Picture Library and the Mansell Collection and rather enjoyed that era. It was the time of Mary Quant frocks (I had one of the original Ginger Group); Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band; *Rolling Stone Magazine*; the opening of the Queen Elizabeth Hall; Christiaan Barnard's first heart transplant; the iconic film *Blow Up*; when colour television came to the UK; abortion being legalised; and Jimi Hendrix setting fire to his guitar on stage for the first time.

One sombre evening towards dusk in August I came home to find a silent gathering lingering on the pavement on the opposite side of the road to where I lived. As I passed, hovering to absorb a heavy atmosphere that smoked its way down the street, two coffins were brought out of the house. They were Joe Orton and the lover who bludgeoned him. He was the age my son is now.

It was from that same road that I got married (more on that in the next chapter) – at Islington Registry Office, wearing an unflattering white mini dress that I made myself as well as making both our wedding rings, and cooking the wedding breakfast. I had something borrowed and something blue, and I simper horribly in the one and only photo taken outside the office. Nada had toyed with the idea of renting a white Rolls Royce to take us from Islington to my parent's garden in Hampstead Garden Suburb for the party. Why didn't he? Too expensive, I imagine. What a contrast to Vita's memorable moment of pure theatre when she generously whisked us all from her house in Islington to a supper venue in Notting Hill Gate on Emily's 40th birthday in a stretch-limo, complete with balloons and champagne!

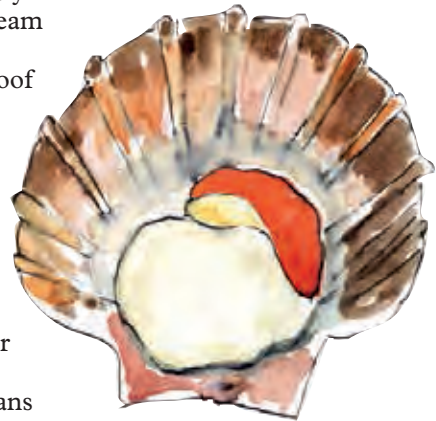
So from a freelancer fishing for work to fish recipes.

### *Coquilles St Jacques*

I have a collection of scallop shells and this was once a favourite starter: they were cheaper then. In former times, I used to pipe the potatoes round the shell, but it's too much washing up and wastage so I just fork it about now.

1. Sauté the onion and garlic. Add parsley and s&p. Remove the mixture from the pan with a slotted spoon and set aside, leaving any juices behind.
2. Reheat the juices in the pan, add the scallops and cook them for 20-40 seconds on each side until golden. Return the garlic and onion to the pan, followed by the white wine, and cook rapidly for 1-2 mins until the liquid is reduced. Stir in the double cream and reduce further.
3. Arrange the mashed potatoes along the 4 sides of an ovenproof dish (or round individual shells).
4. Spoon in the fish and cover with grated cheese. Grill until golden. Garnish with parsley and serve immediately.

1 tbsp butter  
½ onion, finely chopped  
2 cloves garlic, crushed  
handful parsley  
8 scallops (i.e. 2 each)  
125 ml white wine  
150 ml double cream  
handful freshly grated cheese  
good quantity mashed potatoes



### *Greenwald's scallop and prosciutto*

1. Quarter the tomatoes and place skin side down on a baking tray. Sprinkle with oregano, pepper and oil. Bake for 10-15 mins in a hot oven. Add the prosciutto and cook for another 10 mins or so until it is crisp.
2. Fry the garlic, chillies and anchovies in oil for a min, add beans and a glass of water. Bring to the boil and mash to produce a coarse purée.
3. Sear the scallops in a little hot oil for 2 mins without touching them. Check and continue to fry until they are slightly caramelised.
4. Repeat for the other side (or slice across). Put cooked scallops in a bowl with dressing.
5. Dollop a portion of the bean purée onto a plate, scatter the scallops, tomatoes and prosciutto over the beans and garnish with rocket or other green leaves.

8 slices of prosciutto (or thinly sliced streaky bacon)  
4 large tomatoes  
1 garlic clove  
dried oregano  
1-2 dried chillies  
4-6 anchovy fillets  
1 tin of cannellini or flageolet beans, drained and rinsed  
12 scallops  
*dressing:* 1 tbsp lemon juice, 5  
tbsp olive oil

### *G's scallops with their corals*

We went to dinner with Ellie and G once and he said he couldn't understand why TV programmes always show scallop dishes without using the corals – best bit, he thought, and I agreed. His very simple recipe:

1. All I do is remove the corals, chop them up, and then cook them in a little butter, add single cream and liquidise.
2. Pour over separately seared scallops and wolf down.

## *Bron's scallops with whisky*

This is from *Whisky Kitchen* by Sheila McConachie and Graham Harvey (2008) and Bronwen gave it to us one dinner party and I thought it a perfect match. It comes with a hint: don't buy frozen scallops because they are 40% water and disappointing.

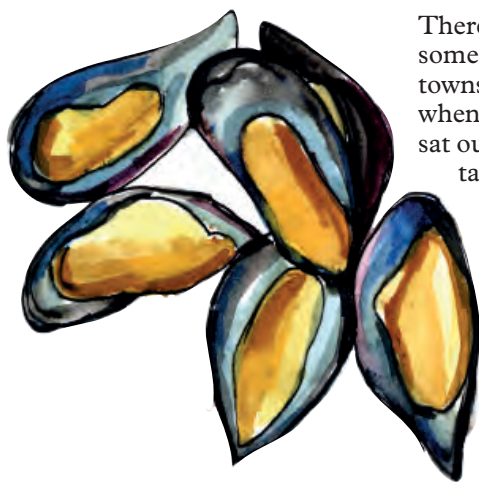
½ lb (or more) celeriac  
1 oz butter  
120 ml double cream  
½ lemon, juiced  
15 ml whisky (Tullibardine in the original, but, hey, whatever you have)  
12 slices black pudding  
12 king scallops  
seasoning

1. Make a celeriac mash.
2. Bring cream and lemon juice to a simmer, add whisky and reduce to a thick cream.
3. Fry the scallops (dried on kitchen towels) in one pan, and black pudding, sliced, in another. 1-2 mins.
4. Working quickly, put 3 spoonfuls of celeriac mash on each plate, then top each with a slice of black pudding, then a scallop with the coral on top and drizzle the sauce all round.

## *Moules marinières/moules frites*

There have been lots of moules occasions; some marvellous and some touristy, because moules-frites are always on demand in port towns. But I do remember one wonderful sun-in-your-eyes occasion when I flew with Randall in his Piper Arrow to Le Touquet and we sat outside on the sea front in some unlikely month like March and talked about all sorts of things. He was getting his pilot's licence and needed a certain number of flying hours with a passenger on board.

I went with him several times and loved it, but never realised how grateful he was to me for trusting myself to him. Later, when he had his licence, Stephen, Vita and I flew to the Isle of Wight for lunch in perfect sunshine and another time we went to Greenwald's place Le Ponchel in France. What a smart way to arrive that was – Greenwald watched us from his car as we touched down in a run-down airfield in Abbeville at 17.45 on 2 June 2000 (as Randall's logbook meticulously records). Randall also reminds me of: 'nice memories of when we had your wedding anniversary picnic at Old Sarum – and you sourced non-alcoholic champagne for your pilot'. How did I do that?



a sack of mussels (c. 2 pt)  
100 ml dry white wine  
1 tbsp unsalted butter  
1 small onion, very finely chopped  
4 fresh bay leaves  
8 sprigs fresh thyme  
2 tbsp crème fraîche  
parsley

1. Wash the mussels in cold running water (discarding open ones).
2. Boil the wine in a small saucepan for 30 seconds then set aside. (This is to remove the harsh taste of the alcohol and leave only the fruity acidity of the wine.)
3. Melt the butter in a large saucepan, then add the onion, bay leaves and thyme. Stir for 10 seconds, then add the wine and bring to the boil.
4. Add the mussels, cover with a lid and cook for 2-3 mins or until the mussels open.
5. Add the cream and parsley and stir well. No seasoning is required as the mussels will release a little salt water when they open, which is enough to season the dish perfectly.

Serve with French bread or chips.

## *Moules ragout*

As on the previous page with less wine and make it into a ragout adding thinly-sliced the ingredients to the right.

## *Emily's alligator pie*

Emily made alligator pie and bird's nest cake in 1984 for a Young Cook of the Year competition for which she was a finalist and won a slow cookpot. She had to choose a celebrity to make her menu for and picked David Attenborough, who wrote her a very nice letter saying he liked seafood. We still have this letter as well as the green cardboard feet that were stuck into the alligator. In her words:

Alligator pie was basically a 'pimped' fish pie, wasn't it, with mussels and scallops and prawns in it. And a pastry topping – roughly in the shape of an alligator.

Bird's nest cake, god can't remember. Something to do with biscuits and chocolate. It was an uncooked cake, we put it on a stand in a ring and finished it with chocolate matchmakers, put it in a tree of Da's creating and topped off with one of those dangly birds that 'pecked' just before the judges came round, I seem to remember.

## *Sprats with Spiros*

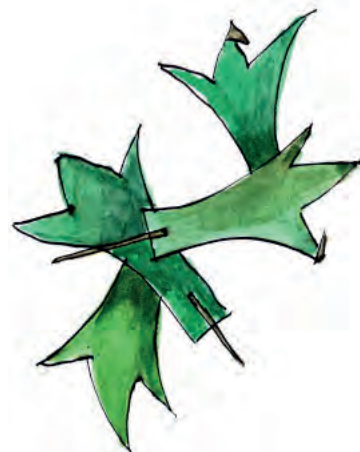
1. First go to Corfu with your three children aged 7, 9 and 11.
2. Meet a fisherman called Spiros on a lovely sunny day.
3. Get taken out in his boat while he cooks the fish on a make-shift barbecue.
4. Eat it, chat in a bit of English and a lot of laughter.
5. Thank him when you get off the boat and remember it the rest of your life.

## *Liz's strata*

Lovely novelist Liz says: 'Strata is one of my favourite dishes. It's easy and people love it and many don't guess it's actually a bread and butter pudding because it's so well disguised as a soufflé. People will say, "this is so delicious you must give me the recipe". And so you will, and the joy of strata will spread'. This is exactly as she gave it to me, and I haven't yet been as deliriously successful as she promises.

1. Mix together the fish, celery, parmesan, mayo.
2. It's a layered dish, like a lasagne. Butter an ovenproof dish and line it with a layer of bread, then a layer of the fish mixture, then another layer of bread, then what's left of the mixture (less than before) spread evenly.
3. Then pour over this a mixture of cream and 4 eggs beaten together, with s&p. Enough to soak the whole thing thoroughly. Then top it with the grated cheese, cover with foil and leave it in the fridge for a good few hours. Or until the next day.
4. Then bake it in a medium oven for 40 mins, taking the foil off for the last 20 mins so that the cheese browns. Serve with salad.

1 leek  
1 fennel  
1 carrot  
a few lardons  
2 pinches saffron  
aioli (stirred in last – page 132)  
chunks of stale bread to put at the bottom of the bowl.



freshly caught sprats or sardines

a loaf or two of plain white *sliced* bread, crusts removed  
lots of mayonnaise  
some grated parmesan  
4 eggs  
pot or two of single cream  
*finely* chopped celery  
a variety of fishy/shellfishy things, e.g. some white fish, chopped in small chunks, shrimps/prawns, scallops, crabmeat  
a good handful of chopped herbs – parsley, dill and chives or parsley and tarragon  
grated cheese for the topping

## Clarissa L's grandmother's fish pudding

This is an alternative to the fish pie I normally do – a comforting Friday night winter fare for which no recipe is needed. I generally use a white, a smoked and a pink fish in a white sauce, with creamy mashed potatoes forked on top. Or sometimes a puff pastry crust. This is a variation.

¾ lb mixed smoked fish, flaked  
4 fl oz milk  
4 oz breadcrumbs  
4 eggs, separated

1. Mix first 3 ingredients and egg yolks; whisk the whites and fold in.
2. Put in buttered pudding bowl, cover with greaseproof paper and tinfoil, or a floured cloth, and cook like a steamed pudding for ¾ hour.

Serve it with a green sauce.

## Beatrice's fish curry

She says: 'Here's the recipe (no particular amounts, depends on how many you're cooking for) but if you prefer I can be more specific and write down what I use next time I do it'. That's my kind of cook.

any white fish, prawns  
freshly grated ginger  
quite a lot of chopped garlic  
chopped onions  
tomatoes  
lots of curry  
leaves  
tin of creamed  
coconut  
ground  
coriander,  
turmeric,  
cumin,  
chilli,  
fresh  
spinach  
fresh coriander  
s&p



1. Heat vegetable oil in the pan, medium heat, add onions and garlic and cook till soft, add curry leaves, add spices and ginger and gently fry for a couple of mins.
2. Add creamed coconut and tomatoes, stir and bring to a simmer.
3. Add fish (gently) and cover (that is, cover the fish with the liquid and the pan with a lid).
4. After about 10 mins, carefully add the fresh spinach and the prawns and stir into liquid without disturbing the fish too much. It will break up, hopefully into nice bits.

Serve with basmati rice.

## Susanna's omelette Arnold Bennett

This is from her booklet on 'swallowing' which she wrote eight years after her throat cancer to share her experiences of the difficulties of eating with others. I laid it out and illustrated it for her, using some of the drawings destined for this book. This classic was made for the novelist when he stayed at the Savoy Hotel, where he wrote an entire novel while the chefs perfected a dish they still serve.

100 g smoked haddock  
125 ml milk  
20 g butter  
20 ml flour  
finely chopped parsley  
15 g butter  
3 lightly beaten eggs  
grated parmesan

1. Simmer the haddock in the milk until tender. Then lift the fish out and break into large flakes. Leave to one side.
2. Use the milk left behind in the saucepan to make the sauce, by adding butter and flour. Then fold in the haddock flakes and the parsley.
3. In an omelette pan warm the butter, then add the eggs. When cooked, add the fishy sauce to the omelette. Sprinkle the cheese on top and place under the grill till bubbling.

bass fillets  
for the plum compot  
1" root ginger  
small red onion  
2 garlic cloves

## Bass aux prunes à la Greenwald

1. Brush the bass with olive oil, seared skin side down on a griddle for 2 mins and then put in a high oven to roast for 3 mins.
2. Make a plum compote:



3. Sauté gently ginger, onion and garlic.
4. Add the rest bar the vinegar.
5. Simmer gently till plums tender.
6. Season and serve warm with the bass.

1 oz butter  
 1 lb plums  
 2 oz sugar  
 2 star anise  
 1 tbsps balsamic vinegar, s&p

### *Roasted fish with sun-dried tomato tapenade*

Delia's *Winter Collection*, oddly, isn't an exception to my Law of Recipe Books. I was mildly surprised, but there are very few in it that I have done more than twice. This is one of those, because it really is quick and looks more impressive than the time it takes.

1. Whuzz the tapenade ingredients to taste – keeping back an olive and a basil leaf per person for garnish. Pulse it so it doesn't go into an amorphous mush.
2. Roll up each fish portion starting with the thin end.
3. Put a generous dollop of tapenade on top and press down firmly all over the fish.
4. Bake for 20-25 mins.
5. Decorate the tops with the reserved basil and olives.

a tail end of haddock or cod per person, skin removed

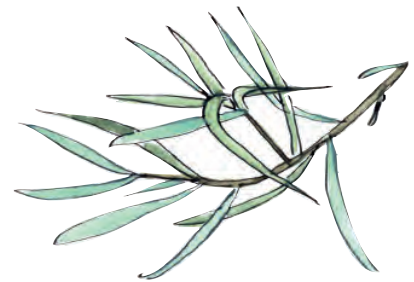
*the tapenade:*

a jar of sun-dried tomatoes with some of its oil (10 oz)  
 tin of pitted black olives (6 oz)  
 basil  
 tsp green peppercorns in brine  
 2 cloves garlic  
 handful of anchovies  
 spoon or two of capers

### *Tourte Béarnaise à la lotte*

Clarissa originally did this; Stephen then took it up and here's my from-memory version which is simpler than the whole caboodle as it required a lot of stages and looked daunting on the page.

1. Lightly fry each bit separately.
2. Make the sauce (reduction of vinegar, white wine, tarragon, black peppercorns and shallots; finished with egg yolks and butter: page 132)
3. Put the sauce in the pastry case.
4. Arrange the fish, shallots and mushrooms on top and bake for about 35 mins.



baked-blind pastry case  
 tail end of monkfish, cut up  
 button mushrooms  
 shallots  
 Béarnaise sauce  
 parsley for garnish

### *Salmon in the dishwasher*

I don't remember who gave me this method of poaching a whole salmon, but I was very keen on it for parties for some time. I catered my mother's 70th (or maybe 75th or 80th) and she didn't like the sound of it and begged me not to do it. Of course, I did. And it turned out perfect. The centre remains a darker pink and it doesn't look as if white paint has been mixed in with it.

1. Wrap up one or two whole salmon in a double layer of silver foil (with a bit of butter, lemon and dill inside) and seal firmly all round.
2. Put in the top of an empty dishwasher (might have to curve slightly).
3. Run a full cycle without any chemicals in the hatches.
4. Decorate when cold with thin slices of cucumber along the fish.

whole salmon  
 butter, dill, lemon

Serve with sauce Béarnaise (page 132).

## *Margaret's nut-encrusted salmon*

Margaret buys the salmon whole when they are at their cheapest and freezes them for the next party (she probably does 4-6 a year: sometimes for specific groupings, such as bereaved parents or poets). This serves 8-10.

one side of salmon, skinned  
¾ pkt each of honey-roast  
cashew nuts and honey-roast  
peanuts  
store cupboard seasoning  
dill

1. Spread salmon lightly with salad cream (or crème fraîche and mayonnaise).
2. Partially process a mixture of the nuts retaining some of their form.
3. Add pepper, ground cumin, ground coriander, mild curry powder, paprika and dill to taste.
4. Spread over the top of the salmon.
5. Bake for 20-30 mins on medium. Don't allow the crust to burn.
6. Serve hot or cold.

## *Oscar's goats' cheese and salmon pie*

This is one I have often had at Margaret's parties, discovering as I was at proof-reading stage that she got it from mutual friends Oscar & Jennifer who served it to us at their garden party in March (yes, the garden in March). They say they always serve it as the backbone of every party as it multiplies up effortlessly, and can be prepared up to 2 days in advance. Originally from *Good Housekeeping* (2005). For 10:

whole file of salmon  
½ lemon  
2 pots goats' cheese, crumbled  
1 oz grated parmesan  
4 tbsp sundried tomato paste  
2 oz wholemeal breadcrumbs  
and butter for a crumble  
topping  
2 tbsp olive oil

1. Place salmon skin side down on a large baking sheet.
2. Squeeze lemon over and season with black pepper.
3. Spread goats' cheese and then sundried tomato paste onto salmon. (Oscar says 'Mash cheese with a fork and if necessary add a little milk to turn it into a thick paste and use whole sundried tomatoes in oil from Marks, pour out the oil, add to a Sainsbury paste and blitz it down to make a mixture thick enough to stay in place on top of the salmon'.)
4. Mix grated cheese and breadcrumbs together and season with black pepper. Sprinkle over salmon pushing crumbs down into tomato paste.
5. Drizzle with olive oil and cook for approx 20 mins till salmon flesh is opaque and crumbs are golden.
6. Chill for serving.

## *Saumon en crouste*

### *Beth's coulibiac*

I remember Beth making puff pastry once as an activity with her children and serving us coulibiac. It was light and buttery, so it must be possible to make your own. Beth says her recipe would have been in Helga Rubinstein's *The Penguin Freezer Cook Book* (1973) and that she has thrown it away now (being more able to dispose of books than we are). I think a real Russian coulibiac has tapioca instead of the rice and wraps the filling in pancakes before making the pastry parcel, but this is roughly what Beth remembers doing. She also comments: 'It was a spectacular party dish – a bit showy-offy, I suppose, reflecting my quietly competitive nature I fear'.

1. Roll out the pastry into two oblongs – one a little bigger than the other.
2. Stack the filling ingredients on top of the smaller one in layers in the order given above, leaving an edge all the way round.
3. Brush the edges with egg and fix the pastry top to the bottom, scrunching the edges together. Brush with egg and slash the top lightly in a few places and/or decorate with pastry shapes.
4. Bake in a medium oven for about ½ an hour.

home-made puff pastry  
a salmon fillet, skinned  
dill mixed with lemon zest  
cooked rice  
mushrooms, cooked in butter  
3 hard-boiled eggs, sliced

### *My variation*

More or less as above but no rice and crushed peas on top and fold the puff pastry into a parcel with a seam at the bottom. I'm not sure I do the eggs or mushrooms, but a triple layer when you slice through at picnics looks attractive. Vita did it one Glyndebourne when eight of us converged, and the green and pink slices with the champagne bubbles totally suited the mood.

### *Honey soya salmon*

I got this from two sources: Leslie Lyndon (previously married to Sonja) served us this many moons ago and Conrad (an Electronic Publishing Group mate) made it when some of us went to his riverside flat in Rotherhithe. I've done it every so often ever since. It goes black and slightly sticky, giving taste to bland, farmed salmon.

1. Make a marinade and soak the salmon in it for ½ an hour.
2. Fry or grill, brushing salmon with the marinade.

1/2 tsp brown sugar  
1/2 tsp butter  
1/2 tsp olive oil  
1/2 tsp honey  
1/2 tsp dry white wine  
1/2 tsp lemon or lime  
2 tsp soy sauce (or teriyaki)  
chopped garlic  
slices of fresh ginger  
salmon steaks

### *Bill's Khaled Khaldoun Latakia hake*

Bill is a keen angler, but he doesn't really like eating the fish he catches. But there is a fish recipe he was given by a friend in Syria. He was taken sea-fishing by this chum in Latakia and they made the dish afterwards.

The only problem, says Sophie, is the sun-dried pimentos. In Syria you can buy large, semi-dried peppers like this which are quite hot, though not madly so, and a really nice fleshy texture. Just like those 'sun-blush' tomatoes you can get here, but infinitely nicer. When she makes this dish she substitutes the flesh of a red pepper roasted alongside a chilli or two. Not the same, but kind of works... says Sophie.

1. Crush the sauce dry ingredients in a pestle and mortar and mix everything in a bowl.
2. Spoon over the fish and cook in a low oven for as long as the fish takes, depending on size.
3. Chop up a lemon and a couple of tomatoes and tuck them in beside the fish in the roasting dish.



hake or other  
firm white fish  
*the sauce:*  
cup of lemon juice  
cup olive oil  
3 bulbs of crushed fresh garlic  
2 tsp coriander seed  
2 tsp cumin  
1 tsp black pepper  
1 tsp white pepper  
1 tsp allspice  
small bowlful of crushed  
walnuts  
2 tsp sun-dried pimento  
chillies  
lemon and tomatoes on the side

## Carp

My mother remembers this being a traditional Christmas Eve dish in her family, but she only did it once because, she said, there are so many little bones to concentrate on that you can't have conversation. She liked lively round-the-table conversations with everyone participating on the same topic. I inherited that trait, but I didn't inherit a recipe and have to make do with one found on the internet which sounds slightly more designer than she would have been used to. I suspect she boiled it whole the time she did it.

6 long red peppers  
2 tbsp olive oil  
2 red onions, peeled and sliced  
4 large fillets of carp, skinned  
120 g pancetta, thinly sliced  
30 large basil leaves  
5 tbsp butter  
¼ tsp paprika  
4 tbsp sour cream (optional)

1. Roast the red peppers in the oven for 25 mins. Cool and remove skins and seeds. Slice in thin strips.
2. Sauté the onions for 5-7 mins until just transparent. Remove the pan from the heat, add the peppers and keep warm.
3. Have 4 large fillets of carp prepared and make incisions in the flesh, about 4-5 in each fillet. Push in the pancetta strips together with the basil.
4. Melt the butter and stir in the paprika. Use to brush each stuffed carp fillet. Arrange on a baking sheet and put in hot oven to cook for 20-30 mins.
5. Serve the carp accompanied by the peppers and red onions. Spoon over some sour cream.

## Charlotte with mackerel and oysters

On one of the very few occasions on which we were invited to supper (as opposed to a party) with Charlotte and Jasper, they had a huge range cooker of impressive ovenness and out of it came four mincey spatch-cooked grilled mackerel. It felt bizarre to us at the time (a lot of years ago) and stuck in the mind. This was when they lived in Crouch End, near us.

Now that she is in Norfolk, she (or they) have taken to turning up for supper at a moment's notice. Once she phoned from the road at 7.30, and I was just pondering what to do with a dozen oysters I had bought for a knock-down £3 – so the upshot was that by the time she arrived, I had a three-course meal (for the two of us, as Stephen was away) in hand. I did the oysters lightly cooked in a cream and Tabasco sauce, not quite trusting them au naturel and we buried a pair of bottles together and were very jolly. Did she drive back somewhere after that? I hope not.

Challenged later, Charlotte says it was a Nigel Slater recipe for the mackerel. With ginger in it – but I couldn't find it.



# 8

## Meat

This section starts with Hungarian goulash and Polish klopses as a nod towards our respective paternal countries of origin, which bounded each other. Coincidence or one of the things that drew us together? And the meat of life – well, it’s love and marriage, surely.

### Marriage

Stephen and I don’t have a signature dish, but if we did it would have to be pork dressed up as wild boar, which was the first dish I ever cooked for him. In fact, the truth is that I didn’t cook it *for* him; he just was there when I did it. It was, all the same, the turning point of our lives.

It was in the Noel Road flat and I had set my sights on Rupert Jones-Parry who was the Longman Lothario and who (insultingly I thought) had run through all the eligible girls but had ignored my charms. I’d already left Longman, which probably made it easier to invite him, and I think I had in mind to show him how cultivated I was and what an interesting flat I had, with demonstrations of good taste in all the ‘stuff’ around. I needed an extra man to make up a six, and had just met Stephen chez Francis Golding. I thought he would do. In the course of the evening, I lost all interest in Rupert and had eyes only for Stephen. He, in turn, left his cigarette lighter behind (very Freudian). He came back a week later to get it (on 9 November 1969). And that was it. Within days, I told Susanna that I would marry him and he, *mutatis mutandi*, said the same to Greenwald. Six-and-a-half months later we were wed. Many years later I met Rupert again at some publishing do and we had lunch together. I told him this story and he promptly tried to make good his earlier omission. It gave me some secret pleasure that honour was eventually satisfied and come-uppance dealt.

But back a bit: I’ve romped through that story too fast. Francis hasn’t been introduced and he was a very good cook himself with acerbic ideas about the way things should be done: I recall him once recounting how he had been served a venison stew with carrots in it. Carrots, my dear; the idea! It was through Francis’s discerning eye that I learned to look anew at Lotte’s trousseau and to question how much of it is real and how much fake. Francis himself had exquisite



taste and the finest of fine collections of Chinese porcelain. He introduced me to Stephen because I was looking for an architect for a project to do with the Young Friends of the Tate to which I belonged. Its chairman was also a local, living in Duncan Terrace (it was in his garden that I had cold artichokes vinaigrette for the first time and thought myself ever so sophisticated) and I had agreed to find an architect. So Francis invited me to meet an architectural student.

Technically we met twice before 9 November (Francis's dinner and my own), but that is the day we *knew*, so that's our official anniversary; we still celebrate it. He had come to fetch the cigarette lighter – little knowing being with me would mean a ban on cigarettes – and I can picture where we stood in my upstairs room when he said he had his car outside and would I like to go for a drink: a tall gangly young man with interestingly chiselled features and a moustache. We went to The Flask in Highgate and drank mead; discovered how similar our backgrounds were and how many ideas we shared. At a repeat visit to the same pub a few months later, Stephen proposed (yes, we were old-fashioned at that time) and although we are talking about a mere four or five months, I thought he'd never get round to it. My boyfriend of the time, Paul, had been summarily dismissed on 10 November: I treated him badly, blinded by love as I was. This was the coup de foudre that I had been longing for and I embraced it without hesitation and with no thought for anyone else. I don't think, when that happens, one can put one's finger on what the attraction is, but looking back now over 44 years together I think we recognised a similar creativity in each other. Making things is important to both of us; it's what we do and what we endlessly talk about, sitting at breakfast designing things on the backs of envelopes. All that is in another chapter.

I think my creative influence on Stephen was that it released his own creativity and enabled him to buck his father's concept of the doctor-lawyer-architect professional that his Jewish paternal pride ideally demanded. To steer away from parental pressure is no easy thing to do; to give up architecture one year away from achieving a qualification is brave. We didn't then know that he would become a pioneer in reinventing the lost craft of lute-making after measuring and studying instruments in historic collections all over Europe. I have no regrets at all over having encouraged him. How, on a picture researcher's pittance, I managed to support us both, I cannot think. Eventually Ludek came to admire his lute-maker son – self-taught and famous in the lute world. Shame he wasn't there, on the other side of the globe (Toronto, Mexico and Sydney), when someone said, 'Not *the* Stephen Gottlieb!'. Ludek got to do his bit of bragging and I am pleased for him. The admiration of his peers was important to him, and it is interesting that, Stephen will comment on something one of



the children has said with the words: ‘You could be right, as my father used to say’. Nada liked to be the one who was right.

By then we had moved to a top floor flat of the generously proportioned Parliament Hill Mansions in Lissenden Gardens, where we had a balcony from which you could throw your peach stones into the Gospel Oak Lido swimming pool below. A Collard & Collard grand piano came as part of the key money which a doctor friend of Ludek’s gave Stephen in cash as a wedding present: £600 – more money than either of us had ever seen in paper form (the rent was £6 a week, a bargain even then, hence the key money). He also gave Stephen some man-to-man advice that we scoffed at when he recounted it to me, but which I have come to see had some sense to it. It was something like: ‘In a marriage, it is wise to keep some things to yourself’.

We didn’t believe that in the early days and drove others mad with our absorption in each other: one friend faded temporarily away then and told me many years later that she had felt we just didn’t need anyone else except each other. The love endured, but the first moments of passion belong to Islington. There’s a kiss in a mews beside the former entrance to the tube at Angel that still wafts on the air whenever I pass by. It is the ghost of the most electric and exquisite kiss. The mews is all pushed-up and gallerified now, but that kiss lingers. It always will.

I kept my maiden name, though, and don’t really know who Jane Gottlieb is when our more traditional friends introduce us as a Gottlieb bundle. As for Mrs S Gottlieb – there are still people who write that on envelopes, stuck in a throw-back to the 19th century.

The Parliament Hill Mansions flat had a proper-sized kitchen and I did a collage of food pictures culled from glossy magazines over a complete, quite large, wall. The top left-hand corner read: On Christmas Day we EAT – the word ‘eat’ being in hoarding-sized bold caps. There was a joyous abundance about that bit of typography that I loved and I think of it every Christmas. I can’t recreate that collage in our present galley kitchen because it is too small and there isn’t any wall space. It is designed to a T (by Stephen) for maximum usability – and very successfully too; every time I whinge on about wanting to make it bigger, I realise how clever the design actually is. Everything is in easy reach, clever little surfaces flap up when extra are needed, and various kitchen machines pack away ingeniously.

We moved to Muswell Hill just before Gabriel was born and couldn’t at first get over having a front door and walking straight out into the street, after having had to climb 78 stairs with two toddlers in arm and a baby inside. Somewhat unadventurously we are still in that same house, but I like it and I like the street and the neighbourliness that surrounds





us. We could have an entirely stimulating social life limiting ourselves just to the people who live in this road (nine of us are in the local choir).

There were phases when we thought of moving to the country, and I know Stephen would have liked to do that, because he would have dearly loved to have a workshop outbuilding. Before buying our present house we had looked at more than 40 houses in the Somerset and Wiltshire area, including one with a threepenny-bit-shaped dairy that would have made a superb workshop. But oh, the work it required! We quailed at the thought. We quailed at many properties that would have been beautiful now – but I am not sure we could have withstood the cost, emotional more than financial. I have always hated ‘broken homes’ and what I mean by that is living for months with mud, dust and plaster. I am not sure either of us could have done it.

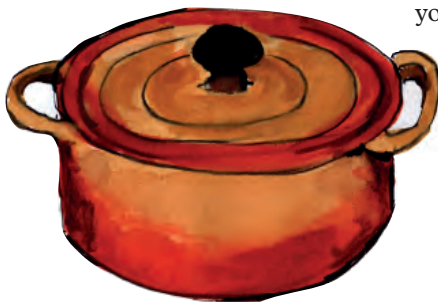
At any rate we didn’t. Life might have been entirely different so I cannot regret it. But the country idyll was a long time going off the conversation list. The latest scare involved a vicarage in Yapton with two outhouses all set up and well-appointed: we could have had a studio each without a great deal of bother. ‘Mine’ already had a kiln in it and an upstairs gallery to boot. The large kitchen garden had proper fruit cages, a mature asparagus bed and self-sufficiency looked to hand. You could bicycle to the sea in 20 mins. Inside was a room suitable for house concerts. We realised, in the end, that though we could have swapped our terraced house in London for this white Georgian building in its own walled-garden grounds in West Sussex, we could not have afforded to maintain it. It had a marvellous kitchen, but I was in severe misery when it looked as if we really might do it this time.

So in all our life together, we have only had three addresses. But we have travelled far together. We are each other’s meat and drink.

## *Frying pans and casseroles*

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### *Eva’s pörkölt (goulash)*



Eva says: ‘There are two secrets of a good goulash: the ingredients you add to it and the ones you don’t. The secret ingredient of a perfect Hungarian stew (besides a good quality Hungarian paprika of course) is onion. It seems to be a lot but this will create your thick sauce. As you are simmering the stew, the onions melt into a sweet, spicy sauce, so you won’t have any pieces of it at the end. What you never ever would add to a pörkölt are any of the following: flour, butter, canned tomatoes (all three I see in many ‘authentic’ recipes). There are a few optional ingredients that could be added,;this really depends on your taste, on habits and on what you have on hand (e.g. pork fat instead of oil, smoked bacon, green pepper, fresh tomato, red wine, caraway seeds).



Oh dear! For me – it isn't goulash unless it has caraway seeds and I've been guilty for years of adding flour and tinned tomatoes. If possible, get the pointed, almost white, peppers found in small ethnic shops, or bigger supermarket, not bell peppers.

1. Heat oil in a saucepan. Add the finely chopped onions and cook until translucent.
2. Eva's secret step: remove the saucepan from the heat and add the paprika – this is very important because the paprika could burn from the sudden heat and get bitter.
3. Put it back, add beef cubes and stir so that the spicy onion mix covers the meat evenly. Cover with about 100-150 ml water so that the liquid doesn't completely cover the meat.
4. Add the sliced green pepper, the whole tomato, s&p.
5. Simmer covered on very low heat for about 1-1½ hours. After 1 hour, check, add a little more water if necessary, so the stew doesn't burn. Depending on the thickness of the sauce, cook for 10-15 mins uncovered so that all the liquid reduces to a spicy, thick sauce that covers the meat. It tastes even better reheated, and it is worth preparing it a day ahead.

2 lb beef for stew, cubed  
3-4 big onions, finely chopped  
4-5 tbsp groundnut oil or sunflower oil  
3-4 tbsp Hungarian sweet paprika  
s&p  
1 pepper, sliced  
1 fresh tomato

### *Angela's klopses*

A staple in Stephen's family home. Angela's recipe is her memory of how Jojo made them. The cooking time of three hours seems long to me. What differentiates klopses from standard meatballs is that you don't stop at step 3 and cook them through, but poach them in a broth – tomato-based in this case, but a beef-broth could also be used. Serve with mashed tatties and sprouts (says Angela) though I think wide egg noodles – or spaetzles – would be more traditional.

1. Sauté the minced onions in butter until the onions are soft.
2. Mix together different meats with the herbs and seasoning and egg. Add breadcrumbs to taste (say a couple of oz) and shape into 2" meatballs.
3. Roll in flour and frizzle in hot oil till browned.
4. Put in a casserole with the 3 tins of tomato and liquid.
5. Cover and put in a medium to low oven for about 3 hours.

1½ lb mixed minced beef, veal or pork  
2 minced onions  
1 tin tomatoes  
1 tin tomato soup  
1 tin water  
herbs de Provence  
some breadcrumbs  
s&p  
butter  
5 fl oz milk  
1 beaten egg

### *Persian meatballs with spinach and chickpeas*

A variant of this is to combine the meatballs with broad beans and lemon instead of the chickpeas and spinach and serve with orzo. Then it becomes Palestinian instead of Persian.

1. Make meatballs in the usual way.
2. Cook and drain the chick peas and spinach.
3. Mix with butter and seasoning all in one pan and simmer for about ½ hour.
4. Then add the 'secret' Arab flavouring – crush the garlic with salt and then fry with the ground coriander until the mixture smells sweetly.
5. Stir into the main pot just before serving.

1½ lb minced lamb  
1 chopped onion  
1 lb spinach  
¼ lb chickpeas soaked overnight (or tin)  
garlic  
ground coriander

Serve with rice.

## Spaghetti with meatballs

This doesn't need a recipe: you just do what you feel like with mince and serve it on spaghetti with a tomato sauce. Stephen often does this when it is his turn to cook. For over a year (maybe even two) we had a week on/week off system, which I rather liked because one had a whole week of not needing to think about it. However, we swapped that system up for me doing all the cooking and Stephen doing household improvements. I am not sure at the time of writing who is getting the best deal. That's a lie – yes, I am sure: he is.

1 onion, diced  
garlic  
1 lb mince  
bit of cinnamon  
any other spices  
an egg

1. Either fry the onion and garlic first or don't bother.
2. Mix everything with the egg to bind and make meatballs on a floured plate.
3. Cook them while cooking the spaghetti and the tomato sauce (béchamel sauce also nice).

## Clarissa's meatballs with lemon and celeriac

This comes via Ottolenghi and the quorn variant is my idea and works nicely. Makes 20 meatballs.

2 lb minced beef (or quorn)  
1 medium onion, peeled and  
finely chopped  
4 oz breadcrumbs  
chopped flat-leaf parsley  
1 egg  
½ tsp ground allspice  
olive oil  
1 small celeriac, cut into batons  
3 garlic cloves, peeled and  
crushed  
½ - ¾ tsp each ground  
turmeric, cumin, cinnamon,  
crushed fennel seeds & smoked  
paprika  
500 ml chicken stock  
good squeeze lemon juice  
Greek yoghurt

1. In a large bowl, use your hands to mix the beef or quorn, onion, breadcrumbs, parsley, egg, allspice, s&p. Form into 5 cm x 3 cm kebab-like shapes.
2. Heat the oil in a large sauté pan for which you have a lid, and sear the meatballs all over for about 5 mins in total. Remove them and add celeriac, garlic and remaining spices to the pan. Cook on high heat, stirring, for 2 mins, return the meatballs to the pan and add the stock, lemon juice, s&p.
3. Bring to a boil, turn down the heat, cover and simmer gently for 30 mins. Remove the lid and leave to bubble away for 10 mins more, until the sauce is quite thick.
4. Remove the pan from the heat and let it sit for a few mins to settle. Taste, season as necessary and serve topped with a dollop of yoghurt and a sprinkling of parsley.

## Pavel's ćevapčići

This must date back to the 1970s when Pavel and Sherrie lived in London; maybe even from 1974 when they stayed in our flat while we went on our three-month Grand Tour measuring lutes (and when Emily stood up in a car park in Florence for the first time, and I conceived my thesis on the sandpits of Europe). We came home to saucepans brillo'd to a 1950s-advertisement shine. This is his recipe and comes to me via his daughter Lenka.

⅓ minced lamb  
⅓ minced beef  
⅓ minced pork  
*always choosing the fattiest meat  
and for every kilo of meat add:*  
2 tbsps of olive oil  
1 clove of garlic finely crushed  
4 fl oz water  
black pepper

1. Mix all the ingredients together in a large bowl and let it all rest for 2 hours to half a day.
2. When ready to start cooking, roll them into little sausages the size of a fat man's thumb.
3. Throw them onto a very hot hotplate and roll the meat around a little to seal the meat. Cook for a few mins and they should be

cooked all the way through. Just before you take them off the hotplate, throw on a little bit of beer.

4. Traditionally served with kaymak (buffalo cream), but half sour cream and half yoghurt mixed together can be used instead. Fresh herbs may be added to this mix – mint works best.

### *Ivan's mutton and oyster sausages*

We made these by hand with actual pig's intestine, but Dave the butcher could provide something more sanitised. They were the best sausages ever.

1. Mix all by hand in a big bowl making sure the oysters are well distributed.
2. Using a funnel and a wooden spoon, stuff the bladder with all the mixture; a knot at the bottom.
3. Twist two or three times at sausage intervals all the way along.
4. These were cooked on the range, but we'd have to fry ours.

### *Stephen's bolognaise*

Again, no recipe required – he does a mincemeat version and also one with tuna and capers (which I'm not so keen on). If I tell the children Stephen is cooking, they assume it is one of his spaghetti dishes.

1. Add to saucepan in list order.
2. Let it infuse for an hour so it thickens and the flavour spreads.

### *Falscher Hase*

My mother did this as a Sunday roast and it must have been a remnant of the Second World War when meat was still scarce (I do remember rationing of sweets, though I don't really recall meat rationing except for queuing for what seemed hours and making patterns on the sawdust floor of the butcher's shop with my shoes). I think she used any old mince and breadcrumbs and I don't think she did put hard-boiled eggs in hers, but according to a German food website (since I don't have any of my mother's recipe books) 'housewives wanted to put a special dish on the table so they mixed chopped meats together, wrapped them around eggs and roasted the meatloaf in a shape reminiscent of a hare, a highly prized meat'. I introduced it to Susanna as a studenty sort of dish – we called it 'wig' (for false hair).

1. Chop onions very finely. Mix the meat, onion, 3 tbsp of the breadcrumbs, the 2 raw eggs, salt, pepper, paprika, mustard and parsley thoroughly.
2. Sprinkle the rest of the breadcrumbs on a cutting board and flatten out the meat mixture in a rectangle about 1" thick. Arrange the whole, hard-boiled eggs in a row down the middle. Fold the sides of the meat patty over the eggs. Form the meat into a nice, free-form loaf shape. Coat liberally in breadcrumbs.
3. Chop 2 strips of bacon into small pieces and fry. Set aside and in



1½ lb  
mutton,  
coarsely chopped  
a dozen oysters  
3 oz breadcrumbs  
6 oz suet  
thyme and savoury  
2 eggs  
tsp salt  
a lot of pepper – black and long  
pepper  
quite a lot of nutmeg  
6 mashed-up anchovies

1 onion, diced  
garlic  
1 carrot, peeled and diced  
1 celery stick, diced  
1 lb mince  
pinch dried red pepper flakes  
1 tin chopped tomatoes in juice  
squeeze of tomato paste  
bit of lemon rind  
slosh of red wine

1 lb minced meat  
1 chopped onion  
breadcrumbs  
2 eggs  
½ tsp salt  
¼ tsp ground black pepper  
1 tsp ground paprika  
1 tsp prepared mustard  
chopped parsley  
3 hard-boiled eggs (optional)  
4 strips of bacon  
beef broth  
1 tsp cornflour  
sour cream

- the same pan brown the meatloaf on all sides in the bacon grease. Lay the remaining strips of bacon over the meatloaf, put in a tin and pour half the beef broth over it.
4. Bake, basting occasionally with the remaining broth for about 45 mins.
  5. Remove meatloaf to a serving platter, cover with aluminium foil and keep warm.
  6. Make a sauce with the cornflour and cream and add in the bacon bits.

### *Upper crust meat loaf*

A posher form of 'wig', this is done in a ring mould and filled with mixed roast vegetables. Cut out from some colour magazine or other and a favourite for some time.

1 lb lean pork  
 ½ lb gammon  
 1 medium cooking apple  
 1 medium onion  
 8 juniper berries  
 garlic  
 seasoning  
 3 oz breadcrumbs  
 2 eggs  
 tbsp brandy  
 stuffed olives, sliced

1. Mince the meats with the apple and onion.
2. Grind the spices and add to meat.
3. Add the breadcrumbs, then the eggs and brandy and test fry a tsp to taste.
4. Butter the mould and put the olives, cut side down round the bottom (to stud the loaf in a nice pattern).
5. Pack the mixture into the mould and bake in a bain marie for 1½ hours in a medium oven.
6. Rest briefly and then turn out.

### *Nick H's chilli con carne*

Not his recipe, but apparently his favourite dish. Ever since he died of cancer – coming back to the UK from Guatemala to go into hospital – we have a dinner with his particular friends (the Angeloses and the Corinnas) on or near the anniversary of his death (November) and take it in turns to serve this dish. For Stephen's sake this has to be relatively mild, so maybe other guests can be offered some chilli or Tabasco on the side to add extra punch.

1 tbsp oil  
 1 large onion  
 ½ red pepper  
 garlic  
 1 heaped tsp hot chilli powder  
 1 lb lean minced beef  
 1 stock cube  
 1 tin chopped tomatoes  
 1 tsp each of paprika, ground  
 cumin, sugar, dried marjoram  
 a squeeze of tomato purée  
 2 tins red kidney beans (or  
 dried soaked overnight)

1. Chop and sweat the vegetables and spices.
2. Add the meat and mix it about to break up. Add the paprika.
3. Add the rest of the ingredients – beans last – and cook slowly so the flavours all blend.
4. Serve with long grain rice and sour cream.

### *Lotte's stuffed peppers*

My mother did do one or two dishes that were noteworthy (though it wasn't till I'd been thumbing through all my books that I remembered). I think one went something like this and was done to make a small amount of meat go round further.

1. 1 pepper per person (hers I think were always green but I mix the colours).
2. Cut off the tops, scrape out the seeds and boil till soft.
3. When cool enough to handle, stuff with a mixture of minced meat, fried onions and cooked rice.



peppers  
 mince  
 onions  
 rice

4. Then into the oven with some stock (she'd have used Maggi) until ready.

I don't think she knew about garlic or herbs, but I'd add some; perhaps a tomato chopped in as well and maybe some cheese.

### *Kim's unstuffed cabbage*

My second cousin Kim says this is a cheat on a much more labour-intensive dish that she had at home occasionally and which was probably handed down from my father's mother. It is easy to assemble but note the long cooking time.

1. In a large, heavy pot, combine vegetables and liquids and bring to a boil over medium-high heat.
2. Combine meat, rice and seasoning and roll this mixture into 1¼" meatballs.
3. Add the meatballs to the by-now boiling soup, reduce the heat, cover the pot and simmer for about 2 hours.
4. Remove the cover, add raisins and cook gently for another 30 mins, uncovered.

chopped onion  
a chopped head of green cabbage  
a cup of tomato sauce & a large can of diced, peeled tomatoes  
a cup of water  
¼ cup each honey and lemon juice  
1 lb minced beef  
½ cup raw white rice  
tsp Worcester sauce and seasonings  
⅓ cup raisins

### *Tagine*

I do have a tagine pot that I bought in Asilah, our tiny maisonette in the Moroccan medina that we bought with three other couples in 2003. I don't use it as I can never quite believe that it won't all fall down when you take the lid off. So my version of a tagine is frankly just a stew with lamb and some sort of fruit in it – apricot, prune, quince – and I quite like adding spinach at the end of cooking. It can go into the tagine pot for show – but consider the extra washing up. Claudia Roden in *A Book of Middle Eastern Food* (1968) gives this version which she cooks on top of the stove, but I can't manage to do that. Whenever anything is meant to cook for 2 hours, I prefer to bung it in the oven and go away.

1 lb lamb, cubed  
oil  
ginger  
ground coriander & cinnamon  
1 onion  
½ lb prunes  
2 tbsp honey  
1 tsp orange blossom water  
roasted grilled sesame seeds for garnish

1. Onion first, then brown the meat and add everything up to the prunes in the list and some water.
2. Cook in a low oven for 2 hours.
3. Add prunes for another 20 mins (I think I usually put them in with the rest though).
4. Stir in the honey and a sprinkle of the blossom water.
5. Throw the sesame seeds over before serving.
6. Serve with couscous.

### *Cassoulet*

This isn't the four-day version – it's what I do in one (but start early as it might need to cook for five hours). Soak the beans overnight if you think of it (in three times their volume of water), otherwise my quick-soak method works OK and is better than using a tin (page 84). Quantities by feel and by eye; meats à choix though it isn't really a cassoulet unless it's got duck and some sort of pork in it. Tomatoes aren't authentic, but I like them in it.



dried haricot beans – in France  
 you can get long thin ones  
 garlic or other sausage  
 lardons and/or pork belly  
 celery  
 onion  
 carrot  
 garlic  
 tomatoes  
 confit ducks legs  
 herbs and seasoning  
 garlic bread to serve with it

1. Boil the beans up for 10 mins and then let them stand for an hour or two before cooking them till they are nearly soft.
2. Sweat and reduce the vegetables to a thick sauce.
3. Add the pork meats (but not the duck) and the drained, half-cooked haricots.
4. Put in a casserole in a medium oven for 2 hours or more.
5. Bury the duck legs in the beans, add a few whole cloves of garlic, perhaps some lemon juice and put back for another 2 hours.

2 best ends of lamb (6 cutlets  
 each) – tied and trimmed by the  
 butcher  
 ½ lb cranberries  
 ¼ pt chicken stock  
 1 oz sugar  
 1 onion  
 ¼ lb mushrooms  
 ½ lb belly of pork (sausage meat  
 works too)  
 pkt chicken liver (this isn't in  
 the original recipe but I think it  
 makes all the difference)  
 butter  
 4 oz breadcrumbs  
 1 egg  
 garlic, parsley, thyme, s&p  
 baby glazed onions for the tops  
 of the crown

### *Crown roast of lamb with festive stuffing*

This was my absolute best party piece at one time, but I think lamb cutlets have gone up in price now and make it a bit of a luxury. From *The Cookery Year*, and these are the quantities for six – though when I do this stuffing for Christmas I don't really weigh anything out and I vary it (probably because I no longer look it up) and it's always good.

1. Make the stuffing by 'popping' the cranberries in a covered saucepan with a little of the sugar and stock (add the rest later).
2. Fry chopped onion and garlic and then add the mushrooms.
3. Mince the meats and put in a bowl with all the stuffing ingredients, breadcrumbs, egg and seasoning.
4. Test the seasoning (and have a bit of light lunch) by frying a mini burger of the mixture to see if it is right.
5. Then pile it into the crown cavity, put into a larded tin and roast for roughly 30 mins per lb of weight or whatever feels and looks right.
6. Put a glazed onion on top of each cutlet spike.
7. Make gravy with the pan scrapings.

### *Brenda's lamb with Sam's variation*

It's a Greek way of cooking but this is as told to me by my hairdresser, Brenda, who went off to live in Spain. She and I would talk recipes every time I had my hair done. Sam's variation is to wrap anchovy filets round the garlic and score the lamb to stuff them in. He uses rosemary instead of oregano. Sam and Tina gave me a late lunch menu which starts with their cocktail (page 242), has their ovened aubergine with the lamb (page 106) and ends with instant raspberry ice-cream (page 195). They 'couldn't really plump for one recipe but have come up with a late Sunday lunch such as you might receive at our place'.

This is a very forgiving dish as it will wait for some hours if you aren't ready to eat it and won't dry out. You can also do it in a slow cook pot where it will wait a really long time.

a shoulder or leg of lamb  
 garlic  
 oregano  
 onions and carrot

1. Spike the lamb all over with garlic slivers and season it.
2. Totally cover the top with a thick layer of fresh or dried oregano.
3. Put in a roasting pan with half a bottle of red wine and baby, peeled onions or large ones roughly cut. I add a bit of carrot too, but I don't think Brenda did.

- Cover with a double layer of silver foil with a fold in the top and scrump it firmly to the edges of the tin so the whole thing is sealed in.
- Back for several hours in a very low oven.
- Peep under the foil and prod it when you think it will be ready – it should fall off the bone.

### *Méchoui from Dan's mother via Peter*

- Arrange lamb pieces in baking tray and cover with garlic, spices (generous with the cumin), seasoning, coriander and olive oil.
- Cover hermetically with foil and bake for 3½ hours in preheated oven at 190°C.
- Uncover and baste with juices.
- Re-cover and cook until meat starts detaching from bones.
- Put under high grill for 5 mins to make crispy before serving.



lamb ½ shoulders and ½ legs  
 or a whole leg cut up  
 12 garlic cloves finely chopped  
 clump of chopped fresh  
 coriander  
 olive oil, ground cumin, saffron,  
 red paprika and brown (i.e. hot,  
 or a sprinkle of chilli)  
 s&p

### *Emily's lamb in Barolo*

Emily didn't want to give me any 'signature dishes' as (according to her) she 'likes to cook anything. But,' she adds, 'my lamb in Barolo is pretty fantastic'. Minimalistic recipe:

- Marinate a joint of lamb for 2 days in whole bottle of Barolo, carrots, onions, celery, peppercorns, bay, cloves, stick cinnamon.
- In oven with a foil parcel over the top to seal it in; 5 hours or so low heat. Bingo! Eat with a spoon.



### *Navarin de mouton*

This is from Raymond Blanc's *Kitchen Secrets* as I don't know where the one I frequently used to do came from. I know it used baby turnips so I've added them as they always seemed to me the whole point of this dish.

- Brown the lamb. Then season with the salt, peppercorns, wine, bouquet garni and chopped tomatoes and cook, stirring, for 1 min. Pour on the cold water to cover the lamb and bring just to the boil, then skim off any scum that rises to the surface.
- Place the casserole, covered, in a low oven and cook for 1½ hours.
- Chop up the vegetables as desired.
- Take out the casserole after 1½ hours, add the vegetables and garlic and bring back to the boil on the hob. Replace the lid and return to the oven for 1 hour until the vegetables are cooked and the lamb is very tender. Taste and correct the seasoning.

2 lb cubed neck or shoulder of  
 lamb  
 2 tbsp rapeseed oil  
 a good glass of white wine  
 1 tsp sea salt  
 6 black peppercorns  
 bay leaves, thyme, parsley,  
 rosemary  
 1 tin chopped tomatoes  
 2 pt cold water  
 2 onions, peeled  
 1 large carrot, peeled  
 1 celery stick  
 4 baby turnips, peeled  
 8 garlic cloves, peeled

## *Vita's spiced lamb with parsnips and raisins*

This recipe is adapted from *Saraban* by Greg and Lucy Malouf (2013). In theirs they use pumpkin and verjuice. Vita substitutes parsnips and pomegranate molasses, with a few more spice alterations – and has had it many times with friends, who all rave about the tangy sweetness, spice and richness of the meat. This is excellent with rice and tzadziki (page 166) or plain yoghurt.

a 2.5 kg leg of lamb  
80 ml olive oil  
600 g parsnips, cut into chunks  
3 purple onions, cut into quarters  
300 g sultanas  
splash of pomegranate molasses (or dessert wine)  
dollop of honey or agave syrup

### *for the spice paste*

4 cloves of garlic,  
2 red chillies  
1 red onion  
1 shallot  
all chopped roughly  
1 tsp each: s&p; caraway seeds;  
fenugreek seeds; grated nutmeg  
½ each: tsp grated cinnamon;  
grated cardamom  
60 ml olive oil

1. *For the spice paste* – combine the garlic, onion, shallot, chilli and salt in a mortar and grind to a paste. Add the remaining spices and pound again. Stir in the oil.
2. Use your hands to rub this all over the lamb, filling in all the crevices. Add the honey or agave, molasses or dessert wine and marinate in the fridge for 2 hours, or overnight to really assimilate the flavours.
3. Pour half the olive oil into a heavy-based roasting pan, add the lamb and cook in the centre of the oven for 20 mins on high. Turn the oven down to medium and continue cooking for a further 20 mins. Remove the pan from the oven and add the remaining oil, a little more honey or molasses.
4. Scatter the parsnips, sultanas and red onion, tossing them all around in the juices to coat in the spicy oil. Return to the oven and cook for a further 20 mins, checking from time to time to turn the vegetables and baste the lamb.
5. Check for doneness – the lamb should be medium rare at this stage. Return it if you prefer it less pink. Then allow the meat to rest for at least 15 mins before carving (the vegetables can be kept warm in the oven if they are done).

## *Venison casserole*

I do this every year around Vita's or my birthday. Also sometimes for Art Workers' Guild winter suppers – sometimes adding beef to it to make it more economical. I never use a recipe but I do always slow cookpot it. If in the right mood, I'll transfer it to an oven dish, get the gravy to the right consistency (reserving some extra) and slap a decorated puff pastry topping on it to make it more of a birthday I've-bothered-for-you statement.

olive oil  
3 lb diced venison  
s&p  
butter  
shallots  
lardons  
some small carrots  
garlic  
½ bottle red wine  
slosh of port  
1 pt beef stock  
1 star anise, juniper berries  
1 cinnamon stick  
3 tbsp redcurrant jelly

1. Brown meat in batches and tip into slow cookpot.
2. Fry the shallots (see onion-peeling method on page 7) till they colour. Add the bacon, carrots and garlic and continue to cook for a few mins.
3. Chuck in the slow cookpot.
4. Glaze the frying pan with red wine and port, bring to the boil and then simmer until the liquid has reduced by half. Add the stock and seasoning to taste.
5. Add to cookpot, turn it on and go away all day.
6. When almost ready to serve, mix some of the juice with a tbsp of sauce flour (first slaked in a little water) and the redcurrant jelly, and pour back into the casserole to thicken. If there's a lot of liquid, reduce it in a saucepan on the stove.

Nice with red cabbage (page 123) and mash (page 114).



## Lapin aux deux moutardes

A favourite from my Islington days (so must be Robert Carrier). I also remember my boss's PA when I was at Longman making something similar with pork chops studded with cloves, coated in mustard on each side and then dunked in brown sugar. This was a quick-assembly dish as I remember watching her do it. Cooked on the hob as you would normally do a chop. And the cream added last.

1. Cut the rabbit into serving pieces, roll the pieces in flour seasoned with s&p, then sauté with the bacon in the olive oil and butter till golden.
2. Add the shallots, the bouquet garni, the white wine and stock, and cook gently, covered, till the rabbit is tender (about 2 hours).
3. Take the rabbit pieces out of the cooking pan and keep them warm. Skim any excess fat from the sauce, and remove the bouquet garni. Whisk together the cream and the two mustards till well combined and add to the sauce in the pan. Correct the seasoning, adding salt, pepper and more mustard (if you want) to taste. Add the rabbit pieces, heat through and serve.

1 rabbit  
2 tbsp flour  
s&p  
2 tbsp olive oil  
2 tbsp butter  
4 oz bacon, diced  
4 shallots, finely chopped  
1 bouquet garni (bought or home made)  
¼ pt dry white wine  
¼ pt chicken stock  
1 tsp Dijon mustard  
1 tsp English mustard  
½ pt double cream

## Poultry

### Chicken generally

This was a weekend treat in our childhood and there were two kinds: a broiling chicken that got thrown into the ubiquitous boiling water pot, and a roasting chicken, that went into the oven whole and with nothing fancy. Lotte would always grab the 'steitz' or pope's nose as her own favourite crispy bit, which always faintly disgusted me. A good free-range chicken (which they were then) doesn't need anything else, but one does like to ring the changes as it is not any longer reserved for weekends only.



If not roasting it, or casserolling it plain, here are some choices of what to cook with it that are my current favourites (quantities à choix):

1. za'atar and crushed pistachios on top
2. orange segments with pomegranate molasses
3. honey, pine nuts and lavender syrup
4. black and green olives
5. walnuts and pomegranate pips
6. sumac, lemon and za'atar with pine nuts
7. lemon sauce and rosemary
8. stuffed with prunes
9. with dates, coriander, cumin, ginger and tomato
10. rubbed all over with rose harissa
11. cooked in a salt crust (page 63)

## Coq-au-vin

a large chicken, jointed  
tbsp butter + olive oil  
lardons  
12 baby onions or shallots,  
peeled but left whole  
pkt button mushrooms  
plain flour  
4 cloves of crushed garlic  
1/3 bottle red wine  
2 carrots, roughly chopped  
2 celery stalks, roughly chopped  
2 bay leaves  
small bunch of thyme or  
rosemary  
tsp sugar  
4 tbsp cognac

This is based on my first, which was from the Robert Carrier *Great Dishes of the World*. It was what we all cooked for dinner parties in the 70s. His classic version may be worth following to the letter, but this is what I do – it's simpler and requires less washing up. The original says 1/2 bottle good burgundy.

1. Cook the bacon and put into a casserole.
2. Shake the chicken pieces in a plastic bag with flour and seasoning in it to coat them, and brown them adding chopped herbs.
3. Then pour in the wine to deglaze the pan and add it all to the casserole.
4. Without washing up the frying pan, put in a bit of oil and the onions partially peeled, cook until the skins come away (cool before peeling) then add a tsp sugar and brown the peeled onions. Tip in a slosh of brandy (whisky will do) and throw into the pot.
5. Either slow cook on low or put in the oven for around an hour (longer probably) adding the mushrooms 20 mins before the end.

a jointed chicken  
onions  
saffron threads  
slices of ginger

## Saffron chicken with hazelnuts

A favourite from Ottolenghi *The Cookbook* (2008) – but he makes it seem so complicated and this is all there is to it.

s&p  
oil  
lemon juice  
a 2 oz squeeze runny honey  
good splash of rosewater  
quite a few hazelnuts

1. Marinade the chicken pieces in rough-cut onions, saffron, ginger, salt & pepper, oil, lemon juice and a bit of water – all day if possible.
2. Mix together the honey, rosewater and slightly crushed pan-roasted hazelnuts to a pouring consistency.
3. Cook the chicken on a flattish oven dish till almost ready.
4. Pour over the topping (alternatives in next recipe) and put back for another 15 mins or so.

1/2 a poussin per person  
Moroccan spiced lemons under  
the skins  
thyme or chervil or tarragon or  
oregano – or any pairing  
a marinade using the herbs and  
balsamic vinegar or Madeira,  
oil, garlic or coat with harissa

## Mediterranean poussin

This is an amalgam of recipes from *Purple Citrus & Sweet Perfume* and *Crazy Water Pickled Lemons* and can be done with chicken as above using one of the toppings instead of the honey and hazelnut.

Nice with quince or rose-petal jam (both of which we have made ourselves).

1 chicken jointed into 8  
3 oz butter  
a little flour  
s&p  
4 oz blanched almonds  
2 tbsp brandy  
2 medium onions  
1/2 pt white stock (can be made  
up from bouillon cube)

## Francis's almond-brandy chicken

The last meal Francis cooked us before his tragic bicycle accident was this one from *The Cookery of England* by Elisabeth Ayrton (1975).

1. Flour and season chicken pieces.
2. Fry the finely sliced onions in butter without allowing them to brown.
3. Remove and place in the bottom of a wide shallow casserole with

- a lid. Put the joints of chicken in the pan and brown on all sides. Remove and arrange in the casserole on top of the onion.
4. Tip the blanched almonds into the pan and fry gently for 2 mins, shaking the pan off the heat. and turn into the casserole.
  5. Stir 1 tbsp flour into the butter remaining in the frying pan. Work it in well but let it get only slightly brown. Stir in stock, adding it slowly and allowing it to thicken smoothly. Add brandy (or sherry). Pour the sauce over the chicken in the casserole, cover closely.
  6. About 40 mins in a medium oven.

### *Chicken with caramelised onion & cardamom rice*

This is from *Jerusalem* by Yotam Ottolenghi and Sami Tamimi (2013) and Vicki did it for us when we were both ailing and lent me the book. Perfect one-pot easy dish. I think I'd halve these quantities for normal occasions.

1. Sauté the onion for 10-15 mins until lightly caramelised. Set aside.
2. Combine the chicken with salt, pepper, 2 tbsps of olive oil, cardamom pods, cloves and cinnamon. Mix everything together with your hands.
3. Add the chicken mix to a clean deep frying pan cook for 5 mins on each side so the skin crisps up a bit.
4. Add the rice, caramelised onion, salt, and pepper. Stir until the rice is coated in the oil. Add the currants
5. Add the boiling water, cover and put on low heat for 30 mins.
6. Then remove the pan from the heat, take off the lid and place a tea towel over the pot. Replace the lid and let sit for 10 mins.
7. Stir in the herbs and use a fork to fluff the rice. Season.

Serve with yoghurt mixed with a little olive oil.

### *Bo's Thai grilled chicken*

Bo's source is the *Family Heart Association Low Fat Diet Book* (1991) and her comment is:

I made this over and over again in the years when Rachel, Ben and Eddy were still living at home and I was working out all day. The reason was that you can set it up the night before or even the same morning, come home in the evening and find it all ready for quick grilling. I love the smell of fresh-ground cumin and fresh-slivered ginger. The lime was always just lemon. If there's a piece left over, it's marvellous in a lunchtime sandwich. As with so many cook-books, this was the single recipe I adopted, and I can't now imagine why on earth I would have bought it – probably it was remaindered! I still cook it sometimes just for me, and it is full of memories of those noisy, bustling times.

1. Score the chicken pieces.
2. Grind the dry ingredients in a pestle and mortar and add the oil.
3. Spread marinade over the chicken and leave for 6 hours in the cool (turn them over if you are there).
4. Grill for 20 mins and serve with salads.



- 3 tbsp currants (the posher version soaks barberries in sugar and water)
- 4 tbsp of olive oil
- 2 onions, thinly sliced
- 8 chicken thighs
- 10 green cardamom pods
- ¼ tsp whole cloves
- 4 cinnamon sticks
- 300 g basmati rice
- 550 ml boiling water
- flat-leaf parsley, dill, and/or coriander

- 2 lb chicken drumsticks, no skin
- ½ tsp each black peppercorns and caraway or cumin
- 1 tsp chilli powder
- 4 tsp sugar
- 1" chopped root ginger
- 3 cloves garlic
- 1 tbsp chopped coriander leaf
- 1 tbsp unsaturated oil
- 1 lime for garnish

## Clarissa's chicken and spinach pie

Emailed to me in 2000 after we'd had it for Steven's birthday Sunday lunch at Catherington Cottage.

chicken pieces  
onion & garlic  
coriander & cinnamon  
marmalade  
spinach  
filo pastry

1. Fry chicken pieces in oil and butter until beginning to brown.
2. Add chopped onion, garlic, ground coriander and cinnamon.
3. Cover for 30 mins and cook gently.
4. Add heaped spoonful marmalade and the chopped, wilted spinach. Cool.
5. Line a loose-based tin with layers of filo pastry brushing with melted butter as you go (C's comment: 'None of this very good for diets'). Leave sheets overlapping at the edge.
6. Fill tin with chicken mixture and fold filo pastry over the top.
7. Bake for 30 mins in moderate oven and for a further 20 mins out of the tin in a low oven to get edges and base brown and crisp.

## Chicken with ballbearings

I haven't done this. It is from Marinetti's *The Futurist Cookbook* of 1932, which we stupidly gave to Hoi Badloi – stupidly because we can't find an affordable hardback now. It's a manifesto railing against pasta and conventionality, and highly quirky. Heralding Heston maybe?

Chicken Fiat: a chicken is roasted with a handful of ball bearings inside. When the flesh has fully absorbed the flavour of the mild steel balls, the chicken is served with a garnish of whipped cream.



## Duck à l'orange

On Christmas Eve I usually do two ducks – not always à l'orange, but quite often so. Originally from *The Cookery Year*. I do them on a rack to catch the duck fat. Raymond Blanc has a variant that appeals – a blackberry sauce and a celeriac mash with it, though frankly if there aren't cafeteria pan mounds of roast potatoes at Christmas I am in real trouble, so other roots (parsnips excepted) don't get a look in.

2 ducks  
4 oranges  
tbsp sugar  
red wine vinegar  
stock  
half lemon  
tbsp arrowroot  
orange liqueur

1. Cut the rind only off the oranges and cut into strips and boil them for 10 mins and drain them for garnish with the peeled segments of 3 oranges just before serving.
2. Roast the ducks till ready (1½ hours approx.).
3. Reduce the sugar and vinegar to a light caramel, add some stock, the 4th orange juiced, lemon juice, and then thicken the sauce with the diluted arrowroot.
4. Add the orange liqueur.

## Adrie's Dutch duck

In his own words. 'Recipe for Dutch duck as my mother used to make it:

1. Catch duck, wring its neck, pluck and gut, or buy one from the shop (a duck shop not a clog shop or a shop selling tulips).
2. Rub outside and inside (not easy) with s&p.
3. Fry in butter both sides (I use a Le Creuset pan) till light brown.

4. Add more butter –  $\frac{2}{3}$  up the side of the bird – and simmer for 2 hours turning it occasionally.

*variations*

I've tried to replace some of the butter with water (20%) and found that was perfectly fine. However, you cannot use the duck-butter-water for roasting the potatoes.

The duck-butter or duck-butter-water can be used as gravy just like it is.

The remains make a great soup the next day. Eat with croutons.'

### *Sally B's partridge or pheasant*

Stephen 'picked Sally up' at a concert one day; they were sitting next to each other and discovered a Polish father connection. Lots of other connections followed. The first time she cooked for us in her low-rent-controlled flat in Highbury, she did partridges individually served on a bed of bread thickly spread with pâté. It was the first time I'd had them, and the first time we realised how knowledgeable about food she was – accompanying her later as 'my companion' when she was writing restaurant reviews. Another time she brought an astonishing durian fruit to a dinner party we had – it gazumped the lemon mousse I'd made and which remained in the kitchen. She couldn't remember the partridge recipe but gave me this instead.

1. Brown chopped onions and whole pheasant in a little oil in a heavy casserole.
2. Tuck chopped up pieces of quince around it, pour in a splash of port and some stock to half way up the bird with the herbs and simmer at a low temperature for about 40 mins.
3. Turn it over half way through cooking, and season and thicken the sauce with a little unsweetened apple purée if you like.



1 pheasant  
1 large quince  
2 medium onions  
port  
oil  
parsley and thyme

### *Pintade façon de Peter*

1. Cut the bird from the bone and fry till golden-ish, then put aside.
2. Fry the finely scraped carrots and spring onions in olive oil in a casserole.
3. Add the guinea fowl to the carrots & onions in the casserole and stir in a heaped tbs of flour. Add white wine and sherry, bring to the boil and then let it simmer for 30-40 mins.
4. Fry in butter the fresh morels or dried wild mushrooms (softened with boiling water and left to stand for 20 mins).
5. Add the mushrooms to the guinea fowl and simmer for 10 more mins.
6. Mix two egg yolks with the crème fraîche and pour slowly into the guinea fowl casserole – Peter says just before serving.

1 or 2 guinea fowl (or a volaille de Bresse)  
2 carrots  
2 spring onions  
thyme, bay leaf  
flour, chicken stock, generous white wine & sherry (ideally Vin Jaune)  
250 g fresh morels (or dried wild mushrooms)  
100-200 ml crème fraîche  
two egg yolks  
butter, s&p

### *Hunter and Boo to a goose*

Finally, by post after months of asking (and I'd anticipated 1000 words) I got this: 'To a "Christmas goose". Canada preferred; grey-lag as fallback. Trimmings galore, and don't forget the roast eggs. Yum! Plus Château Fortia white to chink with. Any vintage; never a bad one. Cheers!' Correct use of exclamation marks, of



course; it being Hunter. At which point I might mention one of my Disgruntled of Tunbridge Wells moments (the other being the misuse of apostrophes and also their substitution by erroneous primes). My favourite pundit is Philip Howard who says:

The exclamation mark, or gasp-mark, or screamer, is properly reserved for true exclamations such as ‘Oh!’, ‘Great Balls of Fire!’ . ‘Damn your impertinence!’, and ‘How you vex me!’ It is sometimes necessary to use a gasp-mark with a sentence that is not a proper exclamation to indicate that the words have an unexpected tone, which is not evident from the words alone: ‘You thought punctuation didn’t matter!’ ‘And I was told he was a teetotaller!’ In these kinds of statement, exclamations and sentences are not what they seem, the exclamation mark is not an unnecessary symbol, but a useful one. Elsewhere the prudent scribe will avoid it like the plague.

As do I.

### *Wittgensteinian duck-rabbit*

For 10 years now I have been having a Wittgenstein’s Poker dinner for 10-12 people instead of a birthday party (see page 205). Quite often I have done duck-rabbit, as a nod in a Wittgensteinian direction, but my Wittgensteinian scholar, Dan, doesn’t like it.

1. As for any casserole.

whole shallots  
celery  
a jointed duck  
rabbit pieces (wild is nicer but  
you’d need 2)  
white wine and crème fraîche

## *Pork*

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### *Pork dressed up as wild boar*

I’ve got my pencilled original of this scribbled inside my first Robert Carrier (it fell to bits and I’ve got a second copy now).

Where *is* the original – a desperate little cry! I can picture the scrap of paper, but can I find it? No. Please don’t let it have been thrown away! This is the dish I first cooked for Stephen.

I think it was loin of pork marinated for three days in a heavy red wine with lots of spices (specially juniper); then cooked with carrots in a casserole and the juices thickened up with cornflour to make a rich, dark sauce.



### *Cesca’s spare ribs*

1. Put spare ribs in oven for 1-2 hours on low.
2. Sauce to pour over in last ¼ hour.

pork loin  
spices  
red wine  
carrot & onion

spare ribs for two  
*sauce:*  
3 tbsp vinegar  
1 juiced lemon  
2 tbsp brown sugar and honey  
(I added marmalade to mine)  
Worcester sauce and quite a lot  
of tomato sauce  
2 tsp cayenne  
water or stock  
grapes to garnish

## *Jojo's meat roll*

1. Cook onions, meat and mushrooms, and season. Remove half the mushrooms for the sauce.
2. Rinse sauerkraut.
3. Roll out the puff pastry to long and thin dimensions.
4. Spread meat mixture along the long side and layer with the sauerkraut on top.
5. Turn up the two sides and roll up ending with a seam underneath.
6. Use spatulas to transfer to a well-greased tin.
7. Paint with olive oil. Cover with foil for first ½ hour in medium oven and another ¼ hour uncovered.
8. Serve with a mushroom sauce.

puff pastry  
1 lb minced pork or veal or both  
about ½ lb mushrooms  
large chopped onion  
sauerkraut

## *Stefan's bigos*

This hunter's stew is a Polish national dish so of course it has to be here though, being essentially pork, it won't have come down to us from the Jewish Polish branch. Our Polish friend Stefan made it for us and it was very good, if plain, fare.

1. Put prunes and dried mushrooms in a bowl. Pour over boiling water and let steep for 30 mins or until mushrooms have softened. Chop or leave whole for a chunkier dish.
2. In a large pot with a lid, sauté onion and fresh cabbage lardons or goose fat. When cabbage has collapsed by half, add sauerkraut, meats, tomatoes, wine, bay leaf and reserved mushrooms and prunes and their soaking liquid, being careful not to pour off the sediment in the bottom of the bowl.
3. Mix well and bring to a boil over medium heat. Lower heat to low and simmer covered for 1½ hours, stirring occasionally and adding liquid as needed to prevent burning.
4. When ready to serve, remove bay leaf and bones if there are any. Serve in heated bowls and garnish with a piece of 'frisée' or other fancy greens to resemble the feather in a hunter's hat. Accompany with whole, peeled and boiled potatoes.

8 oz stoned prunes  
½ oz porcini mushrooms  
1 pt boiling water  
1 tbsp lardons  
1 medium onion, chopped  
1 small head fresh cabbage, chopped  
1 lb sauerkraut, rinsed well and drained  
½ lb smoked Polish sausage, cut into 1" pieces  
½ lb cooked fresh Polish sausage, cut into 1" pieces  
1 lb boneless pork, cut into 1" pieces  
3 large tomatoes, peeled and chopped  
½ pt dry red wine, preferably Madeira  
1 bay leaf  
s&p

The longer this cooks the better it tastes, and it's even better served the next day.

## *Polish sausage pie*

This is a winter favourite from Stephen's childhood and easy to assemble. Chorizo can substitute for the Polish sausage to make it Spanish; both are available from our corner shop for a quick run-round at 7 o'clock if I didn't have a supper plan (or will keep a long time in the fridge if I did).

1. Layer sliced ingredients and pour over stock to ½ cover them.
2. Bake in medium oven for about 30 mins.
3. Bit of cheese on top and let crisp.
4. Serve.



sliced potatoes  
sliced Polish sausage  
sliced hardboiled eggs  
fried onion rings  
veg stock

## *Pork loin with apricot stuffing*

Two recipes in *The Cookery Year* combine in this version that I do at least once a year – probably on Yom Kippur (I have an unerring, but subconscious instinct to serve pork on Jewish festival days; ham and cheese too).

1 pork tenderloin  
50 g unsalted butter  
1 garlic clove  
125 g white breadcrumbs  
125 g dried apricots (plus same again for the sauce)  
1 tbsp parsley and tarragon  
small onion  
garlic clove  
orange zest  
s&p

1. Whuzz the onions, garlic and apricots.
2. Add the breadcrumbs, melted butter, herbs, orange zest, egg and seasoning; mix well and fry a bit to test for taste.
3. Open out the tenderloin and flatten the meat.
4. Spread the stuffing over the pork and roll the joint firmly from one side; tie with string.
5. Brown the meat.
6. Bake in a lidded dish for about 1½ hours in a medium oven, letting the top brown for the last bit.
7. *For the sauce:* More whuzzed apricots – to a smoother consistency, and simmer in veg stock, perhaps with a dash of curry powder.

The original serves it with sliced sauté potatoes, which look nice with it, but it needs something green as well.

## *Lynette's Chinese roast pork*

1¼ lb roasting pork  
¼ tsp salt  
¼ cup sugar  
1½ tbsp soya sauce  
1½ tsp oyster sauce  
1½ tsp hoisin sauce  
¼ tsp sesame oil  
1 tbsp white wine  
1" or more of grated ginger root  
1 clove minced garlic  
2 chopped shallots  
2 tbsp honey

This is her version of something from a Californian cookery book which had been adapted from a Chinese recipe so by the time she had 'bastardised' it (her word) it was probably a different recipe. As she says, 'but what the hell; you liked it and so did we'. She'd tripled the quantities for a party.

1. Mix everything together and marinate the pork for several hours.
2. Roast it, covered, in the marinade.
3. Separate the sauce from the meat and let it cool, taking off the fat as it cools.
4. Slice the pork thinly and serve in the marinade sauce, which jellies when cold.



## *Patty's Taiwanese dishes*

These must have been written out for me around 1975-76. Certainly before Gaby or Nicholas was born and at the height of our closest of close friendships. I gave them to Petica, and she has scanned them to transcribe here. This takes shorthand to the ultimate – I think I did understand at the time, because I made them all a number of times. But I had watched Patty do them – you have to make a mess, she said – and so maybe it made more sense then than it does now. When she moved from Oak Village, she gave me all her dry ingredients – I have still got some of them (lily buds and Chinese 5-spice). I've deconstructed Patty's minimalistic instructions by adding what I think is missing.



### *Jiao dz (dumplings)*

Petica says: 'one of my fave things and I used to make them frequently but you can actually buy quite good ones frozen in the Chinese shops. These are the flour circles which you wrap around some pork dollops'.

1. Mix and marinate.
2. Wrap in pastry circles.
3. Plunge into boiling water, bring to the boil, add a bowl of cold water, bring to the boil again, repeat cold water altogether 3 times.
4. Put into individual bowls with a nice mixture of malt vinegar, sesame oil, soya sauce and chilli.

minced pork  
cooked spinach  
chopped spring onions  
chopped fresh ginger  
soy sauce  
sesame oil

flour paste circles  
dipping sauce

### *Lily buds*

1. Stir fry everything, mix and serve.
2. Beat the egg and fry flat like an omelette, then cut up in strips, and throw on top.



lily buds soaked in cup of warm water, drained  
pork fillet cut up and marinated in soy sauce and squashed clove of garlic  
chopped spring onion  
1 egg

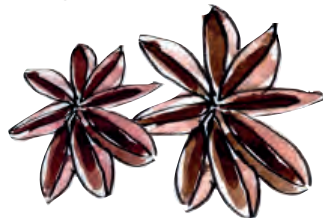
### *Black eggs*

1. Simmer all except the eggs for 1-2 hours or until the beans are soft and black.
2. Take out the pork and flake the meat into the pot.
3. Add the shelled eggs and cook a bit longer until they go black as well.

soya beans (soaked overnight and husked if you can be bothered)  
belly of pork  
2 spring onions  
½ pt water  
½ pt dark soy sauce  
4 oz sugar  
6-8 star anise  
6 hardboiled eggs

### *Huan tong*

1. Chop up and fill the wrappers by putting some filling in a corner; roll it up and pinch the two sides together.
2. Drop them one at a time into boiling water.
3. In a wok, stir bean sprouts, soya sauce, sugar and garlic into hot, smoking oil to accompany the huan tong.



Chinese pastry wrappers (squares)  
ginger  
spring onions  
sesame oil  
soya sauce  
rice wine  
+ prawn or pork with water  
chestnuts or dried mushrooms

# 9

## Fusion

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Strictly speaking, this whole book is a fusion of different cultures, melding food from our family background with latest fads gleaned from books and people, plus mixing in personal anecdotes. This particular section is almost all vegetarian, partly in fusion style and partly not, but in my personal chronology this is where the children get their only star turn. And if they aren't the result of fusion, I don't know where they came from.

### *The baby years*

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As it happens, I've a pretty good idea when each of them began life: Gabriel on Christmas Eve; Vita on Valentine's Day and Emily on the day in July 1972 when Stephen returned from that year's lute summer school – the actual day would be discoverable if some zodiacally-minded descendant wanted to look into the runes. Some people don't think that birth dates are a guide to character, but where the planets were and the phases of the moon at the time of conception. I don't think character is formed by heavenly bodies at all ... and yet, and yet – both Vita and I are Scorpio and we fit all the character traits that we are supposed to fit.

Be that as it may, the Lute Society Summer School is lodged in my mind because the week of Stephen's absence in Cheltenham was the first time we had been apart since we got married. I cried at the bus stop when he left: we celebrated when he returned. Nowadays I don't even see him to the bus: I have an iPad app to tell him when the next one is due though.

Sometimes I tell Emily she was an accident, but it isn't strictly accurate. It is true that I didn't know I was pregnant and got a not-quite-joyous shock when I discovered that I was, but it is also the case that a picture on the back of a Lux packet showing a mother and baby in a soft pink angora sweater was hidden-persuading into my unconscious. The probability is that Stephen and I would never have deliberately planned having children – neither of us earning much, career uncertainty, not feeling grown-up enough, not really caring much for other people's infants – it's just as well Emily just happened through the machinations of the subconscious. I was much more purposeful with the other two.



I didn't enjoy pregnancy: never being a svelte person, lumbering around with all that extra weight made me feel ugly and unattractive. [Note to self: I bet I am carrying around even more weight now, and it's got to be said that all this cooking and eating, with the attendant research into butters and creams and wines, is playing its part.] I certainly wasn't knitting up a layette nor even thinking about what we needed to buy or plan for. All the more unexpected was it, therefore, that as soon as she was born, I fell head-over-heels in love with her. We called her 'The Schmoot' to begin with and didn't give her a name until the registrar was about to arraign us for breach of the law. We were just too busy to talk to each other about it – as any new first-time parent will understand. There's an Easter egg in our collection of annual painted eggs, and it's one of the few that Stephen did (a large duck's egg), with a clothes-line of nappies painted on and a list of names we didn't give Emily.



I don't think I was a natural – I allowed her to roll off the high hospital bed on her second day of life (which she occasionally jokingly holds against me) – but if she's damaged, then she'd have been a total genius if I hadn't. I did take to motherhood all the same and was enraptured by every stage. That's obvious from the baby books of pictures, stories and observations done for each child, which I have always thought would be the only objects I would reach for if there were a fire (why then do I keep them in the attic?). By contrast, there are two 3-inch-square baby books about me, each with less than a dozen pages filled in and both in German so I don't know what they say. I *think* I was a better mother than my own. She did do that for me; she enabled me to see my children as persons quite separate from myself and whom I had to respect as well as love. It should be said, though, that it's in those early years that the gin bottle enters my supermarket trolley alongside the nappy pins.

The reason I know when Vita was conceived was because I had a miscarriage a little while before which had quite shaken me up – don't let anyone tell you a life that never really started isn't something you mourn: I was desperate to conceive again. I was lucky that it happened the second month after the miscarriage.

The reason I know when Gaby was conceived is that I had just learned that my father had terminal cancer and I had always thought we would have three children and therefore took my foot off the brake so the last one would be born before he died. The use of 'I' is interesting here – did we not discuss matters as important as how many children we would have. I don't recall that we did. Gaby was nine months old when Heino died and I have one picture which shows him being quite taken with the little lad, though the truth is he had gone into that internal zone that cancer sufferers seem



to go into when nothing outside their pain and mortality matters very much. By contrast, Nada was besotted from the start – carrying on the Gottlieb name was something he cared very deeply about: I think Stephen cares too. Ironic that our grandson bears the surname Gottlieb-Black.

Vita didn't like Gabriel being born very much and I completely understand why not; she was still a baby herself and too young to have a sense of self or a sense of permanency. It shook up her safe little world and I hold (though she doesn't agree) that it took her years to recover from it. She was a picture-book baby, with little shoes sticking up at right angles to her little legs as she sat balanced, doll-like on the floor. He didn't oust her in my affections; just as she didn't take away any of my love for Emily. I simply found I had buckets more.



But babies whom you can't explain things to don't know that and I probably didn't know it myself either. Three children under the age of four-and-a-half are pretty tiring, and we didn't really know what we were doing.

Looking back, it can't have been too bad because a more loyal and loving trio you could not imagine. Sometimes I think I simply don't

deserve it, having been an angry handful as a daughter myself. We made mistakes, of course we did. I thought Stephen was sometimes too autocratic – I now think it was impatience brought about by low-level depression that we many years later found was an imbalance in his body that a simple Prozac-like pill magically corrected. For my own part, I am searching myself for something to feel guilty about, but apart from little things like not buying Vita the little Knopf-im-ohr lion that she so desperately wanted, being embarrassing at school, and putting my foot in it when in my cups, I can't at the moment think of anything serious. I'll ask them.

At least they did learn to cook – lots of bread dough with real ingredients (not salt instead of sugar); biscuits and gingerbread men to decorate; marzipan fruits to paint; we taught them good cheese manners; how to pass a knife; and they surpassed us in learning to distinguish between and appreciate different grape varietals and regional wines.

These were the years for me of patchwork and collage – in that precious quiet hour when one was at school, another at playgroup and one asleep, I could do a bit of a log-cabin patchwork square or progress a Kaffe Fassett knitting pattern. As that hour lengthened into a whole glorious morning, I picked up my freelance work again.



I logged the children's progress in their baby books from first footprint up to the early years of secondary school, but then the pages fizzle out because one or other of them, in teenage mode, hated any photos of themselves and would have me rip them out. Fully documented are dates of first smile,

first words, measurements of limbs, achievement milestones: family trees, themed birthday cake lists, sandcastle pictures, fancy-dress competitions, all our pets, trips to the workshop, holidays galore, bits of school reports, music exam grades, riding lessons, performance programmes, quiet and boisterous games, early art works and bits of writing. At which point they each took over the writing of their own history for themselves.

I would also doodle little pen-and-ink watercolours with colour-run smudgy edges to chart events in their lives. In this way, I could draw out the tribulations of motherhood by portraying my vision of them variously as little angels, or red-rag devils; as charming young cooks, or pink piglets feeding at the trough; as budding musicians, or green monster wild things. Sometimes I would leave little picture notes illustrating myself slaving away at nappy-changing and housework all day and flopping exhaustedly on the sofa with a gin and tonic in my hand – these were either apologia for thrusting a damp baby into the arms of a returning-from-the-workshop husband, or not-so-subtle hints to teenage young persons for some misdemeanour in the tidying up of rooms intended to foster a sense of responsibility. I'm so glad we didn't have twitter or texting in those days or these silly-but-quite-amusing little sketches, like the ones on this page, would not have found form.

In terms of charting a chronology – in this book, like Peter Pan, none of the children grows up. Of course they all did and their presence *is* in this collection and their voices do, I hope, come through. It's hard to believe they are all middle-aged now. Whether I was successful as a mother is a harder question and one which they will each have to sort out for themselves. All parents try to do their best but they can't always because at the critical time when their young are young, they haven't necessarily got to grips with their own personal dynamic. A third of my three-score years and ten was entirely devoted to them and they are still the most important achievement (is that the word?) of my life. They are, actually, the *only* part of my life that makes it worth having lived. I do think that is the truth. Other things matter – creative endeavours – and are a part of what makes me who I am, but peeling back the Ibsenian wild onion skin to its centre has Emily, Vita and Gabriel at the core.

So much more I could say, but this isn't their story; it is mine. Besides, knowing they will read this makes me too self-conscious and tongue-tied. I cannot heave forty years of love into my mouth.

Vegetarian cooking is generally quite troublesome, requiring thought about taste, appearance and balance. And that's true of bringing up children too.



## Quiches generally

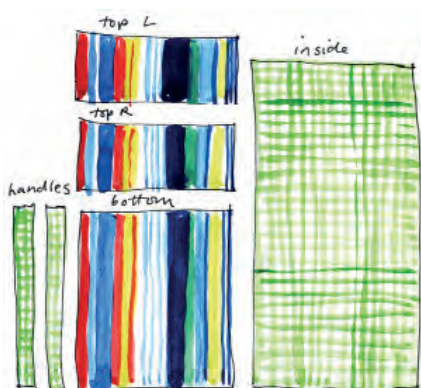
What is a quiche if not a custardy pie binding together a mixture of vegetarian or non-vegetarian ingredients? I suppose I've made as many dull lumpen quiches as I have delicious ones and only now have stopped to think what makes the difference. One I do remember as being especially good, though, was made with three eggs that the hens had laid on stage at the dress rehearsal of *Carmen* at the Royal Opera House in 2010: Emily gave them to me in her capacity of Stage Manager. I served it to the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital team when they came to lunch at Matt Lane-Sanderson's workshop to view, and give final approval for, our installation for the reception area of the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital in Bolsover Street.

So is a list of tips gathered from various sources. Fillings are legion so I am only writing out those that for some reason have particularly impressed me.

A quiche is only savoury and so is a flamiche. Whereas the tart or tarte or flan can be sweet as well as can the pithivier and the galette, which is a freeform flaky pastry circle wrapping up at the edges to hold in a custardless filling. If you slide it (on paper) direct onto a hot baking stone you can avoid a soggy bottom. More on sweet tarts on page 187.

### Principles of quiches

1. See page 60-63 for details on pastry.
2. Forget about low-fat and calorie-counting.
3. Don't use milk in the filling – crème fraîche is best, followed by double cream (can be single).
4. Best (lightest) proportion of eggs to cream: 3 egg yolks to 8 fl oz cream.
5. More solid proportion: 2 whole eggs to 8-10 fl oz cream.
6. 12 oz pastry lines a 27.5 cm tart tin.
7. Can make the pastry case ahead of time, but it's always best if served with the filling just-made and hot from the oven.
8. That said, it's a good picnic staple cold.
9. Don't think of the pastry as case to hold the filling – do a frittata or eggah instead (pages 146-8).



deckchair fabric (or similar)  
with gingham lining

### Chess's porte tartière

The term *porte tartière* is our coinage for a quiche carrier that Chess made for us one Christmas. Roughly as follows:

1. In the thicker fabric, cut out 1 piece 36 cm x 40 cm and 2 pieces 15 cm x 40 cm. Join the 2 narrower pieces to form seams on each side of the long edge.
2. In the thinner fabric, cut out 1 piece 36 cm x 80 cm. Sew the lining to the thicker fabric leaving one long edge open so you can turn it inside out and press. Also leave 2 gaps for the handles in

- the other long edge about 12 cm from the top and bottom.
- In the thinner fabric, cut out 2 pieces 8 cm wide x 40 cm long; sew together along the length and turn inside out, and press, to make 2 handles. Sew 1 handle in where the gaps are.
  - Hand stitch the remaining long side, inserting the other handle in the parallel position.
  - With the thinner side facing, fold in the sides with the handles and hand sew the top and bottom edges.
  - To use, slip the tart in, on its tin or on a plate, and use the handles to carry it to your destination.



## *Vivienne's flan de poireaux à la Berrichonne*

Vivienne says she can't claim this as it is from Elizabeth David's *French Provincial Cooking* (1960). But what I remember is that she served it as a starter at a dinner party for about 10 people and I thought she was very brave because it was freshly made, and perfectly cooked and I did not know how she had timed it so well with all the other things involved in entertaining large numbers on your own. She says: 'I always prepare the pastry, the leeks and the egg and cream mixture in advance, but then spread the warm leeks and the egg and cream mixture on top and put it in the oven so that it will be ready to serve straight away, all puffed up. You can reheat it or keep it warm, and it will still taste fine, but it won't look so good once it has deflated'. She says she is an 'anxious and obedient cook' – I am not obedient and that will be my downfall.

- Line an 8" pie tin with crumbly pastry. Simply crumble the butter into the sieved flour and salt, add the iced water, and form into a ball. Do not knead or roll or leave it to rest, but spread it directly into the tin with your hands, pressing it lightly into place with your knuckles. Prick the surface evenly with a fork and bake blind.
- Chop the white part of the leeks and let them melt in butter. Add diced ham. Spread this mixture on the pastry.
- Beat together the egg yolks and cream. Season with s&p. Pour this mixture over the leeks, put a few small pieces of butter on top and cook in a medium-hot oven for 30 to 40 mins.

6 oz plain flour  
 3 oz butter  
 ½ tsp salt  
 2-4 tbsp iced water  
 2 lb leeks  
 2 oz ham (or omit)  
 3 egg yolks  
 ½ pt cream

## *Savoury pithiviers*

I saw this being made on *The Great British Bake Off* on TV in 2012 and immediately thought: here's one for my collection. Almost any pancake or quiche filling would probably be good; a really big circle is most impressive. It's not for slimmers, but looks architecturally pleasing and shows your guests you care about them. Could be in the party section, but fits best here.

### *Basic principle*

- Place the pastry disk for the base onto non-stick parchment lined baking tray. Brush the edges with egg-wash, leaving an unbrushed area in the centre the size of a saucer.

500 g all-butter puff pastry, rolled out and cut into 2 circles – one about 2" bigger than the other  
 1 egg



2. Pile up the layers, leaving a border around the edge and neaten the filling into a mound.
3. Place the larger pastry disk on top of the filling and let it join up with the base; seal well and trim.
4. Create a scalloped edge using the back of a knife by pressing the pastry between your thumb and forefinger. Rest it in the fridge for 15 mins.
5. Brush the pithivier with egg-wash. Make a small hole in the centre and four other small openings around the upper edge to allow steam to escape.
6. Using a small knife, decorate the pithivier with a radiating sunbeam pattern; start at the centre of the pastry, mark lines running out to the edge. Avoid cutting all the way through. You can also score the scalloped edge.
7. Bake the pithivier in the hot preheated oven for 10 mins, then reduce the temperature to medium and continue to bake for another 15-20 mins until puffed and golden.

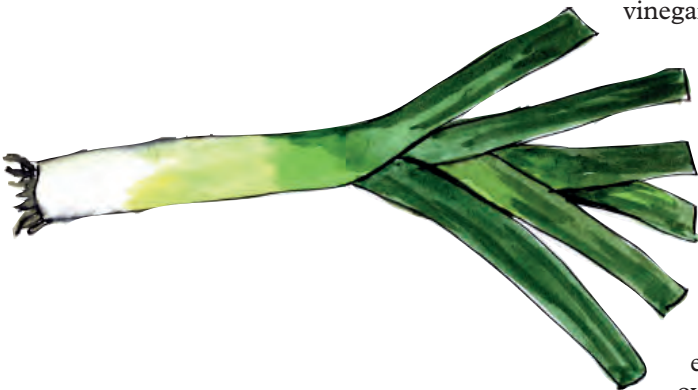
### *Filling variations*

*white, red and green layered:* small bag potatoes (cooked and sliced); 6 red peppers (cooked and sliced) + tsp each ground cumin and sugar; spinach and goats' cheese with caramelised garlic (as in step 1 of the garlic tart on page 104) + egg.

*pea, tarragon & cream cheese* 1 onion, chopped and softened; 150 g frozen peas; 125 g cream cheese; small bunch tarragon, chopped; ½ lemon zest; handful parsley.

*oyster mushroom and leek* leeks, garlic, oyster mushrooms, sage, thyme, crème fraîche. Serve with a sauce made from reduced vegetable stock and cream with wilted watercress, sage and mint, and whuzz it all so it goes green. Add lemon juices and chopped chives on top.

*leeks* halve lengthways then slice into ½ cm half-moons and wash well in cold water. Melt butter and a dash of olive oil then add leeks with just a little water, and cook gently until soft, about 10-15 mins. Then finish with s&p as needed and a dash of sherry vinegar to brighten the flavour.



*aubergine and sundried tomatoes* I invented this from what we had around for a galette and it was particularly good. One aubergine cut into chip shapes, fried till soft; throw in some sundried tomatoes, half a mozzarella and a sprinkle of feta and thyme.

*red pepper, red onion* caramelised with sour cream underneath and a free-range egg cracked on top for the last 6 mins in the oven. This one is for the open galettes, not the closed pithivier.



## Galettes

Basically a pithivier without its lid – so less dramatic, but fewer calories and more economical usage of pastry-making. It's also rather nice looking and something you can throw together from almost anything for a what-shall-we-have-for-lunch occasion (assuming the pastry is to hand – which is quite a big presumption).

1. Cut a circle of short pastry (don't waste home-made puff on this).
2. Fill the inside with any filling (see previous page) leaving about 1½" border.
3. Crinkle the sides upwards so they hold the pastry in like a sunflower head.
4. Egg wash the exposed pastry.
5. Bake for 20-30 mins.

## Sonja's flan mitsiyou

This and the following two are pastryless quiches made for the night before Passover after all the flour has been swept from the house (allegedly). Sonja did these one year while still married to Leslie and I was impressed and kept the recipes: she has not and they will return to her with this book. All three present nifty ideas for dieting moments or for dealing with people who can't eat gluten.

1. Combine base ingredients and press into a greased loose-bottomed flan tin.
2. Bake for 10 mins
3. Sauté the vegetables, starting with the onions.
4. Beat eggs with soda water and fold in the vegetables and half the cream.
5. Pour into prepared base and bake till set – 15 mins or so.
6. Sprinkle on remaining cheese and parsley.

## Sonja's cabbage flan

1. Blanch the large leaves in boiling salted water for 5 mins.
2. Line a buttered flan dish (not loose-bottomed) with the leaves overhanging.
3. Mix the other ingredients with the rest of the cabbage, chopped.
4. Season and pour on the leaves, and fold them over the top.
5. Bake 25 mins until set, brushing the top with oil to prevent the leaves drying out.

## Sonja's sweet onion tart

1. Sweat the diced carrots in 1 tsp oil so they slowly exude juice. Stir 5 mins and add onions, seasoned. Cover and simmer for 15 mins. Add mushrooms and cook another 10 mins. Mix with egg and liquids.
2. Cut away the ribs of the cabbage leaves and blanch them in boiling salted water 4 mins. Drain & dry. Line a cake tin with leaves, leaving enough hanging over the side to completely



### base

1 lb matzo meal  
2 oz butter  
2 eggs

### filling

1 large onion  
2 tbsp butter  
1 each chopped red and green pepper  
6 oz sliced mushrooms  
8 oz sliced courgettes  
12 oz grated cheese  
6 eggs  
¼ pt soda water  
parsley, garlic, s&p

750 g Savoy cabbage  
2 eggs  
small pot yoghurt  
small pot sour cream  
50 g grated cheese  
s&p, nutmeg

2¼ lb onions very thinly sliced  
7 oz button mushrooms  
6 oz peeled carrots diced very small  
6 large cabbage leaves  
thyme  
2 eggs  
¾ pt milk + ⅓ pt water

- enclose the filling (which you put in first).
3. Cook covered in foil in a bain marie for 50 mins. Take out and leave for 10 mins before turning out so it keeps its shape. Pour tomato or asparagus sauce round it.

This is also good wrapped up in blanched leek leaves as individual ‘cannelloni’, but fiddly.

### *Caramelised garlic tart*

Ottolenghi’s *Plenty* again. It’s worth the effort – it helps to have a nifty garlic-peeling device.



- 1 puff pastry case baked blind
- 3 heads of garlic, peeled
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp balsamic vinegar
- 220 ml water
- $\frac{3}{4}$  tbsp caster sugar
- 1 tsp chopped rosemary
- 1 tsp chopped thyme, plus a few whole sprigs to finish
- 120 g soft, creamy goats’ cheese
- 120 g hard, mature goats’ cheese
- 2 eggs
- 100 ml double cream
- 100 ml crème fraîche
- s&p

1. Blanch the garlic cloves in simmering water for 3 mins, then drain well. Fry the garlic in oil on a high heat for 2 mins. Add the vinegar and water and bring to the boil, then simmer gently for 10 mins. Add the sugar, rosemary, chopped thyme and  $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp salt. Simmer for 10 mins, or until most of the liquid has evaporated and the garlic cloves are coated in a dark caramel syrup.
2. To assemble, break both types of goats’ cheese into pieces and scatter in the pastry case. Spoon the garlic cloves and syrup evenly over the cheese. Whisk together the eggs, creams,  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt and some black pepper. Pour this custard over the tart to fill the gaps, making sure that you can still see the garlic and cheese over the surface.
3. Bake for 35–45 mins on a low to medium oven until the tart filling has set and the top is golden brown. Leave to cool a little. Then take out of tin, trim the pastry edge if needed, lay a few sprigs of rosemary on top and serve tiède.

### *Esther’s goats’ cheese pie*

Hers was inspired by ‘Tart it up! Sweet and Savoury Tarts and Pies’ by Eric Lanlard in the Daily Mail Weekend section (a surprising choice of read but apparently it gives her several ideas). She served hers cold.

- a baked-blind pastry case
- half a small butternut squash, sliced and unpeeled
- 3 red peppers halves
- 1 red onion, thinly sliced
- hot pepper flakes to taste
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 4 slices goats’ cheese log
- chopped fresh thyme
- 3 beaten eggs
- 5 fl oz goats’ yoghurt
- 12–16 pitted black olives

1. Roast the squash and peppers, with olive oil drizzled over.
2. Soften onions and garlic; add balsamic vinegar and hot pepper flakes. Then cook until you are left with a red onion marmalade.
3. Spread onions evenly on pastry case.
4. Cut squash into squares and arrange on top, followed by peppers and the olives; sprinkle with thyme.
5. Lay the cheese slices on top.
6. Beat eggs and yoghurt together (seasoning to taste) and pour over the pie.
7. Bake on medium for 25–30 mins until the pie is set and golden.

## Potato and goats' cheese tatin

1. Grease individual tart tins or a larger one.
2. Cook the potatoes and the peeled shallots and let cool (shallots will cook quicker). Chop a bit of the top and bottom off each potato. Then cut horizontally into halves.
3. Make a semi-dark caramel (page 182). Pour the caramel carefully, dividing it into the oiled tins and allow to spread on the bottom. Scatter thyme on the caramel.
4. Stand the potatoes close together on the bottom of the tin. Gently press shallots between the potatoes. Sprinkle s&p generously. Cover with goats' cheese.
5. Cut a puff pastry disc that is 3 cm larger in diameter than the tin. Place on the cheese and gently tuck the excess pastry around the potatoes. Chill for up to 24 hours.
6. Bake in a hot oven for 15 mins. Continue for another 5 mins on medium, maybe a few mins longer.
7. Rest a minute and then turn out on a plate to serve.

for 2  
puff pastry sheet, rolled thinly  
4 baby potatoes  
4 small shallots  
40 g caster sugar  
10 g butter  
2 sprigs of fresh thyme  
60 g goats' cheese, sliced  
olive oil  
s&p

## Chicory tatin

1. (Officially, cook chicory briefly in water with the lemon juice till just wilted and drain well. But I never do that. I go straight on to the next stage and cook it in the caramel till it is soft.)
2. Make a caramel with butter and sugar and transfer to baking dish. Cram chicory cut side down into the caramel. Crumble the stilton over it all. Cover with the pastry (prick in 2 places).
3. If time, let rest in fridge before baking.
4. Bake for 25 mins and turn upside down after 5 mins. Nice with a salad with walnuts in.

1 lemon  
5-6 halved chicory  
4 oz stilton  
butter and sugar  
1 portion puff pastry

Same principle for tomato; beetroot; fennel; red onion; potato and little tomatoes – or any other tatin. Good cold.



## Baked and fried

## Philip MC's nut roast

Written in a meticulous italic hand and probably dating to the early 70s of the Lute Society when everyone was vegetarian, and during the brown flour and brown rice phase.

1. Cook chopped onion in a little water until soft, pour off surplus water and keep it.
2. Add oil and all other ingredients and add back the onion stock until it's a soft consistency.
3. Spread mixture about 1" thick on a greased baking tray and bake for 25 mins in a moderate oven.

6 oz grated cashew nuts  
4 oz wholemeal breadcrumbs  
3 oz pine nuts  
1 onion  
juice half a lemon  
2 fl oz vegetable oil  
s&p

Finely chopped tomato can be added to give another flavour.

6 oz pine nuts  
 2 onions  
 2 eggs  
 2 oz breadcrumbs  
 ½ lb tomatoes  
 2 oz butter  
 1 tsp each of marmite and sage

### *Pine kernel roast*

I think the original was in Julia Singer's writing. She said to grind the nuts, but I prefer whole.

1. Brown the chopped onions. Skin (but why bother) and chop tomatoes and add.
2. Cook for a bit. Remove from heat and shove in everything else.
3. Put in greased loaf tin for 40 mins on medium oven.

### *Julia S's aubergine bake*

1 aubergine  
 2 eggs  
 chopped onion  
 oregano  
 2 tomatoes  
 2 oz cheddar + spoon of parmesan  
 4 oz breadcrumbs

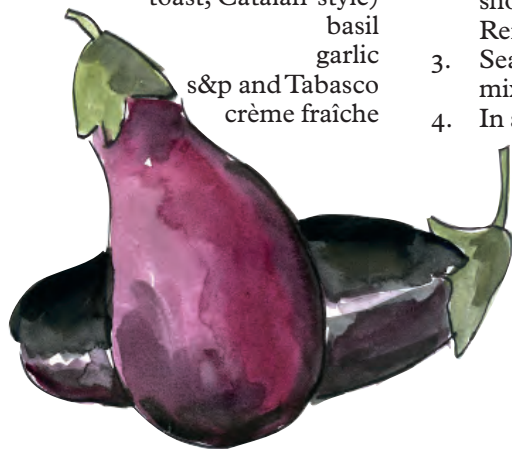
1. Peel & slice aubergine and boil in salted water for 10 mins. Drain & mash. Add all except the tomato which goes sliced on the bottom and top. Parmesan also on the top.
2. Put in greased loaf tin for 40 mins in a medium oven. This also works as a soufflé if you separate the eggs and add a bit of white sauce.

### *Sam's aubergine from the oven*

Part of Sam and Tina's late lunch: Sam says: 'Aubergines are special, but only if the recipe puts them through two preparation steps, e.g. first roast then purée, first bake then stuff, and so on. Here the procedure is fry and then bake with further ingredients. Original source: Simon Hopkinson *Roast Chicken and Other Stories: Second Helpings* (2001). The preparation can be done in advance'.

Sam serves this with his slow-cooked lamb (page 84), which complements the aubergine, but when I tested this recipe on its own I felt it needed the lamb and re-jigged the leftovers the following day layering in lamb mince and a cheese sauce topping, making it into a potato-less moussaka.

3-4 aubergines  
 5-6 large tomatoes, halved and deseeded  
 (you won't need the seeds in this recipe, but you don't have to throw them away – mix with olive oil and salt and serve on toast, Catalan-style)  
 basil  
 garlic  
 s&p and Tabasco  
 crème fraîche



1. Slice aubergines and fry them or roast in olive oil in the oven, turning once.
2. Peel the tomatoes and put them diced in a saucepan with a chunk of butter, a garlic clove peeled and sliced thinly, a handful of basil leaves, shredded roughly, and the seasoning. Heat and let bubble gently for 10-15 mins, stir every now and then. The whole should thicken somewhat and start to emit an irresistible aroma. Remove from the heat.
3. Season a large amount of crème fraîche or double cream or a mixture of the two with salt and lots of pepper.
4. In a baking dish (the one you use for lasagne) pour or spoon the tomato mixture and spread to cover the base. Place the aubergine slices gently on top in rows; overlapping slightly and touching all four edges of the dish. Pour or spoon the cream-mixture on top to cover the aubergines. Bake in the middle of a medium oven until the surface has formed a delicate brown crust, around 30 mins, perhaps more.

## Emily's aubergine croquettes

1. Char-cook the aubergines as for baba ghanoush (page 45).
2. Bake the potatoes and scoop out the inside into the bowl with the aubergines. Then crumble in the feta, grate in the parmesan and add half the breadcrumbs.
3. Add the beaten egg slowly as you might not need it all as you want the mixture to be sticky and not too wet.
4. Divide the mixture into four and then roll out each section into a sausage and make smaller sausages. Then roll each little sausage in the remaining breadcrumbs. Then put in the fridge for at least 30 mins to chill.
5. Deep fry the croquettes a few at a time and drain on kitchen paper.

Nice served with a tarragon aioli (page 132 and using tarragon vinegar instead of lemon).

3 aubergines  
4 medium potatoes cooked and mashed  
140 g feta cheese  
20 g parmesan cheese  
1 egg  
200 g dried white breadcrumbs  
groundnut oil (for frying)  
a lemon

## Imam bayildi

The Imam did a lot of fainting with pleasure (which is what 'bayildi' means) because there are several versions I know of. This one is from *The Cookery Year*.

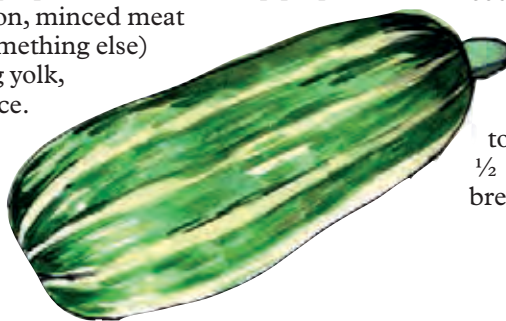
1. Cook the aubergines whole for 10 mins in boiling water. Drain and plunge in cold water.
2. Cut in half lengthwise and scoop out most of the flesh.
3. Sprinkle with salt, a liberal swoosh of olive oil and bake uncovered for 30 mins on low-medium.
4. Chop the onions and tomatoes and fry gently with the crushed garlic and cinnamon and sugar until reduced by half (about 20 mins).
5. Add the chopped aubergine flesh and pine nuts and cook for another 10 mins.
6. Stuff the shells with the mixture and serve hot or cold.

1 aubergine per person (half if one of several dishes)  
onion  
tomatoes  
garlic  
½ tsp cinnamon  
tsp caster sugar  
parsley and pine nuts

## Stuffed courgettes or marrow

Someone must have given me this in 1989 because it was scribbled on a diary page and I found it stuffed into my yellow folder. This one has mince in it but I've also used other chopped vegetables with gruyère instead for a vegetarian version.

1. Halve courgettes, removing pulp from middle. Chop pulp and mix with a chopped onion, minced meat (but you could substitute something else) – cook for a bit; then add egg yolk, matzo meal, and a white sauce. Fill courgette cases. Fry briefly face down.
2. Put in oven dish and cover with tomato garlic sauce (bought or made).
3. Bake medium oven for ¾ hour; longer for the marrow.



courgettes (1 per person for a main, ½ for a starter) or 1 marrow  
white sauce  
tom & garlic sauce  
½ to 1 lb mince  
breadcrumbs

## Butternut squash and red pepper stew

I love this – a real winter warmer. It's from Leith's *Vegetarian Bible* (2002), which is in theory full of things that should go in this section. It's a huge fat book and there can't really be anything it doesn't have. And yet, and yet! I don't use it much.

a chopped-up butternut squash  
garlic  
chilli flakes, caraway seeds  
red onion  
½ fennel  
1 red pepper  
3 or 4 carrots  
½ pt spicy vegetable  
stock  
coriander and parsley

1. Sweat squash with crushed garlic, chilli, caraway seeds and seasoning
2. Add other vegetables (sliced in different ways) and cover for 5-8 mins.
3. Add stock, cover and simmer until everything soft but holding their original shape.
4. Reduce the liquid and add the green herbs.

Serve with hot-buttered couscous.



## Stuffed onions

The *Plenty* ones are the best but the principle is this:

large Spanish onions  
fillings à choix

1. Blanch some very big onions and when cold peel off the outer leaves keeping the smaller ones for something else.
2. Make a fairly firm stuffing (could be a nut one, or the original is tomatoes, white breadcrumbs, crumbled feta, and parsley).
3. Roll the stuffing in the large softened onion leaves into cigar-shapes.
4. Put them in a greased dish and pour over a vegetable and white wine stock.
5. Bake for about 45 mins.

## Tiân of onions

2 kg onions, sliced  
fried chopped carrot (optional)  
2 oz flour + 5 tbsp olive oil  
milk or cream  
s&p, nutmeg, little bit of garlic  
sprig of thyme  
60 g breadcrumbs

1. Cook onions in boiling salted water till just tender. Drain and keep the liquid. Make a white sauce using the oil and flour, and ¼ litre each of the onion water and milk, till you have a double cream consistency. Can add an egg to this. Season.
2. Grease a dish (ideally a tiân dish – sides sloping outwards) and pour in half the sauce, then the onion slices, then the rest of the sauce. Fry the breadcrumbs lightly and scatter on top.
3. Bake in medium oven for an hour or so.

## Gaby's cumin cauliflower

1. Boil the cauliflower florets for a couple of mins, so they are not quite raw but not soft.
2. Toss florets in the oil, then combine the spices and salt in a bowl and roll the cauliflower in the mix to coat.
3. Transfer cauliflower to a roasting tray and cook in a hottish oven for 15-20 mins or until tender.
4. Allow to cool a little before dressing (below). Combine all dressing ingredients except the coriander and pour over the cauliflower.
5. Finish with a sprinkling of chopped coriander

## Stephen's corn fritters

Fay Maschler's actually, from *The Evening Standard*, but I've so far avoided learning how to do them. There's a reason for that.

1. Slice the corn kernels off the cob into a large bowl – they shouldn't come off whole.
2. Lightly coat with a tbsp of flour per cob and stir.
3. Throw in an egg and some cream and mix.
4. Fry the fritters on both sides until golden.

## Fondue

A wedding present favourite in the 70s was a fondue set – I can't remember who gave us ours. We play the forfeits game when we use it (which isn't very often). I only do the cheese version and it is very rich.

1. Rub the inside of the fondue pot with halves of garlic.
2. Add the wine and lemon juice to the pot and heat until boiling. Lower the heat and gradually stir in the cheeses until melted, stirring all the time.
3. If using kirsch, blend with the cornflour, otherwise use water. Add to the cheese mixture and cook gently until the mixture is smooth – don't let it boil or it will burn.
4. If it doesn't bind, I find a bit of beaten egg sometimes helps.
5. Share out the forks and everyone dips into the pot. If your bread falls off the others decide on a forfeit.

## Cauliflower cheese

Winter comfort food, especially when it comes out all brown and bubbling up out of the oven. *Variations:* add brown macaroni, bacon or mushrooms.

1. Cook cauliflower florets (+ stalk and good bits of leaves) in milk with a bayleaf in it till al dente.
2. Make a cheese sauce using the infused milk.
3. Put in an oven dish with extra cheese on top, maybe some breadcrumbs and slices of tomato across the top to give a bit of colour.
4. Bake on medium for about 20 mins.

1 cauliflower, separated into florets  
1½ tsp ground cumin  
1½ tsp ground coriander  
s&p, 1 tbsp olive oil  
For the dressing:  
4 tbsp plain yoghurt, creamy if possible  
1 tbsp olive oil  
1 clove garlic, crushed  
juice of ½ lemon, or more to taste  
handful coriander leaves, roughly chopped. s&p

fresh corn on the cob (1 cob per 2 people)  
egg  
flour  
cream



oil and salt

1 clove garlic  
½ pt white wine  
1 tsp lemon juice  
8 oz grated emmental  
8 oz grated gruyère  
1 tsp cornflour  
1 tbsp kirsch (optional)  
cubed garlic bread pieces, for dipping

cauliflower  
milk  
tbsp sauce flour  
cheddar cheese  
breadcrumbs

### *Macaroni cheese*

As the previous page (but cook in water). Both require a vibrant red or green salad to lift the pallid colour.

### *Sprout crumble*

As above, leaving the sprouts whole and with a topping of crumble under the final cheese layer.

### *Fennel and tomato crumble*

Another one from *Plenty*; only I do a simpler version with no cream, reducing the quantities to go with one fennel, using any tomatoes, sliced and baked with the fennel, and putting the crumble on top of that and any sort of cheese over that. Fine for two.

1-3 fennel bulbs  
3 tbsp olive oil  
1 tbsp thyme leaves and a few  
whole sprigs  
3 garlic cloves, crushed  
coarse sea salt  
black pepper  
6 oz whipping cream  
3½ oz parmesan cheese grated  
10½ oz cherry tomatoes on the  
vine  
chopped flat-leaf parsley

*crumble:*

3½ oz plain flour  
1 oz caster sugar  
2½ oz cold unsalted butter cut  
into small cubes

1. Cut each bulb lengthways in half and slice across.
2. Place the fennel in a large bowl with the olive oil, thyme leaves, garlic, s&p; toss and transfer to an oven-proof dish and pour the cream over the fennel.
3. Mix the crumble with the grated parmesan and scatter evenly on top.
4. Cover the dish with foil and bake for 45 mins. Remove the foil and arrange the tomatoes on top along with a few thyme sprigs.
5. Return to the oven and bake for another 15 mins or until the fennel is soft and the gratin is a golden brown. Sprinkle chopped parsley over and serve.



## *Potato favourites*

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### *Dauphinois potatoes*

From time to time I need to read Lindsay Bareham's *In Praise of the Potato* (Penguin 1995) where she goes into all the principles of what sort of potatoes to use, how thinly to slice, whether to rinse or not and whether to use cream, milk or cheese. It's a good idea to do one of her classic recipes, letter for letter, to remind oneself of what the principles are because this is such a 'more-ish' dish when you get it right, and therefore very disappointing when you don't. It's quite annoying that English supermarkets don't tell you which of their potatoes are 'waxy' and which aren't, so I've done some research for this and the other potato recipes. I think waxy for this dish, though some sources say floury. Edouard de Pomiane (whose diagrammatic recipes Stephen liked) says add a tsp flour to the cream to stop it separating.

Charlotte, Lady Balfour, Vivaldi  
and Desirée potatoes  
cream  
butter

*ratio*

1½ lb potatoes : ½ pt double  
cream : 2 oz butter

1. Use a mandolin to cut consistent wafer-thin slices. (Either rinse and dry, or don't.)
2. Butter and rub the dish with garlic.



3. Arrange in layers seasoning each layer well.
4. Dot butter on each layer.
5. Fill to within  $\frac{3}{4}$ " of the top.
6. Use  $\frac{1}{2}$  pt thick cream to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  lb potatoes. (Or half milk and half cream and either bring to the boil first or don't. Can add tsp flour.)
7. Pour over potatoes.
8. Press the potatoes down frequently during cooking to get a good glaze as the cream bubbles up.
9. Bake for about 40 mins on medium and turn up for the last 10 mins to give some colour.

*optional:* more garlic between the layers; cheese on top; stock instead of cream; wild mushrooms or truffle in between the layers.

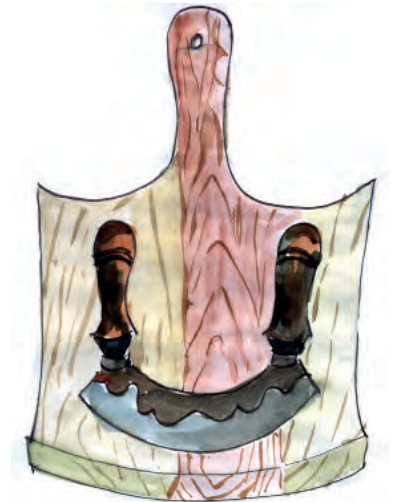
### *Parsnip and tomato dauphinois*

Just like an ordinary potato one, but don't boil the cream and layer the two vegetables – both thinly sliced. Astonishingly good. It's good with courgettes and tomatoes too, but a bit liquidy.

### *Ottolenghi's sweet potato gratin*

I like to do this with half-and-half sweet and ordinary potatoes and arrange them in stripes, using my largest oven tray so the layers are roughly 2 slices thick.

1. Mix the potato slices in a large bowl along with the chopped sage, garlic and s&p (two bowls if going for the striped effect)
2. Butter a gratin or casserole dish and layer the potato slices overlapping them so you get parallel lines with the skins showing.
3. Cover with foil and bake in a medium oven for 45 mins. Uncover and drizzle with the cream.  
Bake another 20 mins or so, until top is crispy and cream is bubbly.
4. Garnish with sage.



5 sweet potatoes, washed and sliced super thin (leave skin on the potatoes)  
5 cloves crushed garlic  
2 tbsp chopped fresh sage  
2 tsp sea salt  
ground black pepper  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  pt heavy cream

### *Nest's soufflé potatoes*

Nest Rubio used to do these and whip them out of the freezer when she had unexpected company – don't stint on the butter, she said (but she was thin and didn't need stinting). I always mean to do extra and have a secret freezer stash, but they are so good they just disappear. Not bad cold either.

1. Bake any number of potatoes.
2. When cool enough, cut in half and scrape the flesh into a bowl.
3. Season well and mix with egg yolks, lashings of cream and bacon bits + or – cheese.
4. Whisk the egg white to a soft peak and fold in.
5. Fill all the potato-skin halves with the mixture, piling it high.
6. Bake till risen and browned nicely on top.

large baking potatoes  
Edwards, Maris Piper, Red Duke of Yorks  
butter  
bacon and/or grated cheese (optional)  
eggs  
cream

## *Patatas pobres*

The recipe here is the one in *Driving Over Lemons* (1999) by Chris Stewart, which tells the story of how he bought a peasant farm in a remote valley in Andalusia – sited on the wrong side of the river, with no water or electricity, and with its previous owner still in residence. He, Pedro, favoured papas a lo pobre for breakfast, lunch and supper with two glasses of wine.

thin-sliced potatoes  
green peppers  
Spanish onions  
lots of garlic and olive oil

First he put a deep frying-pan, hideously greasy and blackened, onto a tripod over the flames and poured into it what I judged to be two coffee-cupfuls (after dinner size) of olive oil. Then with his pocket knife he hacked up a couple of onions, without being too delicate in the manner of peeling them. As they fizzed gladly in the oil, he pulled to pieces a whole head of garlic and tossed the lot into the pan... He then took a bucket in which were the potatoes hygienically swimming in water; these he had peeled ... and chopped them roughly – great coarse chips, straight into the spitting oil.. In a basket hanging from a pole were green and red peppers. Taking five or six small ones, he tossed them in whole. This cooked for a while and was served with ‘enormous fatty widges’ of ham.

## *Potato ribbons*

Not a good idea for someone like me who has an unerring leaning towards fattening deliciousnesses. Nice though. I've got two gadgets for this: my father's vintage potato peeler, which will first peel the potato, then it needs to be put through again to make string; and my Lakeland apple corer, which will make a spiral ribbon (plus some potato 'cores'). Best limit this to a party of 4 as it is troublesome.

1. Deep fry the potato string in a little nest-like bundles and drain on paper.
2. Throw salt and cayenne pepper over them.

## *Chips*



There is nothing to compare with fish and chips after school swimming lessons, which were held at the end of the school day when we would troop off to the chippie and buy them wrapped in newspaper, and stand at the bus stop with them warming our hands. Who, of my generation, doesn't have that memory? At the pool itself we would have had a spoon of Bovril swished around in hot water. Still nice for a winter lunch time.

When I was living in Brierley Hill doing my one-year glass course, unhealthy eateries were all around and I used to allow myself chips once a month. They were never worth it. Nor are the ones from Toff in Muswell Hill, though we have them with Lesley and Tony now and then and think of it as a shared treat. I almost never make chips myself – maybe twice a year.

Floury potatoes are good for chips – King Edwards, Roosters, Maris Piper, Yukon. Some secrets from here and there – Michel Roux: wash the starch off first and then deep fry once, allow to cool

and deep fry again. Heston: ‘The first secret is cooking the chips until they are almost falling apart as the cracks are what makes them so crispy. The second secret is allowing the chips to steam dry then sit in the freezer for an hour to get rid of as much moisture as possible. The final secret is to cook the chips in very hot oil for a crispy, glass-like crust’.

### *Bataille and quelin potatoes*

I had to put this in as it was something I seem to have had on the *SS Iberia* on 11 August 1958 on my painting-prize cruise. Apparently this is a forgotten French classic – which I have made my own since finding this recipe. And I learned a tip: adding an acid such as lemon juice when boiling a potato will help to fix the starch, which means the potato will not fall apart so easily.

1. Peel and wash potatoes, and put in cold water.
2. For the quelin: cut potato shapes with a large melon-baller.
3. For the bataille: cut in  $\frac{3}{4}$ " squares by hand.
4. Cook in water with a pinch of salt and lemon juice; the balls should stay slightly firm.
5. Before serving, cook for a few mins in melted butter with chopped parsley.

russet potatoes  
butter  
salt & lemon juice



### *Gerda's paluszki*

Gerda must be in the book as she is a cousin-by-marriage on Stephen's side and a great foodie.

This must be why Nada always had gnocchi when we went to an Italian restaurant: they reminded him of paluszki, which means little fingers in Polish. Stephen was a baby and Gerda 19 when she made these for the family. Here's the story in (mostly) Gerda's own words.

When I arrived in England in the spring of 1946, Ludek picked me up from the ship. London was overwhelming, amazingly busy and beautiful. All I saw in Poland was hunger, misery & chaos. The cities were in ruins and depressing, but I was finally in England. Ludek put me up in a nearby hotel, since they had no room for me in their tiny flat in the Kensington mews. The next day I spent with Joan and baby Stephen, while Ludek went to work at the BBC. Both Joan and the baby had bad colds and stayed all day in bed. I decided to make dinner for the family. I scouted their tiny fridge and found the ingredients (right).

1. Boil and mash the potatoes and leave to cool.
2. Peel and slice the carrots and cook in very little water, adding some brown sugar and butter, salt and cinnamon.
3. When the potatoes are cool, transfer them to a bowl, add 1 egg, salt and flour so that the dough becomes elastic and smooth.
4. Divide the dough in 2 parts, put one part in the fridge to keep it cold; roll the rest of the mix into a long roll 1-2" in diameter, flouring the board.
5. Cut the roll crosswise; roll each piece to look like a finger.

carrots and peas  
potatoes  
bits of fatty bacon  
onion  
butter  
1 egg  
salt, flour, cinnamon  
brown sugar

6. Boil salted water in a big pot and throw in about 20 dumplings.
7. Once they rise to the top, cook them 1 min longer, then gently lift them out with a slotted spoon and spread them on a platter or a board to dry (so they won't stick to each other).
8. Continue boiling the rest of the dough until it is all cooked.
9. Now the dumplings are done, but they need some lubricant. Butter was still being rationed, so I retrieved the bits of bacon, cut them up in to tiny bits, rendered the bacon into about 3 tbsp of fat while the solids became what we called in Poland *skfarki*. They are very tasty & crisp.
10. I fried a chopped onion in the bacon fat till it was golden brown, then mixed it gently with the *paluszki* (including the crisp bits of bacon) and put the dish in the low temperature oven to keep the dumplings warm.
11. Finally I reheated the carrots, added peas and a little cornflour slaked in water.

When Ludek came home and was told I cooked a Polish dish, he just couldn't get over the fact that his little cousin could cook such gourmet fare, with hardly any food in the kitchen. He kept thinking of me as a little girl before the war, when in fact I was 19 years old and had much experience in making a meal with little bit of food during the war. Ludwik said that the *paluszki* and the carrots tasted the same as they did in his home before the war. He hadn't had such dishes since he came to England and he couldn't get enough of it.

## *Pierogi*

Another Nada favourite, but I've never made them and I don't think I will.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| sauerkraut<br>mashed potato<br><i>dough made from:</i><br>3 eggs<br>225 ml soured cream<br>375 g plain flour<br>¼ tsp salt<br>1 tbsp baking powder | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work the dough and roll out, cutting out circles with a pastry-cutter.</li> <li>2. Fill one half with mashed potato and sauerkraut, fold down the other half and press the edges together sealing well with a fork.</li> <li>3. Drop into boiling water for 3-5 mins until they rise to the top, and take out with a slotted spoon.</li> </ol> |
|--|--|

## *Different kinds of mash*

A childhood memory here is making what we called an 'echo lake' by denting the mash with the back of a ladle and then pouring gravy into the hollow. Steven and I would eat round the edges of the lake until the surrounding mountains fell into it.

On Masterchef they do all sorts of flavoured spuds – pesto mash, horseradish mash, black olive mash, mustard mash, champ. I'm not really tempted but I do like combinations of root vegetables. The kind of potato is important too. Desirée and Maris Piper are suitable for mash and sometimes I wash them peeled and cut to get rid of the starch.

Stephen doesn't believe in peeling potatoes so he mashes them up, skins and all, with lots of caramelised onions thrown in for texture so you don't notice the skins. Me, I like them peeled so you get that

nice smoothness. But never mashed in the blender. My favourite masher is a wooden plunger-type from a vintage set I acquired once. Combinations in any quantities – and always lashings of butter and milk to loosen, and maybe a gob of crème fraîche on top:

potato, butter and nutmeg  
potato, butter, garlic and cream (with an optional egg)  
potato, parmesan and truffle oil  
potato and parsnip  
potato and celeriac  
potato, rosemary and leek  
potato and cabbage or sprout and nutmeg (bubble-and-squeak, colcannon)  
carrot and swede  
sweet potato and ordinary potato – marbled  
butternut squash and chilli flakes  
cauliflower



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## *Rice or pasta favourites*

### *Polly's butternut squash risotto*

Polly is my Queen of the Risotto – and I picture her cooking it in comfy, pyjamery clothes and wearing fluffy slippers. I once gave her a book of risotto recipes by Valentina Harris (not sure why you need a whole book) and this was one she did for us and I asked for the recipe afterwards. Polly's version has a variation at the wine stage: 'Add one small glass of white wine and pour one large glass for yourself. Store the rest in the fridge or just continue to drink it throughout the cooking process'.

All risottos follow this general method. The squash and porcini can be replaced by other vegetables: asparagus, carrot, broccoli. Celery and chicken works well – a typical Monday standby.



ratio per person: 2 oz rice to 200 ml liquid

1. Cut squash into about 2½ cm pieces and gently fry it with the onion, garlic, sage, thyme for about 10 mins until almost tender.
2. Add the rice and keep stirring for 3-4 mins to toast it without colouring. Pour in 100 ml of the wine and stir everything for 1 min.
3. Pour the stock into a pan, add the porcini, then bring to a gentle simmer.
4. Start to add the hot stock (leaving the porcini behind) – this process should take about 20 mins. Keep stirring and adding ladlefuls as the previous one gets absorbed, continuing to stir to keep the risotto creamy. As the last of the stock goes in (keep a little back) check if the rice is ready – it should be soft with a bit of chew in the middle – and the consistency fluid. Season with pepper.
5. Take the pan off the heat. Add a splash of the stock to keep the

1 butternut squash  
2 litres vegetable stock  
1 bottle white wine  
12 oz canaroli (or arborio) rice  
dried porcini, soaked in a little stock  
1 onion, finely chopped  
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
6 sage leaves  
2 thyme sprigs  
handful flat-leaf parsley  
2 oz parmesan  
2 tbs mascarpone



1 fennel  
risotto rice – 2 oz per person  
2 stock cubes in a litre of water  
3 shallots  
grated parmesan  
2 glasses white wine

1 finely chopped onion  
300 g frozen or cooked fresh  
peas  
hot vegetable stock  
350 g risotto rice  
200 ml white wine  
25 g parmesan  
pea shoots (optional)

different kinds of mushrooms,  
but must include porcini (pre-  
soaked in boiling water for ½  
hour)  
onion  
2 oz canaroli rice per person  
1 fl oz Madeira per oz of rice  
shaved parmesan

risotto moist, scatter over the parsley and half the parmesan, then spoon on the mascarpone. With the lid on, let the risotto sit for 3-4 mins to rest.

1. Meanwhile, heat the remaining oil in a small frying pan. Add the sage leaves, then fry for a few secs until starting to colour. Transfer to kitchen paper with a slotted spoon to drain. Spoon the risotto into bowls, then scatter over the rest of the parmesan and the crisp sage leaves.

### *Petica's fennel risotto*

I hadn't got into risotto until Petica had us over to the first flat she had bought and cooked this one while we watched. I remember thinking it very brave of her as it's one of those dishes that has to be done on the spot and eaten straight away. Not everyone likes to be attending to something slightly tricky when guests come.

1. Chop up the fennel and shallots in small pieces, soften in olive oil and butter.
2. Stir in the rice so grains absorb butter.
3. Boil the stock.
4. Add full glass of white wine & evaporate, stirring continuously.
5. Add ladles of boiling broth, one at a time, while continuing to stir.
6. When all absorbed by now swollen rice (20 mins) add Parmigiano, softened fennel, another glass of wine and stir.
7. Sprinkle rest of cheese on top.
8. Take off heat and briefly rest before serving.

### *Pea risotto*

Same principle as all the rest except that you purée about ⅓ of the peas with some stock and add that with the rest of the peas towards the end of the stirring process.

### *Oven-baked wild mushroom risotto*

This is a bit of a find (Delia, of course) as you don't have to do all that slow ladling and stirring: it cooks in the oven all by itself. I suspect some of the other risotti would work like this too, but the mystique of slowly adding hot stock and stirring it in is rather comforting and part of the fun.

1. Cook the chopped onion in butter and add the chopped mushrooms (reserve the juices from the dried ones) after a while and allow to meld for about 20 mins.
2. Add the rice until coated in butter, then the liquid the dried mushrooms were soaked in.
3. Add the Madeira, bring to simmering point, season and then put in the centre of a warmed oven for 20 mins exactly at 150°C.
4. Stir in 2 spoons of grated parmesan and return to the oven for 15 mins.
5. Serve immediately with parsley and parmesan shavings on top.

## Tomato risotto

1. As for any risotto except you tip all the hot water in at once until absorbed. Then add  $\frac{3}{4}$  of tomato essence (page 48) and allow to barely simmer till al dente. Don't need to stir.
2. Add rest of essence and a mixture of chopped vegetables à choix. Now you do stir to extract the starch and give the whole a creamy texture.
3. Add the cheeses.

## Nick's paella

His, because he did it three times when they were staying with us for five months in 2012 and I think it's one of his signature dishes. Looked very grand in our huge paella dish. It's straight from *Moro* and once we didn't have paella rice only sushi rice and risotto rice, but No, he absolutely couldn't do it without the real thing (I'm sure it would have been fine with either had we not been within a bike ride of Sainsbury's).

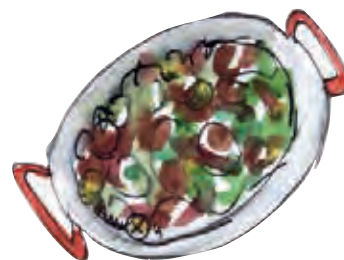
1. In a large paella pan or frying pan, heat the olive oil over a high heat, then stir-fry the pork for a few seconds so it is still a little undercooked. Season.
2. Remove from the pan with a slotted spoon and put to one side. Turn down the heat to a low to medium temperature and fry the chorizo for 1 min.
3. Add the onion and peppers and cook for 20 mins, stirring occasionally. Add the garlic to the onion and cook for a further 5-10 mins. At this point the mixture should have caramelised and taste sweet.
4. Stir the rice into the pan to coat in the flavoursome mixture.
5. Season with s&p, paprika and saffron followed by the hot stock and simmer for 15 mins or until there is just a thin layer of liquid around the rice. The rice should still be firm, but not chalky.
6. Meanwhile in a large saucepan, briefly wilt the spinach with a little salt by blanching, or steaming.
7. Evenly scatter the pork over the rice followed by the spinach. With the back of a spoon gently push the pork and spinach partially into the oily liquid that remains at the bottom of the pan. Cover the paella tightly with foil (or a lid) and let it sit for 5 mins.
8. Serve with lemon and a crisp salad.

## Gidek's rice pudding

In 1925-7 Ludek and Gidek took part in the 'Hashomer Hatzair' summer camps (before it became a politicised left-wing Zionist movement). Ludek's *Espèce d'Autobiographie* recounts this story of a rice disaster. It's not the only example of something that didn't work that's in this book.

Cooking was done in turns and judging by the results, each 'cook' was less expert than the one before. When Gidek's turn came, he thought he'd jolly up the menu and make a rice pudding by a

white onion, garlic  
200 g canaroli rice  
300 ml of Raymond Blanc's  
tomato essence (page 48)  
+ 300 g hot water  
topping of mixed chopped  
vegetables (fennel, courgette,  
carrot, peas, toms, black olives)  
parmesan and mascarpone



7 tbsp olive oil  
350 g pork fillet, halved  
lengthways, then sliced across  
roughly into 7mm strips  
120 g mild cooking chorizo, cut  
into pieces  
2 large Spanish onions, finely  
chopped  
1 large green pepper, halved,  
seeded and finely chopped  
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
250 g paella rice  
1 tsp sweet smoked Spanish  
paprika  
saffron strands  
900 ml hot chicken stock  
500 g spinach, washed and  
drained  
1 lemon in wedges  
s&p

simple expedient of tossing bits of apple, raisins, sugar, etc. into the boiling brew. His concentration must have been disturbed, no doubt by one of the several girl guides who always seemed to hover about him. He was a tall and very handsome lad with a beautiful singing voice and while I had to work to attract the girls' attention, by jumping, running or shooting off arrows – he only had to be himself and they would flock to him. He was also one and a half years older, I consoled myself. As for the rice pudding, it did Gidek's reputation as cook little good. It solidified to a degree where it had to be ladled out of the cauldron with shovels, and so as not to waste an expensive commodity. It was used, for the duration of the camp, as glue for pasting up the day's orders, announcements and...menus. On the night of Gidek's rice pudding, we went to bed hungry.

### *Perdeli pilaf*

We had this in France with Chris: Maggie made it from *Purple Citrus*. This is an Ottoman-English-French version, the 'curtain' (because that's what *perdeli* means) being a parcel of filo pastry. Maggie made the pilaf before we came and then assembled the filo as we sat in the garden with our rosé, but there's no reason not to do the whole parcel in advance and then you can be with your guests all the time, with a quick flit to the kitchen to attend to heating it up in the oven. It needs a sauce to go with it and I don't think the original quantities and timings are right so this is my annotated version.

2 confit of duck legs, shredded  
 4 shallots  
     garlic  
 1¼ cups arborio rice  
     ¾ cup raisins  
 2½ cups chicken stock  
 1 cup pine nuts  
 tsp hemp seeds  
 6 sheets filo  
     ghee

1. Sauté shallots and crushed garlic and stir in rice and raisins, coating them in oil.
2. Add stock and reduce to a simmer for 25 mins or more until rice is done – maybe adding more liquid as the rice absorbs it all. Cool a bit and add hemp seeds (if you have them) and pine nuts.
3. On a rimless baking sheet, overlap 4 filo sheets to make a large rectangle; place 2 sheets in the centre to cover the overlapping seam. Spoon the pilaf mixture into the centre and scatter the duck meat on top. Fold the filo edges over to make a circular parcel. (Or for a bit of drama, make individual parcels.)
4. Heat the ghee in a frying pan and slide the parcel into it, cooking for 2-3 mins until the pastry is golden and crispy; then flip it over using the baking tray and do the other side.
5. Put back on the sheet and bake in a medium oven to heat through for about 10 mins.

Cut into wedges and serve with salad.

### *Lucy's Persian rice*

Lucy was married to an Iranian at one time and cooked us this unusual rice 'cake'. When she served it, it had a golden crispy crust, which Iranians call 'Tadik'.

½ cup of basmati rice  
 per person  
     water  
     butter  
     salt

1. Rinse the rice under the tap. Then put it in a thin based non-stick pan and cover with water up to the first knuckle of your index finger above the rice (or, less poetically, 1" above).

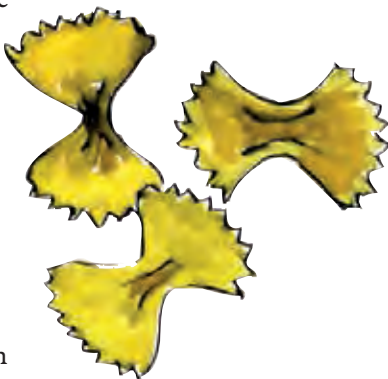


2. Add a generous knob of butter, and a pinch of salt to the pan.
3. Uncovered, bring to the boil on a high heat, stirring occasionally. Cook until most of the water has evaporated and the sound changes from squelchy to crackly.
4. Then reduce the heat, cover, and cook for about 50 minutes.
5. When ready to serve, turn out your rice 'cake' onto a plate.

### *Randall's diagram pastas*

What was ingenious about these two recipes is that they came in diagrammatic form. Randall had tried to reduce recipes to their most basic by listing ingredients and processes in rough order of necessity – like a pilot's check list. Both are good standbys for coming back from the theatre.

1. Small frying pan
2. Saucepan
3. 10 mins prep
4. 20 mins cooking



### *Tuna pasta casserole*

This is from someone from playgroup era – it could be Sarah Gould who lived at No. 2 and whose children, Richard and Victoria, were parallel ages to Vita and Gabriel; we were in and out of each other's houses all the time. Lost touch now: such is life.

1. Fry the onion first, then add the soup.
2. Fold in tuna and ½ the cheese.
3. Add cooked pasta.
4. Pour into greased casserole.
5. Grate remaining cheese on top and bake until it has melted.

*1. peanut butter*  
2 tbsp peanut butter  
spring onions  
sun dried tomatoes

*2. tuna-sweetcorn*  
tuna flakes – small tin  
sweet corn – small tin  
mushroom soup – Campbell's  
condensed

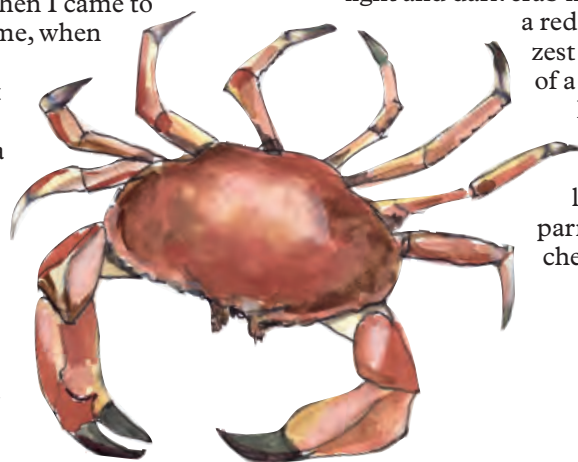
*both with*  
8 oz pasta bows or twists  
garlic  
cayenne pepper  
parmesan cheese

7 oz tin tuna, rinsed and flaked  
12 oz pasta shapes  
2 tbsp margarine (that dates it)  
2 tbsp chopped onion  
1 tin condensed cream of celery  
soup  
4 oz grated cheddar

### *Catriona's crab pasta*

Catriona made this in a flash one evening when I came to her London flat for a girlie evening. Next time, when I went to fetch the crib for our grandson, Ossian, that all three of our babies had slept in, I asked for a repeat as it was so good, and now it's become a tradition. Nice with a citrusy white wine like Soave.

1. Cook the pasta.
2. Put a bit of oil in another pan and cook the chilli and lemon zest briefly.
3. Add the pasta and crab meat and heat through. Add lemon juice, rocket (or coriander) and parmesan if you want it. Don't use too much cheese as it makes it dry.



light and dark crab meat  
a red chilli  
zest and juice  
of a lemon  
handful  
of wild  
rocket  
linguine  
parmesan  
cheese

## Cesca's spinach and ricotta lasagne

This serves quite a lot of people (her handwritten recipe says 10). Cesca always did huge quantities of food for her parties – always worried that it wouldn't be enough. There was always tons left over.

2½ pts tomato/wine sauce made with tinned toms, onion, garlic, wine  
1½ lb spinach  
1 onion  
olive oil  
minced garlic  
2 lb ricotta cheese  
¼ lb grated parmesan  
3 beaten eggs  
½ lb mozzarella  
1 lb lasagne leaves  
salt, parsley etc.

1. Cook and drain the spinach, chop and combine with sautéed onion, garlic, ricotta and parmesan cheeses, eggs and seasoning.
2. Grate the mozzarella into separate bowl.
3. Then layer the pasta with tomato sauce, then spinach sauce, then mozzarella sprinkles.
4. Repeat all layers with tomato sauce on top and more parmesan on top of that.
5. Cover with foil and bake for 40 mins on lowish medium and then another 10 mins uncovered.

## Nick's lentil lasagne

It's a Hairy Bikers' TV offering, but he did it for us and this is my simplified version. This is enough for eight but it is so good that six will polish it off.

*for the lentil ragout*  
knob of butter, for greasing and frying  
7 oz puy lentils  
1 stock cube  
olive oil for frying  
1 onion, chopped  
1 garlic clove, chopped  
4 oz mushrooms, finely diced  
4 oz leek, finely sliced  
1 can chopped tomatoes  
6-9 sheets lasagne  
handful grated parmesan cheese  
green salad, to serve

*for the cheese sauce*  
4 oz butter  
3½ oz plain flour  
1½ pts milk  
6 tbsp double cream  
4 oz grated cheddar cheese

1. Cover the lentils with cold water and bring to the boil. Crumble in the stock cube and cook for 15-20 mins, or until the lentils are tender, then drain. Add more water if the mixture looks dry.
2. Sauté onion, garlic, mushrooms and leek for about 5 mins.
3. Stir in the cooked lentils for 5 mins, then the tomatoes. Cover and simmer for 10-15 mins. Season, to taste, with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.
4. Make a cheese sauce in the usual way.
5. To assemble the lasagne, spread a quarter of the lentil ragout over the base of the greased baking dish, cover this with a quarter of the cheese sauce, then arrange a third of the lasagne sheets over the top.
6. Repeat, finishing with a layer of cheese sauce. Sprinkle over the parmesan cheese and bake in the oven for 30-40 mins, or until bubbling and golden-brown.



Serve with a green salad.

## Pesto sixways

*rough ratio* nuts: cheese: oil = 1: 1: 3 + good bunch of leaves

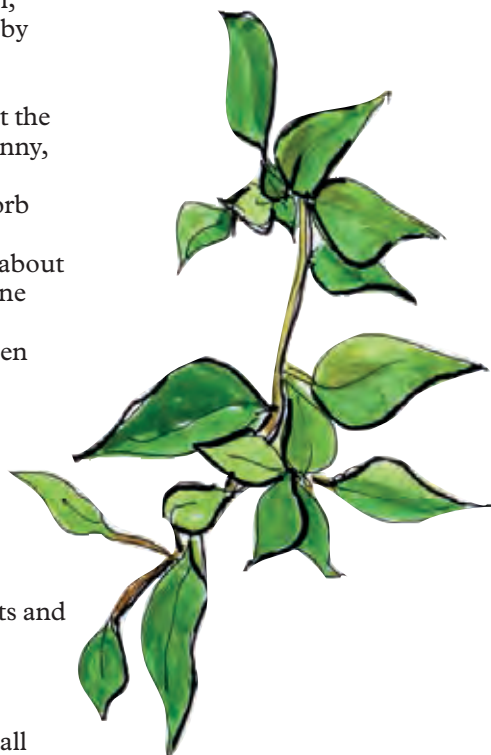
### Flip-Flop's classic pesto

I think Philip learnt to make this when he lived in Rome. He had a flat near the Trevi Fountain. We were all going to stay, and I produced an old map of Rome I'd had as a teenager. He was about to mark it when we were amazed to find an X on the exact spot already: I had stayed in a pensione in the same building years before. In his own words:

I don't believe in substitutes. Must be pine nuts rather than walnuts. Must be olive oil. Basil is essential for the real thing. And definitely parmesan and not another hard cheese. It's not a cheap dish, given the ingredients. In addition to using as a pasta sauce, it's very good in a vegetable soup; or Petica sometimes cooks salmon with a pesto crust on top.

1. Mash up some garlic with sea salt in a mortar.
2. I used to pestle in the pine nuts, but now I've got lazy I just put them in a machine. They can easily become too smooth, however, which is why in an ideal world I would do the job by hand, leaving the pine nuts slightly lumpy and coarse.
3. Next, add lots of torn up basil leaves.
4. Drizzle in olive oil and meanwhile pestle some more so that the whole thing becomes a dark green paste. It shouldn't be runny, but just malleable.
5. Add quite a lot of grated parmesan, which will tend to absorb some of the olive oil if you have overdone the drizzling. Quantities are a bit vague, but I would say there should be about as much loose grated parmesan by volume as there were pine nuts before they were mashed up.
6. Store in a Kilner jar in the fridge; the pesto can also be frozen without harming it.

50 g pine nuts  
 large bunch of basil  
 50 g parmesan  
 150 ml olive oil  
 2 garlic cloves



#### *Stephen's walnut pesto*

He does it with basil and walnuts which is less expensive and we aren't sure we agree with Flip-Flop re taste.

#### *Kale pesto*

A good handful of curly kale, parsley, parmesan to taste, walnuts and olive oil – all whuzzed.

#### *Clarissa L's coriander pesto*

Coriander, parsley, parmesan to taste, pine nuts and olive oil – all whuzzed. Not quite sure of the proportions; C measures things – but it worked out well when I did it by feel.

#### *Petica's fennel pesto*

Her words: 'the fennel pesto had 2 whole bulbs of fennel pulverised with a massive load of parmesan (well a whole packet of that gran padano stuff), 1 small packet of pine nuts and about 150 g of ground almonds (maybe more?), olive oil, s&p'.

#### *Richard and Adrienne's sort of pesto*

This is what they call these days a 'deconstructed pesto', i.e. the same ingredients to make a miraculously quick pasta sauce. A Stephen just-back-from-the-theatre alternative to 'an-omelette-and-a-glass-of' which is what we usually have.

1. Mix all of this in a bowl – but not whuzzed.
2. Throw over pasta twists.

handfuls of chopped rocket and parsley  
 lots of garlic  
 lemon zest and lemon juice  
 lots of parmesan  
 olive oil  
 toasted pine nuts  
 sundried tomatoes (optional)

### *Half-remembered sauerkraut*

This is the recipe that initiated this collection when I couldn't find the recipe. No source said anything about carrots (and Polish Stefan said not), but I had a feeling for them so this is my reconstructed version. Jane Grigson adds caraway seeds, but it's also nice without.

a jar of shop-bought sauerkraut  
soaked in changed cold water  
for about an hour  
carrots  
store cupboard dried fruits  
bacon bits  
caraway seeds (optional)

1. Chopped onions and very small squares of carrot sweated; add the sauerkraut plus some porcini, a few prunes and apricots (either would do or could be apple, and if it's a cooking apple some sugar might be needed), and some lardons.
2. Leave with the lid on for a bit, then slake with flour and add some white wine or Vermouth.
3. Cook very slowly for an hour or longer with some pre-cooked pork meat of any kind in with it.



Even better on the second day with another sort of pork added.

### *Sweet sour cabbage*

Another one I do by feel and can never quite remember whether it matters if the lid is on or off. The original comes from a calendar we had in the 60s and it turns out it doesn't matter. This was the week beginning 8 March and is, apparently, 'from Germany'. It's usually better the second time so I try to make it in the morning and reheat in the evening. Excellent with duck or sausages or just as part of a vegetarian spread.

1 lb white cabbage  
1 tbsp pork, duck or goose fat  
1 tbsp white sugar  
4 tbsp dry still cider and 1 tbsp  
cider vinegar  
2 tsp flour slaked in water  
s&p and caraway seeds

1. Shred the cabbage finely and wash well. Melt the fat, add sugar and watch carefully until the sugar turns brown, and then throw in the cabbage (sizzles fiercely).
2. Toss till all the shreds are shiny and almost burnt; and add seasoning, cider and vinegar.
3. Cook gently until cabbage is almost tender and then add slaked flour.
4. Cook for another 10 mins and throw in the caraway seeds.

### *Alice's kapusta*

Alice remembers annual gatherings of village women preparing cabbage for the winter, presumably making it into sauerkraut. A shredder was placed between two chairs with a sheet underneath and a woman stood on either side, rubbing the cabbage across the blade. The shredded mounds were loaded into a barrel and Joszi, wearing clean white stockings for the occasion, was lifted into the barrel to jump up and down, squeezing out liquid.

1 cabbage shredded  
3 skinned tomatoes  
2 Granny Smith apples  
tsp sugar

1. Sauté cabbage in a little vegetable oil, add two large tomatoes, two cut up apples, spoonful of sugar, a little salt
2. Add a little water, simmer until soft.

## *Vicki's cabbage gratin*

She got it from Nigel Slater's *Tender* (2009), but her version cooks the cabbage for a bit longer and she adds a spoon of mustard to the sauce and uses more cream and less milk. I loved it but Stephen thought it no more than the sum of its parts – which he sometimes says and I am not sure what that means. I'm putting it in because it was nicely crunchy and a combination I wouldn't have thought of. Worked marvellously with a Turkish cabbage – which is a white flat cabbage – and a combination of cheddar and feta instead of yarg.

1. Bring milk to the boil, then turn off heat and infuse with 2 cloves and a couple of bay leaves
2. Make a white sauce with the infused milk without. Whisk if necessary. Add s&p and nutmeg. Stir in cream and grated cheese.
3. Boil water in pan and cook chopped cabbage 6 mins (Nige says 2). Then arrange in dish and pour over sauce. Top with breadcrumbs. Bake roughly 45 mins till golden on top.

1 pt milk  
2 cloves & 1 bay leaf  
1 oz butter  
1 oz plain flour  
100 ml double cream  
4 oz Cornish yarg cheese  
handful breadcrumbs  
medium white cabbage  
a little nutmeg

## *Red cabbage*

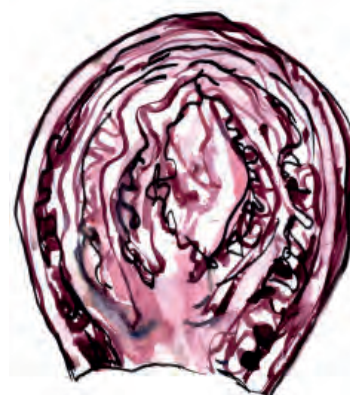
I don't really think you can go wrong with red cabbage as long as you add something sweet and something spicy to it. It's said to get better the longer it cooks, and even better next day, but I've cooked it fresh and crunchy with a mixture of red peppers and other red ingredients and it's a change from the long, slow version. My mother, who prided herself on her Christmas red cabbage, always held that you mustn't put any water in it, that was the secret: wine or vinegar instead. I like adding tea. Nige says juniper is a must – or a shake of gin. Steven remembers that every Christmas the arguments over the red cabbage in the tiny kitchen in Meadway Court would grow so heated that they threatened to destroy his anticipated pleasure in the Christmas meal. This is roughly what I think I do – though it's different every time. Vita does it as her contribution nowadays and her version will be different again.

1. Add to a large saucepan roughly in the order of the list.
2. Simmer on the lowest of low heat, covered, for quite a long time.

## *Caramelised fennel*

The original has you steam the fennel halves first, but I don't think it's necessary. It's nicest with cider, but one doesn't always want to open a bottle just for this, so anything else will do. Ottolenghi has a version with goats' cheese dotted on top and some crushed fennel seeds.

1. Foam the sugar and butter in a large frying pan.
2. Add the fennel cut side down.
3. Brown all over for 5 – 10 mins.
4. Add the liquids and cover the pan.
5. Turn the fennel over occasionally – cooking time will be about 20 mins covered and another 20 mins uncovered so that it caramelises all over.



finely shredded red cabbage  
tossed in duck fat  
2 shredded onions  
a couple of cut-up apples  
a dash each of: cinnamon,  
mixed spice, ginger, nutmeg,  
s&p, ground cloves, cayenne  
red wine  
raisins and apricots instead of  
brown sugar  
a slosh of tea and/or gin

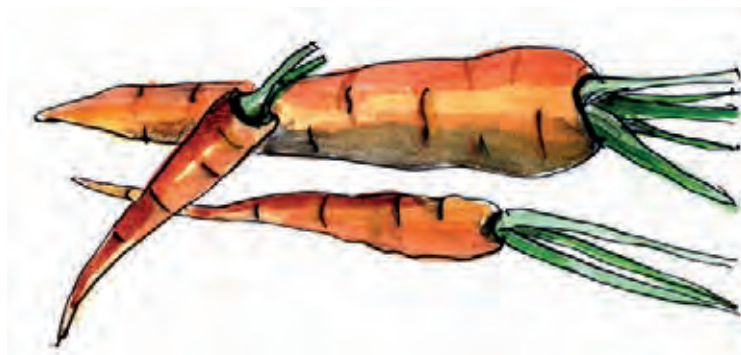
fennel heads cut in half  
(quarters if they are very big)  
knob of butter and shake of  
sugar  
cider and cider vinegar

## *Nada's carrots*

A favourite with Stephen. He also cooks courgettes in this way, sometimes with a tiny bit of water and 1 tbsp olive oil and all cooked tightly lidded and very slow. I am not sure the breadcrumbs add anything except calories, but this is the recipe.

carrots  
sugar  
stock  
butter  
breadcrumbs

1. Cook in butter, sugar and a little stock with the lid on, quite slowly.
2. Take the lid off and let the carrots absorb all the liquid.
3. Toss some breadcrumbs in a buttered frying pan and put on top of the carrots.



## *Dan's beans*

Dan and Peter *are* pinger cooks (unlike me): we have learned not to be late because when the bell pings the readiness of the main dish, everyone is ushered to table. This is precision cuisine and it works. Peter usually does the main, and Danièle prepares inventive vegetables learned from her Moroccan mother. I always like this one, which she does in a special way that I can't copy. Cooking is like handwriting; it has the stamp of every chef's character.

haricot beans  
tomatoes  
olive oil  
coriander  
paprika

1. Tip green beans into a saucepan. Add 3 fresh blanched and skinned tomatoes, diced.
2. Add a very generous handful of cut-up fresh coriander, paprika, salt, pepper, a bit of olive oil.
3. Put lid on saucepan, and let cook at medium heat, stirring once in a while, for about 30 mins.

## *Caramelised onions*

4 large red onions, finely  
chopped (half moon shape)  
4 tbsp olive oil  
4 tbsp balsamic vinegar  
2 tbsp coriander, finely chopped

1. Heat oil in a saucepan and sauté onions until soft and caramelised, about 20 to 25 mins.
2. Add the balsamic vinegar and coriander and cook for 5 more mins.
3. Take from heat and season.
4. Add a glass of red wine if you want to make it into a sauce.

# 10

## Leftovers

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Some leftovers are factored in from the start, like the ‘free’ dinner parties I sometimes have after an Art Workers’ Guild supper; free because there’s no cost or effort involved and a Friday evening dinner is there at the flick of a switch or two. Picnics, too, work on the principle that it’s OK to overdo it and have leftovers for a lunch or two – and the wherewithal of an impromptu invitation to a friend to hop over.

There is also a whiff of the pejorative in the term ‘leftover’ – as if no one wanted it before so why serve it again. You wouldn’t, for example, offer such food to a Hindu deity. Refrigeration and the prevalence of the restaurant doggy bag have altered that, and newspaper recipes make frugality into a virtue. What Clarissa used to say – when each of her family had an assigned day of the week on which they cooked – was that the trouble with that system was that no one took responsibility for leftovers. Next day’s cook would always start again and that meant good food piled up in the fridge until it had to be thrown away. For someone whose childhood is post-war, that goes against the grain.

When Stephen and I had our ‘week on/week off’ system (it lasted over a year) we could plan ahead. And I often do, especially if I am going to be out all day. Mrs Beeton in the *All About Cookery* 1923 edition has a note in the introduction that caught my eye because 90 years later nothing has changed:

The art of using up: the cry and need for economy is greater today than ever. A number of recipes for the utilisation of odds and ends have, therefore, been included showing how nourishing, tasty and daintily garnished dishes may be prepared from portions of fish, poultry, game and meat that have already made an appearance at table.

What stories have dining tables in every family home heard during the span of their oaken years?

*Making do*

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My childhood table was an antique round table across whose treacle-dark patina the parents had once angrily thrown oranges at one another. Oranges were a treat just after the war and my shock at what must have seemed to me then as frightening aggression is tempered by wonder at such cavalier

treatment of an exotic fruit. This table heard a lot of rows because my parents argued and shouted at each other a great deal. Like a phoenix, Lotte required conflagration to come alive. She needed to *see* feelings to believe in them. Heino, on the other hand, was a pacifist and would seek conciliation until, tried and tested to the limit, he would snap. They mellowed as they got older, and she could not have been more gentle and caring during the long months she nursed him through his final illness. I have come to admire that now that my own nursing skills have been tested.

The round table had probably also heard the familiar refrain, ‘that is for my lunch tomorrow’ whenever someone wanted to finish the last spoonful in a serving dish. Lotte was protective of her leftovers and guarded her ‘my lunch’ as if it were a precious piece of love that she could warm up in a saucepan.

When our parents died, he of cancer of the liver at the age of 75; she of lymphoma at the age of 92, Steven and I had to empty their house. Most things had been repaired. Saucepan handles, porcelain figurines, curtain rails and even wine glasses betrayed the make-do-and-mend era under which its occupants first moved there. Appalling yellow glues bulged between broken bits of china creating swerves in the elegant curve of a Bauhaus jug handle or swelling the contours of a blue and white plate. Electrician’s solder held the bowl of an English pewter spoon to its handle. Inept carpentry hacked into old wood – underneath, or at the back, where the bungling joinery wouldn’t show. And where ingenuity or access to the right materials completely failed, a broken object would be held together by winding a narrow black tape, that went under the name *passe-partout*, round the offending pieces. Rolls and rolls of it turned up in drawers. Heino was the *passe-partout* handy-man. Picture frames were constructed out of *passe-partout*. Knife handles were mended with it. So was electrical wiring – fraying brown two-ply flex with dangerous raw ends half hidden inside a black knot of tape. There were varicose veins of thick ungainly cords straggling across and under carpets.

All this had to be cleared, though perhaps the new occupants might have turned up something that had escaped our scrutiny. Maybe an etching nib with which, week upon week at afternoon art classes, Lotte scratched out the loneliness of her 20 years without Heino – etchings of monochromed solitude, of being an outsider in a foreign land, of black looming cross-hatched buildings; hundreds of them which we took home and had to find place for in our own warm family interiors.

Maybe the new owners found the infant hand from a 16th-century Madonna and Child made in Mechelen in Flanders, bought in mint condition, but which I inherited blemished and





without the child's reaching hand (now repaired by a fellow Brother). Steven didn't want it. What was a holy icon doing in his mother's home? I think Lotte saw herself in it; it was an icon of what might have been. The coy curve of the Madonna's gilt and lapis lazuli drapery and the sweetness of her face provided a mirror of the child-like innocence that Lotte felt was all her own. With her secret inner gaze, the medieval Madonna seemed not to notice that anything was lacking. But though the baby balanced comfortably enough on the young mother's hip, its lack of hand broke the rhythm of the composition. Maimed and unable, the child could not reach out to touch the mother nor feel her tender care.

Lotte had loved her house: 86 Oakwood Road in Hampstead Garden Suburb, which they bought in 1953 for £5000 (it last sold in 2012 for £955,000). She lavished care in her choice of the pictures and objects that adorned it. Many were idols of some sort – holy, ethnic, pagan, prehistoric, it made no difference to her so long as they counted as 'art'. So long as they showed taste, and cultivation, and discernment. But she wasn't a connoisseur. Several art objects heralded as rare, or old or valuable proved chipped, or fake or broken. The gilded Meissen plate was mass-produced; the Bechstein tuneless; and of course the 'Claude Lorrain' engraving (that's what they called it) was not by him; nor the 'Paolo Brill' by Brill.

It wasn't hard to parcel out what the Will called 'trinkets'. Who had been advising Lotte on her use of language here? An English word she never used herself and one which was neither directly translated from the German nor described a lifetime of collecting. Steven and I had dress-rehearsed the yours-mine scene so many times in childhood that when it came to it we knew instinctively when to stake a claim and when to hold back. We devised a system that was equitable and mutually caring. We would not repeat the pattern of the Family Feud; nor Granny's inequitable will (all the money to the beloved son; house and contents to Käte; nothing to Lotte because she allegedly didn't need it). 'What is the one thing in the house you'd most like to have?' 'No, you say first.' 'No you.' 'You're older than me.' 'You're the girl.' 'Just say, we don't have to decide now.' 'And your second choice?' 'Well, your second choice is my first.' It worked very well.

There was plenty for a totter who appeared from nowhere and burrowed deeply into the three skips that came one after another and gaped outside the house. He drove up in his estate car and delved, his young tattooed chest embracing the sunshine and the scent of the past. Pushing aside other people's hedge clippings, tipped on at dead of night, he ferreted under mildewed *New Yorkers* and copies of *Die Schönste*, kicked away protruding horsehair, bedsprings, box upon box of used Christmas wrapping paper and deposited a



triumphant car-boot-sale's-worth on the pavement – Heino's pre-war riding boots, a fifties cabinet radio of astounding ugliness, plastic poppet beads in a glass Kilner jar, mosaic tiles from Ravenna, Festival of Britain fire irons, a trunk with Cunard and Hamburg-America Shipping Line labels stuck on it, a dozen art-school drawing-boards, a jumble of wooden shoe-trees.

I think I flapped up and down the garden path saying: 'We shouldn't be doing this. We shouldn't be throwing these things out'. I thought we should take such bits of history to one of those film accessory warehouses. But Steven thought there was just too much to sort through and simply nowhere to put it. Besides, all those suitcases and shoe-trees – they may have been sculptural, historical and with interesting graphics, but Auschwitz jumped to mind. We let it all go.

I did keep one ancient envelope from an 'Apotheke am Adolf-Hitler-Platz 6, Charlottenburg' because its black-lined Jungendstil typography gives off the sound and aroma of another era. I don't know what healing powders had been inside. It's a reminder of the healing my own generation has needed in growing up with grieving kin.

The mending and make-do ethic may be alien to present generations, but I find it hard to throw food away. There's almost always something inventive you can do with leftovers.

## Using up

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Some 'using up' is obvious – the Sunday roast becoming cottage or shepherd's pie on Monday; a curry on Tuesday; bubble-and-squeak on Wednesday – and maybe it's time for a change by then. It should be noted that bubble-and-squeak at its best is a superior dish, frying, mashing and crunching up the remains of Sunday lunch.

A few things I regularly do are:

*day 1:* roast chicken  
*day 2:* chicken risotto, chicken and ham pie, soup stock, arancini

*day 1:* spag bol (Stephen's usually)  
*day 2:* lasagne

*day 1:* poached salmon or other  
*day 2:* fish cakes

*day 1:* venison stew  
*day 2:* game pâté

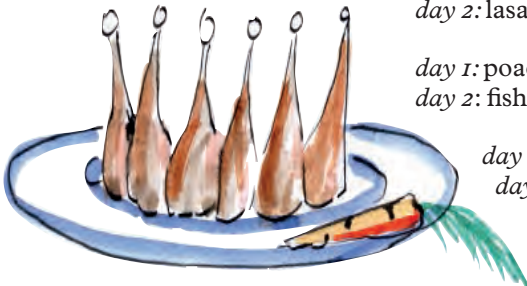
*day 1:* any stew  
*day 2:* goulash soup

*day 1:* the Christmas bird  
*day 2:* goose pies, pâtés, soups and bubble-and-squeak

*day 1:* lamb roast  
*day 2:* moussaka, shepherd's pie, bubble-and-squeak

*day 1:* vegetables  
*day 2:* frittata, soup, savoury scones, fougasses

*day 1 & 2:* chocolate cake  
*day 3:* chocolate mousse



## *Rainy days*

The rainy-day effect is tipping a leftover stew into a plastic box and putting it into the freezer for another time. Or making two pies or tarts and freezing one. The theory is that you might suddenly have surprise guests, or not feel like cooking, or come home from the theatre and just want to warm something up quickly.

Or break your foot – which happened to me in 2013 – and put a damper on doing anything at all in the kitchen. I did some research into ready-meals at that time and discovered that all the major supermarkets have quite good ranges and there are also online and high street venues specialising in gourmet brands. Some of these are more expensive than cooking yourself, but if you shop around and look at offers they can be very reasonable – sometimes cheaper. All I can say is that you can find reheatable packets that are really quite good, but they are never as fresh nor as good quality as what you make yourself. And, essentially, you don't know what's in them. Cheapest is to make bigger quantities of a dish and then freeze your own individual packs to reheat when you're injured or feeling lazy. We don't cook in a microwave.

For entertaining, though, I invariably feel I am not feeding my guests properly if I pull something out of the freezer; that I haven't bothered for them; that it doesn't taste quite as good the second time. I also find that the freezer is hungry for all these delicacies and gobbles them up possessively in case there's another, better occasion for their use.

Things that do work well in the freezer are: soup stocks; pastry; pâté; egg whites; tomato essence; frozen peas and the like. Also nut cakes made with egg whites that unfreeze very quickly if someone is suddenly coming to tea.

## *Fried potatoes*

Stephen says you can never make too much potato because he particularly likes them fried next day. This is true up to a point. For one thing, you have to get the quantities right so there is enough for the next day. And secondly, they aren't as cheap as they once were and the fancy varieties (which I rather like) are sold in little bags and turn out quite pricey.

## *Stew*

I think this would traditionally have been always cooking by the fire and new ingredients thrown in as it got eaten so there would always be a homeopathic residue of the original first stew. Nowadays one would just cook up a casserole and heat it up again next day with something new added. Mr Gottlieb gets suspicious after three days so I would probably stop there and then make anything left over into a rich soup.

## *Cottage or shepherd's pie*

Winter comfort. Any minced-up leftover meat (beef for cottage; lamb for shepherd's), with a bit of sauce, onion, carrot, and a nice forked topping of mash. I like a mix of potatoes and parsnip.



## *Pithivier savoyarde*

Wrap up leftover dauphinoise (if there ever are any leftovers) in a ham blanket, sprinkle with gruyère. Michel Roux makes a béchamel sauce, cooled down, and then layers it with ham slices. See page 101 for details of the pithivier.

## *Corned beef hash*

Nursery fare – I did it when the children were little but not since. Left-over mash with corned beef forked into it and fried like bubble and squeak. Quite nice.

## *Risotto wedges*

*The Leith Bible* adds Brie to a risotto (any kind), lets it get cold and then forms it into a flat round cake and leaves it overnight. Then cut into wedges, brush with egg and breadcrumbs and fry the wedges on both sides in hot oil.

Or make into pancakes.

Or arancini (little oranges or stuffed rice balls).

Risotto can also be made into perdeli pilaf (page 118) next day.

## *Koftit – chicken balls*

A good use of chicken leftovers and a nice change from the usual risotto, which is what I generally think of. I recycled a partridge that had been a bit dry first time round like this and it came out a treat.

½ lb cooked chicken  
¼ lb white breadcrumbs  
2 oz pistachios  
oil and lemon and s&p

1. Mince the chicken.
2. Soak the bread (without crusts) in water, squeeze dry and crumble.
3. Mix everything and knead vigorously.
4. Shape and roll into small balls.

That's it for a cold lunch or picnic – if you want them for a hot supper, coat in flour and fry them or poach in chicken broth or in a rich tomato sauce.

## *Chocolate cake mousse*

It sounds a bit lazy but it works. Quantities according to how big the cake slice is, but say it is a quarter of a standard cake.

8 oz slice of cake  
½ carton double cream  
4 egg whites  
mashed blackberries would add something

1. Whuzz up the leftover cake, icing and all. Add a bit of cream to make it a spreading texture.
2. Beat the egg whites to stiff peaks and fold into choco mix.
3. Put in a bowl or individual dishes.

I try and give old bread to the birds, or let it go hardish in the oven and then whuzz it into breadcrumbs.

Strictly speaking all the bread-and-butter puddings, and summer pudding (pages 181 and 193) should go in here, but I think they fit best where they are.

Sauces are in here too, on the theory that they paper over the cracks of a second-served dish, but that denigrates the role of a superb sauce. Still, for those of us who have odd bits of cheese, vegetables and meat needing using, there's nothing like a spicy cheese sauce to bind it all together. Or a nice gravy to reheat some slices of beef.

### *Treacle tart*

This is a nursery dish, though jolly nice and I wouldn't be ashamed to serve it as a finale to a dinner party. The proportions here are 1 part breadcrumbs to 4 parts syrup, but Nigel has 1 part breadcrumbs to 2½ parts syrup and no eggs. Both work in a different way. I like mine quite lemony. Jojo also made this a lot when Stephen was young.

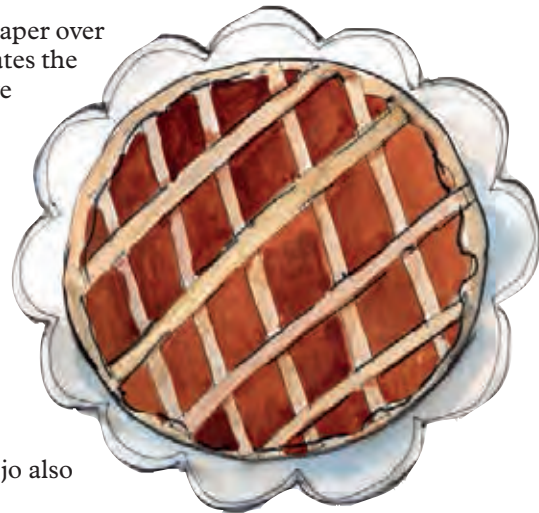
1. Mix together the golden syrup (and optional treacle) with the lemon zest and juice.
2. Beat the eggs in a bowl and add to the treacle mixture.
3. Stir in the breadcrumbs and pour the mixture into the prepared tart case.
4. Bake for 20-25 mins on medium until the crust and filling are golden brown and firm to the touch.

Serve warm with crème fraîche or ice-cream.

### *Clarissa's famous bread sauce*

This just has to be passed down to generations of the family to go with any Christmas bird. Every Christmas she makes more than last time and there are still complaints that it isn't enough. A favourite with Sam and Emily in particular, who would make late-night forays into the Catherington cellar for a cold roast potato (garrison quantities also required) lashed with bread sauce. Wise to double the quantities given here.

1. Put onion in a saucepan of milk with the bayleaf and bring to the boil.
2. Turn off and leave for half an hour to infuse.
3. Add breadcrumbs and butter.
4. Cook on very low heat for 15-20 mins.
5. Remove onion and bayleaf; season and stir in some cream before serving.



shortcrust pastry case  
500 g golden syrup  
125 g fresh breadcrumbs  
1 lemon  
2 eggs  
*optional:* 1 tbs black treacle for a darker set; a twist of chopped ginger for punch; a slosh of double cream for luxury



1 large onion stuck with cloves  
1 pt milk  
a bayleaf  
3-4 oz one-day-old white breadcrumbs  
2 oz butter  
cream  
nutmeg and seasoning

## *Aïoli two-ways*

This keeps in a jam-jar and it is delicious for eggs Benedict or most fish dishes.

garlic cloves  
2 egg yolks  
juice 1 lemon  
200 ml olive oil  
1 tsp Dijon mustard

1. Crush garlic cloves and transfer them to a mortar. Add a tsp salt and pound the mixture to a pulp, adding enough salt to make a thick paste.
2. Thin out with lemon juice and mustard, in roughly equal quantities.
3. Add olive oil a few drops at a time and then in a thin stream. (One egg yolk will easily absorb 120 ml of oil, a little less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  pt but I stop at about 100 ml per yolk.) If the mixture gets too thick to beat, add a few drops of lemon juice. You should end up with something stiff enough to form blunt peaks. (Replacing half the olive oil with sunflower oil makes a milder aïoli.)

1 large quince, peeled and chunked  
2 garlic cloves  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp sea salt  
mild olive oil  
lemon juice  
white wine vinegar  
1 tbsp runny honey

## *Quince aïoli*

1. Cook the quince chunks in water (might take  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour until they are soft).
2. Crush the garlic and salt and add quince crushing all to a purée.
3. Drip in the oil as for making a mayonnaise.
4. Add the vinegar, squeeze of lemon and honey to taste.

## *Béarnaise sauce*

2 tbsp tarragon (or white wine) vinegar  
2 tbsp water  
1 shallot, finely chopped  
6 black peppercorns  
2 tbsp chopped fresh tarragon + stalks  
2 egg yolks  
5 oz butter  
s&p

1. Put the vinegar, water, shallot, peppercorns and tarragon stalks into a small saucepan over a medium heat and simmer until you have half a tbsp of liquid remaining. Strain the liquid into a bowl and set aside.
2. Beat the egg yolks and tarragon vinegar reduction until light and frothy.
3. Melt the butter and slowly add to the yolk mix, 1 tbsp at a time, until the sauce is thick and smooth. Be careful not to over-beat as it may separate.
4. Stir in the chopped tarragon and season.

## *Hollandaise sauce*

4 oz butter, cut into pieces  
3 tbsp white wine vinegar  
1 small shallot, peeled and very finely chopped  
6 black peppercorns  
1 bay leaf  
2 egg yolks  
pinch caster sugar  
lemon juice  
s&p

1. Melt the butter slowly and then pour into a jug.
2. Put the vinegar, shallot, peppercorns and bay leaf in a small saucepan over a high heat and bring to the boil. Cook for 1-2 mins, or until reduced to 1 tbsp of liquid. Remove from the heat.
3. Put the egg yolks in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering water. Whisk with the salt and sugar until pale. Sieve the vinegar mixture onto the yolks and continue whisking until well combined. Slowly add the butter in a steady stream, whisking constantly until the sauce is smooth, thick and shiny.
4. Add lemon juice to taste.

If it curdles (splits) try dropping in an ice cube. If that doesn't work, start again with another egg yolk, a knob of warmed butter in a new bain marie and as that thickens, slowly add the previous mixture.

# 11

## Picnics

**M**y theory of picnics is that there should always be too much – like the royal feasts that had an array of sweet and savoury dishes laid out at once so the diners could pick a little of whatever took their fancy. Picnics are nicest as a cornucopia spread out on a red-checkered cloth with contributions from everyone present. A casual rug on the grass is easiest, but I do like a table and chairs nowadays. There should be one or two ‘central’ dishes and several salads (like leaf tea: one spoon per person and one for the pot). Then a transportable dessert (not always so easy), fresh fruit and chocolate.



At Glyndebourne (standing tickets having gone up from £10 to £30 since the time we went to the First Night of the re-opening in 1994) we usually have a starter with bubbles before the opera and the rest in the long interval. The starter can be any one of the dishes in this collection, or just quail’s eggs, vegetable crisps and smoked salmon. If we go by train, some more bubbles with a second dessert makes the journey home more fun.

Finding the ideal picnic spot on other occasions is always difficult – as our friend Peter Howard remarked recently, ‘Even when you have planned where to go, it can take an hour to find the ideal spot’ (Peter served us gazpacho from a thermos – a stylish idea and done with panache as we drove to the picnic in his Bristol motorcar). It’s easier to find picnic spots in France, which is bigger and it’s easier there to picnic by water, which is one of my ideal requisites. And easier to buy ready-made tartes, pâtés, fresh bread and patisserie.

Some picnics remain in the memory, not for the food but for something else. There was the time in the quiet shade well out of Rome along the Via Appia with Philip (aka Flip-Flop) and all our children when a motorbikist stopped and offered us a huge truffle for what I remember as being the equivalent of £40. Certainly worth it, but we weren’t in truffle-buying mode and though Philip had a flat in Rome and we could easily have found a way of using it, we declined. I think both families vaguely regretted it afterwards.



So picnics! The Great Outdoors! Where does that fit in with my autobiographical musings? Jane the walker; Jane the mountain-eer; Jane the sports diva – I don't think so. Skinny-dipping in refreshing lakes and rivers I can do, but anything else sportif, forget it. I have tried, here and there, at various points in my life to drum up some impetus to exercise, but I just hate the whole thing and am bored by it. That thrill of the endorphin rush so many people talk about – I'm just dysendorphic; I don't experience it. All that climbing up and down hills, what's it *for*? The reward is meant to be the view, but landscapes do very little for me and mountains positively oppress me. When I walk, I keep my eyes firmly on the ground because if I can't see where I am treading, I fear I will fall over. Clarissa thinks I have a missing gene and perhaps I have. A knapsack, a sandwich and a Kendal mintcake on a rainy hillside is not my idea of fun.

I do love the sea though; the sea in all its moods. Rivers, lakes too – oily black at night, or sun-gilded by day. I can watch water move for hours – it cleanses the mind.

Fortunately I have not passed the anti-heartiness gene down to the rest of the family. Getting sodden in (or putting up) a tent is something all three young couples seem to do with eagerness and hilarity. Vita perhaps has received a brushing of my tar because her camping honeymoon in Africa had something of style about it, with a tent on top of the jeep and folding tables and chairs for their (sometimes) frugal picnics in back-of-beyond places. I think she is the only one who hasn't been on a camping walking trek with her dad, but she has crossed the Himalayas taking herself off solo, hitching up with unknown companions for safety. Pretty brave and adventurous! And she camps now at music festivals.

I've nothing against baked beans cooked in their tin over a camping gaz, but my deep-rooted treadmill phobia about the lugging and the walking goes back a long way. When I was six we lived in Meadway Court (No.32), which had a large grassy courtyard, and I would frequently be pushed out for fresh air. Once, when the parentals were off on a Sunday walk, I stoutly refused to go with them, solving the fresh air problem by hauling my table and chair, coloured pencils and notebook down into the courtyard where I proceeded to write my first novel, which was called *Judy*. Like this volume, I illustrated it myself: Judy wore a pink dress.

Later came school with its team-spirit-inducing competitive sports days – I am proud to announce that I came fourth with a companion in the three-legged race once, but at the back in the egg-and-spoon, and I once surprised everyone with a spectacular long jump. Wednesday afternoons at secondary school offered the indignity of playing hockey in baggy



navy-blue knickers, with a pocket for your hanky – a handy accessory in my case to wipe away the tears of shame at my sheer inability to hit a ball with a stick and bafflement at the pointlessness of it anyway. Worse, the knickers exposed my tree-trunk legs, blue and blotchy from poor circulation. There must have been others who hated it too, but one didn't dare to say so as popular girls were good at sport; the comics *Girl* and *School Friend* idealised such girls.

My brother got the sports gene, along with the shapely legs, and he and my mother would participate in mixed-doubles matches at the annual tournament held on the tennis courts beside the air-raid shelters behind Meadway Court (with a green clapboarded pavilion for tea?) – none of it there now. He did rather well in the Wimbledon Junior Championships one year. Because of that, tennis was my least worst sport, and I am still addicted to watching Wimbledon every year. But even tennis led to an ultimate humiliation that was bound up in my mind with the impossibility of ever being truly English. It was one of those country house 'anyone for tennis' moments. I partnered Tristram Cary (grandson of Joyce Cary). There was a posse of young residents in the large Hertfordshire house and I suppose some sort of garb and an old wooden racquet with gut strings were found for me. But could I hit one single ball? No! Routed and shamefaced, I have never touched a tennis racquet since.

Barn-dancing is the one physical activity I actually enjoy: nice jolly music, a caller telling you what to do, a swing of different partners, and I 'get' it. Strip the willow, do-si-do, ladies' chain, grapevine – I can do the steps. Try me on a waltz, and I'm falling over my feet.

I'll stick with picnics.

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## Starting off

### Choosing the hamper

Nothing beats a willow hamper for style and aesthetic pleasure, and you can't have too many baskets to give flexibility to fit a mood or occasion: square, round, compartmented. Choosing the one for the occasion will depend on what is going into it, which way up it is carried and how it is to be transported. Lightweight rucksacks fitted with plastic tableware are ... well, lightweight. If distance is involved, one has to go for compromise. Ditto, if it is a real summer with real heat and then cool-boxes with ice-packs are handy. But plastic carrier bags? For me that is not a picnic. I do, however, have a folder in which I am collecting ideas for folded cardboard cartons and Hampers – the idea being that you can be stylish and throw away your hamper en route (responsibly), so you aren't hampered with it. I was going to include ideas and templates in this volume, but it will have to be for another occasion.



## *Cucumber cups with vodka gazpacho*

Emily did this in her Catford flat one August in 2004 for an amazing meal with every course a wow in itself. I don't know what recipe she used, but I found this at [greatbritishchefs.com](http://greatbritishchefs.com). She hollowed out cucumber shot 'glasses' to hold the liquid and made cucumber spoons as well, but this one uses glasses. It's a bit advanced for a travelling picnic, but perfect for a garden one.

1 cucumber, roughly chopped  
2 red peppers, roughly chopped  
3 tomatoes, roughly chopped  
2 punnets of cherry tomatoes  
2 garlic cloves, roughly chopped  
50 ml of vodka  
50 ml of water  
pinch of saffron  
2 drops of Tabasco  
1 pinch of caster sugar  
50ml of white wine vinegar  
dash of salt  
dash of Worcester sauce

1. Pulse all the vegetables to a pulp. Add all the remaining ingredients and whuzz again.
2. Place the pulp into jelly bag and leave overnight; then pour into a jug.
3. Fill each shot glass by a 1/3 with water and freeze – this will keep the gazpacho cool once served and add a frosted finish to the glass.
4. Pour some of the liquid on top of the ice in each of the shot glasses.

## *Gazpacho*

I had a phase of doing one of these every dinner party and took the white to Glyndebourne once. The vichyssoise on page 38 is also good for picnics.

*red*  
1 kg peeled tomatoes  
a red and green pepper  
1 cucumber  
*white*  
140 g blanched almonds  
*both*  
2 garlic cloves  
170 g good white bread, stale  
and trimmed of its crust  
s&p  
about 220 ml extra-virgin olive  
oil  
3-4 tbsp sherry vinegar  
*garnish for the red*  
finely-chopped extra peppers  
pitted black olives, sliced  
cubes of Spanish ham  
chopped egg  
*garnish for the white*  
green grapes or melon or apple

1. Soak the bread in just enough cold water to cover for around 10 mins.
2. Put the garlic and either the red or the white ingredients in a food processor and blend. Add the bread, drained of the water, and some salt, and let the blades run until it is smooth. Gradually trickle in the oil through the feed tube until the soup is the consistency of cream, then add the vinegar. Add a little more salt or vinegar to taste.
3. For a very fine texture, press through a sieve into a container, cover and refrigerate for a couple of hours.
4. Serve with little containers of garnish to hand round separately (see the suggestions left). Little Japanese lacquer-ware is pretty and light-weight for a picnic – or bowls if at home.

## *Özge's boiled egg meze*

This recipe is named after Özge Irez who taught it to Anna in Turkey, and this is how she wrote it down. This can be a starter or part of a meze-style lunch, and so simple to make. It's the fried sage that really 'makes' it for me. Transporting boiled eggs always seems fraught with the smell of sulphur problem: internet sources say if you use fresh eggs and don't overcook them, then this doesn't happen. Or add a few tsp of white distilled vinegar to the cooking water.

1. Carefully add eggs to boiling water and cook for 7-8 mins depending on size of eggs.

2. Frighten in cold water. (This helps prevent the yolks going grey and sulphurous.) Tap the eggs on their bottoms to let water in under the shell – this loosens the membrane and makes them easier to peel.
3. Peel, halve lengthways and sprinkle a little coarse salt over the them and pack in a plastic box.
4. Fry the sage leaves until crispy, but not brown. Remove the pan from the heat and while the oil is still very warm (but not super hot), swirl in some chilli flakes and wrap in clingfilm.
5. At the picnic venue, arrange the eggs on a plate and spoon over some yoghurt. Add enough so that each egg gets some, but not so much as to obscure all the beautiful orange yolks.
6. Drizzle the oil over the eggs and garnish with the sage leaves.

### *Corina's curried eggs*

We first had these at Corina's house in Pepys Road and they went in a flash. Terrifically 'more-ish' but I always forget about them. Could be nice with quail's eggs but I think they would be a fiddle to make and would vanish in seconds.

1. All you do is halve the eggs longwise, scoop out the yolk, mush it up with some butter and curry powder to taste and put the yolks back into the eggs again.
2. Garnish with chives.

### *Quail's eggs*

We always had these at the Magdalen College dinners when I was a Trustee of the Krazsna-Krausz Foundation (a prize for books about film and photography) and Tony Smith was President of the college. He always had a little treat for us as well – a valuable Iznik tile on display in the middle of the table; a visit to the library capsule where the very earliest vellum books were kept in a controlled temperature bubble; an organ recital in the chapel; a walk in the deer park; a tour of Oscar Wilde's rooms; drinks in his garden. I think I went to about eight of these wonderful occasions and our names are in the illustrious visitors' book alongside some very great and good. His were peeled and ready-to-eat, but I serve them in their shells just because they are so pretty – and surprising numbers of people get introduced to them at our house.

1. Serve hard-boiled in their shells with celery salt.

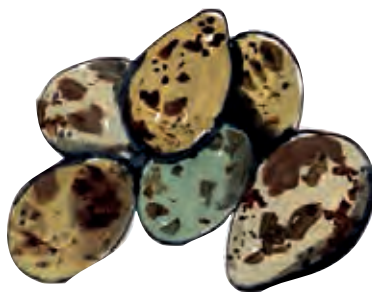
### *Chopped liver*

So simple, I'd forgotten to put this in until Susanna asked me how to make it. She complained (nicely) afterwards that her guest had pronounced, 'Cor! this doesn't look very appetising!' causing some merriment amongst the company. She had omitted step 3 (overleaf) thinking it was rich enough without more butter, but forgetting that it would add visual enticement.

1 egg per person, kept at room temperature  
 coarse sea salt  
 plain Greek yoghurt  
 good extra virgin olive oil  
 sage leaves  
 medium hot bright red chilli flakes, preferably Turkish maraş pepper



hard-boiled eggs (see Özge comment above)  
 curry powder



onions  
 chicken liver  
 butter  
 3 hardboiled eggs  
 dash of Madeira or port or  
 brandy

1. Cook the onions first and then the liver while the eggs are boiling. Splash of alcohol on top when soft.
2. Mash or chop roughly and squash into a pâté dish or individual pots.
3. Pour melted butter on top and decorate with a bayleaf and some juniper berries or pink peppercorns.

*Marion's vegetarian chopped liver*

As above but with a packet of pecans and a tin of green beans instead of the chicken liver, no alcohol and no need for step 3.

## Terrines

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### *Pheasant rillettes*

This can be adapted for duck or partridge. Making rillettes is basically braising meat in plenty of fat until it falls off the bone, then shredding the meat and mixing with just enough of the fat for it to become spreadable. This recipe is not designed for keeping though, so store in the fridge and use within a few days. One pheasant is enough to serve 10. Best buy them plucked from the butcher, but when I was doing my MA, a fellow student – who ran a shoot – would occasionally give me a brace, unplucked. Poor old Stephen had to deal with them – which brings home what being a carnivore means.

1 pheasant  
 400-600 g duck or goose fat  
 1 red onion, sliced  
 3 cloves of garlic, sliced  
 10 juniper berries  
 2 tbsp dried thyme  
 2 bay leaves  
 freshly ground black pepper  
 200 ml apple juice  
 3 tbsp apple vinegar  
 salt

1. Use a small casserole pot just big enough to hold the pheasant. Brown it over high heat and add the onions and garlic.
2. Add the spices, apple juice, vinegar, salt and enough fat to nearly submerge the bird. Let it simmer gently over a low heat until the meat is falling-off-the-bone-tender, around 2½ hours. Keep the lid on initially to help the pheasant cook, then remove it towards the end to let excess water evaporate. Turn the bird over occasionally so that it cooks evenly.
3. Remove the pheasant and let cool. Pick the meat off the bones and take care to discard all pieces of bone, tendon and skin etc. Shred the meat and mix in what is left of the onions and a little of the cooking fat to make a coarse, spreadable paste.
4. Add s&p and vinegar to taste and pack it into a clean jar. Pour over a little extra of the cooking fat to cover the surface and let solidify in the fridge for a few hours before serving.

### *Striped vegetable terrine*

*any quantity of:*  
 aubergines  
 courgettes  
 long red peppers  
 sundried tomatoes  
 artichoke hearts  
 rocket  
 pesto  
 ricotta, mixed with garlic  
 parmesan

1. Slice the vegetables longwise, brush with olive oil and roast till ready. Nicest to peel the peppers.
2. Put clingfilm into a loaf-shaped terrine.
3. Layer the vegetables in stripes of colour, putting the mixed cheeses in the middle, mixing the ricotta with garlic to make it into a kind of mortar to bind the hearts.
4. Weight it down overnight and turn out for the picnic.
5. Best, if time, to freeze it and slice while still a bit solid (easier to do).

## *Pork-liver-veal terrine*

There are two recipes from which I did our wedding breakfast terrines in 1970 – nowadays I just make it up as I go along. I still have the list of all the things I cooked for our wedding (page 209). I made several pâtés, some just chicken liver, and the serving girls, who were sub-contracted from the Royal Institution of Great Britain (my father's virtual club), cut them into such narrow slices that there was loads left over and we had to throw some of it away. From *Summer Cooking* by Elizabeth David (1965) most of which is now lost as it fell apart. It was a 4/6 paperback when I bought it.

1. Mince the meats and mix with everything else to taste (fry a tiny bit to test).
2. Leave the mixture to stand for an hour for the flavours to blend.
3. Line the terrine with bacon (some for the top) and pack the mixture in very tightly and domed a bit at the top as it will shrink.
4. Cook in a bain marie in lowish oven, covered, and cook for an hour. Bit longer uncovered.
5. Let it cool completely before unmoulding. At its best after 2-3 days.

## *Cauliflower terrine*

1. Cook florets, drain and mash.
2. Chop up 2 rashers and fry with the onion. Put the other 2 rashers along the base of a greased loaf tin. Mix, season and taste all the rest and spoon into tin.
3. Cover with parchment and cook for about an hour in a medium oven.
4. Wait a bit and then unmould to cut in slices.
5. Nice hot but more intriguing when cold.

1 lb pig's liver and 6 oz belly of pork  
or  
1 lb each of fat pork and lean veal  
streaky bacon to line the terrine  
garlic, pepper corns, white wine and brandy (whisky, sherry, vermouth or rum)  
no herbs mentioned but I'd be inclined to add juniper berries and thyme

1 cauliflower  
1 onion  
4 rashers bacon, chopped  
3 oz breadcrumbs  
¼ pt sour cream and 2 eggs  
nutmeg, salt, parsley

## *Pastry or bread-based*

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### *Strudels*

From *Anton Mosimann, Naturally!* (1991), and he uses strudel pastry (filo will do). I have done all his fillings several times:

#### *savoury*

potato, onion, garlic and leek with chives and nutmeg  
spinach, carrots, leeks, onions, hard-boiled eggs, pine nuts and fontina cheese

#### *sweet*

a nice sweetish version uses prunes and quark  
and in *Jerusalem* there's one with ricotta, goats' cheese and crushed pistachios topped with syrup (called mutabbaq)

1. Cook fillings first, bind with an egg, seasoning.
2. Roll up in the pastry (brushed with egg or with melted butter).
3. Bake for about 40 mins.



puff pastry  
pesto  
large plum tomatoes, 6-8  
basil  
parmesan

### *Walnut tartlets*

1. Bake blind some little pastry patty pans.
2. Fill with: curd cheese, cream, egg, cayenne, chopped walnuts and chopped spring onions.
3. Bake briefly.

Nice hot as well as cold for picnics.

### *Stephen's tomato pesto tart*

I don't recall where he got this from (could be *The Evening Standard*), but I know he did it first and I've done it several times since. Home-made pesto is much, much better than bought (see page 121).

puff pastry  
pesto  
about 8 large tomatoes

1. Roll out the pastry to a rectangle to fit a large baking tray and fold the edges over all round a little.
2. Spread generously with pesto all over.
3. Rest it in the fridge while you blanch and peel the tomatoes (prick them and pour boiling water over and peel when cool enough).
4. Slice the tomatoes and arrange in lines (overlapping if thin enough) along the pastry (it will use up quite a lot of tomatoes).
5. Dot with grated parmesan and bake for about half an hour.
6. When cool, slice into squares.

Good hot as well.



### *Sweet potato and goats' cheese tartlets*

This is the same principle as the one above and can be done like that, but for some reason I like doing this one in individual squares.

puff pastry  
egg  
sweet potatoes  
goats' cheese  
black sesame or other  
black seeds (for colour) or  
toasted cumin seeds for taste  
(sparingly)

1. First cook the sweet potatoes in the oven, unpeeled.
2. Cut the rolled-out pastry into squares and then score in inner square about 1 cm from the edge.
3. Brush with egg and crumble a generous amount of goats' cheese in the centre of each.
4. Slice the sweet potatoes and arranged on the inner square (3-4 slices).
5. Top with seeds and seasoning.
6. Bake for half an hour or until the pastry puffs up around the filling.

### *Petica's red pepper tart*

It's from Delia's *How to Cook Book Three* (2001), and I had it at Petica's for lunch when I went to see baby Billy at five months old. The original has a parmesan and thyme flavoured pastry, but she used bought and so would I. One could do this striped with yellow peppers as well. Worked well as mini tartlets with filo pastry for the Tomato Symphony (page 48).

1. Bake a blind pastry case.
2. Skin the tomatoes and peppers by blanching them (why not bake

them whole with the rest, though).

- Put deseeded peppers and tomato halves in a bowl and add a tbsp of the oil, the garlic and some seasoning (going easy on the salt because of the anchovies). Give it all a good mix, then spread everything out on one of the baking trays and roast in the top part of the oven for about 50 mins.
- Cool the peppers and tomatoes and whuzz with the anchovy fillets and all their oil.
- Add the tomato purée and thyme and blend until everything is reduced to a thick, smooth mixture.
- Whisk the eggs and yolks, along with the pimentón, then stir in the pepper-and-tomato mixture and pour into the pastry case.
- Bake for 35 mins or so. Serve warm or cold.

shortcrust pastry  
4 medium red peppers  
12 oz ripe, red tomatoes  
2 tbsps olive oil  
1 large clove garlic, chopped  
2 oz anchovy fillets in oil  
1 level tbsp tomato purée  
1 tsp finely chopped fresh thyme  
2 large eggs  
2 large egg yolks  
1 tsp sweet, mild pimentón (smoked paprika)  
s&p

### *Concentric circles tart*

I found this on an internet bloggers' magazine called 'What Liberty Ate' and 'pinterested' it. The original doesn't have anything to bind it, which sort of works, but it was better with eggs and cream to make it more solid. I served this at a little ladies' lunch to introduce Margaret, Bo and Jen to each other (as fellow Muswell Hill intelligensiae) and they were totally wowed by it, and the whole menu, but nothing came of connecting them.

- Peel the vegetables longwise with a potato peeler.
- Start with carrot and roll up in a spiral.
- Continue circling round with strips of courgettes; then carrot again – and so on.
- When large enough, transfer to the pastry case and carry on until it is packed full.
- Gently pour over an egg and cream mix to soak into the cracks.
- Sprinkle with s&p and rosemary and bake for ½ hour or more.

- or same idea with parsnip strips wrapped round baby tomatoes
- or strips of sweet and ordinary potato (this one I did in a square dish with the strips arranged like a chessboard)

a baked-blind pastry case  
about 4 carrots  
2-3 courgettes  
2 egg yolks, 1 whole egg and cream

Prue Leith steams ribbons like this for 5 mins and then tosses them in lemon juice and butter as side dish or garnish.

### *Deep courgette tarte*

This was in a BBC *Olive* magazine that I took for a while (early 2000s). This is the only recipe I kept from that time.

- Slice the courgettes and cook in a knob of butter in a large frying pan for about 10 mins.
- Mix the eggs and double cream and season.
- Slice the goats' cheese logs.
- Fill the pastry case with layers of goats' cheese, egg mix and courgettes, finishing with courgettes and goats' cheese.
- Bake for 50 mins at 190°C fan then leave to cool in the tin before slicing.

a deep pastry case, baked blind  
4 large courgettes, sliced across  
butter  
6 eggs  
100 ml double cream  
2 x 125 g logs goats' cheese – or feta is a good alternative



6 oz cheese  
 4 eggs – separated  
 ¼ pt cream, spoon warm water  
 4 tbsp mayo  
 2 oz breadcrumbs  
 s&p, cayenne  
 crisp lettuce and any other salad  
 leaves

## Gruyère roulade

1. Line a Swiss roll tin with parchment and sprinkle with parmesan.
2. Mix egg yolks with other ingredients – the warm water to soften the mixture.
3. Whisk the egg whites with a pinch of salt.
4. Fold in and pour into tin.
5. Bake 10-15 mins on medium.
6. Remove and cool slightly, placing a wringed out wet tea-towel on top till it cools.
7. Sprinkle parchment paper with parmesan and turn out onto it.
8. Spread mayo on that and then arrange all the saladings on that – evenly.
9. Roll up loosely.

## Gougère

4 oz butter + ½ pt milk  
 5 oz flour  
 3-4 eggs  
 4 oz grated Gruyère  
 bit of nutmeg & cayenne pepper

1. Bring milk and butter with seasoning to the boil. Pour in the sifted flour until you have a smooth choux paste. Remove from heat and add eggs one at a time. When the mixture is thick and shiny add the cheese and leave to cool.
2. Bake for 45 mins in a greased ring mould or just on a sheet of baking paper (under a bowl). Brush with milk.

Nice with crushed minted peas piled in the middle.

## Red Leicester puffs

From Josceline Dimbleby's *First Impressions* (1984). Any cheese works, but this gives it a glowing colour.

2 oz butter  
 ¼ pt water  
 2½ oz flour  
 1 egg yolk + 2 eggs  
 3 oz cubed red Leicester

1. Make a choux pastry (as above) with red Leicester melted in. Drop tangerine-sized dollops on a parchment-lined tin leaving plenty of space between them.
2. Bake for about 20 mins with some boiling water in a pan on the lower shelf to generate steam.
3. Slit and fill with boursin softened with cream or any other garlicky cream cheese. Or a crushed green pea and crème fraîche filling.

Nice hot or cold.

## Puff packets

1. Roll out some puff pastry; cut into 8 rectangles or 12 squares; put on a flat oven dish; lightly score pastry with an inner square; and cool for a bit in the fridge.
2. Then, depending what you have in the house, thinly slice and arrange in little rows within the centre square one of the following fillings.
3. Peeled tomatoes on top of a spread of pesto with toasted pine nuts on top.
4. Unpeeled sweet potato, softened in the oven first with a spread of crème fraîche (if you have it; don't bother if not) on the pastry, bits of goats' cheese sprinkled and toasted pine nuts on top.



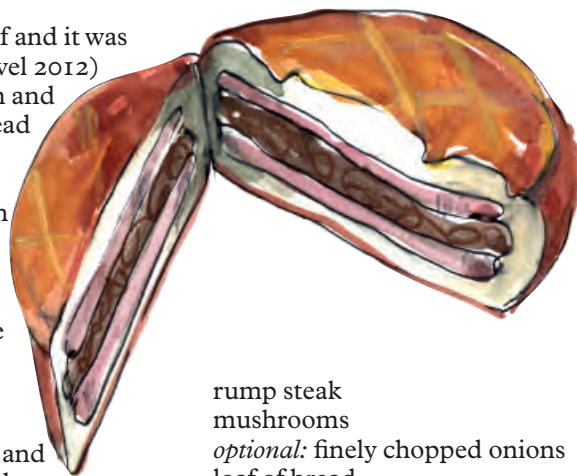


5. As above with ordinary potatoes, any old cheese and currants instead of the nuts.
6. Or caramelised onions.
7. Chopped walnuts, spring onions and beaten egg to bind.
8. Put into a hottish oven until the ‘picture frame’ of the puff pastry puffs up, sealing the filling neatly inside, and producing attractive individual portions. Nice hot as well.

## Shooters’ sandwich

Found in Emily’s *Of Picnics & Pageants* (2005) and clearly for an Edwardian shooting party, this originally comes from T Earle Welby’s *The Dinner Knell* (1932).

I did it for Glyndebourne (*Figs* 2012) in a round loaf and it was impressive but wodgy, and made a second attempt (Ravel 2012) in a pavé loaf. The second time, I sandwiched the onion and mushroom mix between two thinner steaks, but the bread was still soggy. Our hosts at the *Figs* occasion (Chris & Allegra) suggested wrapping the steak in ham as a barrier to the juices seeping into the loaf. So for version three (*Rosenkavalier* 2014) I lined the bread with mustard and thin prosciutto. Success at last, though maybe a tad too dry. Still room for improvement. Maybe a thin pancake as the barrier as sometimes done for beef Wellington. This is it as written:



rump steak  
mushrooms  
*optional:* finely chopped onions  
loaf of bread  
horseradish or mustard  
blotting paper  
greaseproof paper  
string

Take a large, thick, excellent rump steak. Do not season it for that would cause the juices to run out, and in grilling it keep it markedly underdone. Have ready a sandwich loaf one end of which has been cut off and an adequate proportion of the contents of which have been removed. Put the steak, hot from the grill, and – but only then – somewhat highly seasoned, into the loaf; add a few grilled mushrooms; replace the deleted end of the loaf; wrap the loaf in a double sheet of clean white blotting paper, tie with twine both ways, superimpose sheets of greaseproof paper and more twine. Place a moderate weight on top, and after a while add other weights. Let the thing endure pressure for at least six hours. Do not carve it until and as each slice is required.

## Picnic loaf

From *Marvellous Meals with Mince* (1982) – more trouble than the Shooters’, but holds together better (cheaper too).

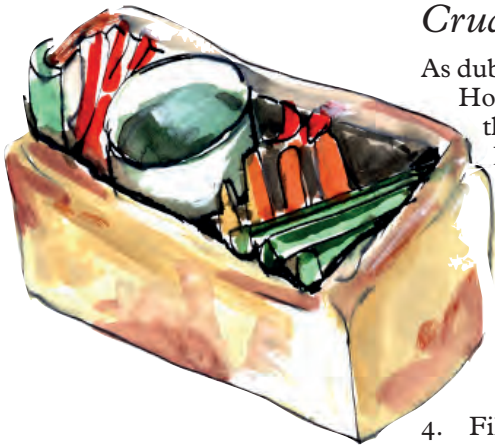
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|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cut off the end of a tin loaf and pull out the bread, whuzz it into breadcrumbs and fry till golden.</li> <li>2. Fry leeks, garlic.</li> <li>3. Mix all in a bowl, season well and stuff right inside the loaf, securing the cut-off end with a skewer right through.</li> <li>4. Smear loaf all over with butter and wrap completely in foil.</li> <li>5. Cook for an hour, medium oven.</li> <li>6. If cooked soon before picnicking, this can be kept warm in an insulated bag for quite a long time; otherwise it’s good cold.</li> </ol> | <p>tin loaf<br/>8 oz leeks<br/>8 oz minced beef<br/>2 spoons tomato purée<br/>2 oz grated cheese<br/>garlic<br/>ground coriander<br/>1 egg</p> |
|---|--|

## Mediterranean cob

This is from *Cool Food* (2003); I did it in different loaf shapes quite a lot one picnic year. Roasting the vegetables was a bit laborious as they had to be done in batches.

any quantity of: aubergines,  
courgettes, sweet potato and  
long red peppers – say 2 to 4 of  
each  
cob loaf  
pesto  
ricotta & parmesan cheeses

1. Slice the vegetables longwise, brush with olive oil and roast till ready. Nicest to peel the peppers.
2. Cut the top off a cob loaf, scoop out the bread to leave a shell and spread pesto round the surfaces of the inside. Layer the vegetables in stripes of colour, putting the mixed cheeses in the middle. Put the lid on.
3. Put in plastic bag with weights overnight. Cut in wedges for the round loaf or across if a tin loaf.



a long white tin loaf (day old)  
carrots, red pepper, cucumber,  
celery  
any dip (cheese, avocado, fishy)

## Crudithéâtre

As dubbed by Emily on a boat crossing from Harwich to Hook van Holland – I'd put my crudités inside a hollow loaf of bread with the dip and asked if they'd enjoyed the coup de théâtre. Though I say it myself, I did a stunning picnic on that occasion and this was the first dish so had an element of theatricality about it. Repeated on the odd Eurostar after that to the interest (and envy) of those in the neighbouring seats.

1. Slice the top off the loaf to form a lid.
2. Remove all the inside of the loaf leaving a firm crust.
3. Put the dip in a small clicky box to fit in the middle of the loaf.
4. Fill all spaces with sliced vegetable sticks (might have to have a separate box with the extra ones).
5. Put the lid on and wrap firmly in foil.

## Fougasse

This is a leaf-shaped French flatbread a bit like the Italian foccacia, but it isn't in the bread section because what I am after is the savoury slippers – same idea as Cornish pasties, only bread on the outside and more subtle fillings. We get them in simple bakeries in France, but it's not so easy to find a recipe. The nearest I can get is this.

bread dough made with olive oil  
any suitable filling, e.g.  
fried onions, roasted red  
pepper, roasted garlic, cherry  
tomatoes and topped with  
Roquefort or goats' cheese  
sundried tomatoes, pesto,  
artichoke hearts, olives,  
aubergines, butternut squash  
figs and goats' cheese  
pine nuts and cheese  
potato and spinach (+ optional  
ricotta)

1. Divide a loaf-dough quantity into 6 portions and roll into rectangles.
2. Spread one long half with a filling mix.
3. Cut 6 slits in the other half and fold over the filling, sealing all round.
4. Shape into a slipper; transfer to a baking tray, brush with olive oil, sprinkle herbs on top.
5. Leave to rise and bake for 20 mins in a hottish oven.

In some versions, you roll out the whole loaf's-worth, spread the filling in the centre and roll it all up like a Swiss roll, tucking the edges in and sealing firmly. Bake it and slice when cold.

## Spanish tortilla

This is my from-memory version of the one in the *Moro* cookbook. Once you've got it by heart, it's terribly easy.

1. Slice both.
2. Start off the onions in olive oil.
3. Salt the potatoes in a colander for a bit.
4. Then cook them in sunflower oil (I do it in a non-stick pan with a lid on very, very low).
5. After about 40 mins both should be soft but without a colour change.
6. Beat the eggs.
7. Drain off the oil (if any). Mix everything in a large bowl and add pepper (salt may not be needed). At this point you can pause till later.
8. Wash out the frying pan and get the oil hot before adding all the mixture. Shake so nothing sticks to the bottom and cook for a bit. Finish off in the oven on the grill setting or flip over on a plate. Turn out upside down when it has settled.

about 2 lb charlotte potatoes  
and same of onions  
6-8 eggs (Moro says 8, but 6 is  
enough)

Serve hot in wedges or picnic cold and sliced into squares with little bits of piquillo pepper on top.

## Caulifritta

Same principal as the tortilla but using cauliflower – with a dash of turmeric to give it colour. People are never quite sure what the flavour is. The name is my coinage.

1. Cut cauliflower into florets and cook till still a little crunchy.
2. Mix with all the other ingredients.
3. As step 8 above.

Oddly, it is more intriguing cold as people don't identify the cauliflower.

## Spinach kuku

1. Dice a large potato quite small and fry in olive oil while chopping a large onion; add that.
2. When done put in a bowl with cooked, drained spinach, s&p and lemon juice.
3. Beat in 5 eggs.
4. Then cook as for a Spanish tortilla.

Hot or picnic cold and sliced into squares.

I've done it without the onion (because it was featuring in other dishes) and it was just as nice. Another book suggests adding cottage cheese.



1 small cauliflower  
4 eggs  
3 tbsp crème fraîche  
2 tbsp Dijon mustard  
2 tsp sweet smoked paprika  
3 tbsp chives, finely chopped  
4 oz smoked mozzarella  
2 oz strong cheddar  
s&p

potato  
onion  
spinach  
eggs  
lemon juice  
seasoning

## *Kuku from the Peacock Throne of Persia*

I think I found this while riffling through some of Sophie's cookbooks. *Jerusalem* has a kuku made with broad beans and currants (plus turmeric and cinnamon) on the same principle.

3 or 4 aubergines cut in half,  
salted first  
2 large onions chopped  
4 eggs  
2 tbsp flour  
s&p and lemon juice

1. Fry aubergines (or bake oiled in the oven) and fry the onions (possibly in separate pans) and then scoop out the flesh of the aubergine into a bowl and mash with the onions. Factor in the time it takes for the aubergines to get cool enough to handle.
2. Mix together with other ingredients.
3. Cook in a clean frying pan or bake in an oiled oblong pan about 1" thick for around 30 mins on a medium hot oven.

Hot or picnic cold and sliced into diamonds with yoghurt.

## *Root vegetable rösti*

This belongs here, as it is another variant of the theme – or is it, as there is no egg? Possibly this one is better hot.

1 lb waxy potatoes  
mixed lb of swede, carrot,  
parsnip, turnip – combinations  
à choix  
1 onion  
parsley etc

1. Parboil all the vegetables whole (but peeled) for 3 mins. Drain in a colander and leave for 2 hours.
2. Sweat the chopped onion.
3. Coarsely grate the vegetables and add the onion and seasoning.
4. Wipe out the frying pan and start again with new oil, pressing the vegetables down and fry on one side and then the other.

Cut in slices to serve.

## *Courgette latkes*

I've never really been keen on latkes as the grated potato soaks up an awful lot of oil and I'm not a fan of deep frying anyway, but these are lighter. I think this was in Emily's handwriting and found in Stephen's file. This file (I note as I leaf through) is full of snips from newspapers and all sorts of recipes that I don't recall him ever making.

2 courgettes  
2 potatoes  
fresh mint and spring onions  
pkt feta cheese  
1 egg

1. Grate, salt, rinse and squeeze the courgettes.
2. Steam the potatoes for 8 mins; then grate them too and crumble in the feta.
3. Mix all in a bowl.
4. Dunk in flour and fry.



## *Eggah*

I used to do this a lot – the original is in Claudia Roden's *A Book of Middle Eastern Food* (1968). Basically it is a quiche without the pastry, cooked in a loaf tin; or it can be done the same way as the Spanish tortilla. I had thought it always has pasta in it to add bulk so you can cut bread-sized slices, but there's only one like that in the book and that has left-over chicken in it. This version works. Adding a bit of crushed cardamom gives it an Arab flavour.

1. Oil the tin and shake the breadcrumbs about in it.

2. Combine fried vegetables and cooked pasta with the eggs in a bowl.
3. Optionally add crushed cardamom seeds.
4. Pour into tin.
5. Bake for 40 mins on medium heat.

Slice when cold. This is nice hot too, but needs to settle before slicing.

### *Provençal omelette cake*

Another variation of the same idea (party quantities given).

1. Break the eggs into two bowls, five in each. Whisk lightly and season with s&p.
2. Heat the oil in a pan, add the courgettes and spring onions, then fry gently for about 10 mins until softened.
3. Cool, then stir into one bowl of eggs with a little s&p.
4. Add the roasted peppers to the other bowl of eggs with the garlic, chilli, s&p.
5. Make three omelettes from each bowl.
6. For the filling, beat the cheese with milk to make a spreadable consistency. Stir in the herbs.
7. Line a deep cake tin with clingfilm (same size as the frying pan). Select the best red pepper omelette and place in the tin, prettiest side down. Spread with a thin layer of cheese filling, then cover with a courgette omelette. Repeat, alternating the layers, until all the omelettes and filling are in the tin, finishing with an omelette. Flip the clingfilm over the omelette, then chill for up to 24 hours.
8. To serve, invert the omelette cake onto a serving plate and peel off the clingfilm. Pile rocket on the top and scatter over the cheese, a drizzle of olive oil and a little freshly ground black pepper.

Serve cut into wedges.

### *Sonja's vegetable and feta frittata*

This is the eggah principle, but she did it in a square silicone tin and it came out a treat sliced into cubes. Delicious hot – equally good sliced into little canapé-sized squares cold. I think the feta is the ‘killer’ ingredient and all the vegetables can be varied according to what’s around. This is my adaptation.

1. Grease deep 23 cm square cake mould.
2. Cook squash in boiling water till just tender.
3. Same with potato.
4. Slice the courgettes.
5. Layer the vegetables in the mould as preferred (courgettes first) adding in the spinach leaves and top with onions.
6. Combine cheeses and eggs and pour over.
7. Bake in very hot oven about 25 mins or until firm (it was 10 mins longer I think for me).

Et voila!

combinations of any vegetables such as peas, broad beans, courgettes, red peppers, sundried tomatoes tagliatelli or other pasta shapes (cooked first)  
prosciutto, ham, bacon or chicken (or omit)  
parmesan or goats' cheese  
3-4 eggs and a slosh of milk  
breadcrumbs

10 eggs  
olive oil  
2 courgettes, finely chopped  
3 spring onions, thinly sliced  
4 roasted red peppers from a jar, drained and finely chopped  
1 garlic clove, crushed  
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped

*for the filling*  
300 g soft cheese  
5-6 tbsp milk  
snipped chives  
chopped fresh basil  
rocket leaves and shaved  
parmesan, to serve

1½ lb coarsely chopped  
butternut squash  
1 large potato (or parsnip)  
4 oz chopped spinach leaves  
3 mandolined courgettes  
3 oz feta crumbled  
2 oz grated cheddar  
8 eggs lightly beaten  
1 small red onion

3-4 eggs  
 chopped onion  
 2 oz grated parmesan (or any other cheese)  
 parsley or other herbs  
 cooked diced ham  
 cooked diced potatoes  
 cooked diced carrots  
 or any other combination of vegetables

*Savoury crêpes*  
 ½ pt cold water  
 ½ pt cold milk  
 12 oz flour  
 4 eggs  
 ½ tsp salt  
 4 tbsp melted butter

*Sweet crêpes*  
 3 fl oz cold water  
 3 fl oz cold milk  
 8 oz flour  
 3 egg yolks  
 3 tbsp orange liqueur (or other)  
 5 tbsp melted butter

*Buckwheat pancakes made with:*  
 4 oz plain flour + salt  
 2 eggs  
 250 ml milk  
 bit of melted butter

*filling*  
 14 oz cream cheese  
 chives  
 8 oz smoked salmon (actually it uses more than you think it will)

## Steven's frittata

His usual offering at a picnic. A posh omelette really.

1. Onions first and then add everything to a bowl of beaten eggs.
2. Cook slowly in an oiled frying pan.
3. When nearly cooked, put under a hot grill till lightly browned.
4. Turn upside-down onto a plate.

## Basic pancake proportions

Julia Child's version for the savoury and sweet versions - ingredients left.

1. Whuzz and leave to settle.
2. May need to add more liquid later.

### *Savoury fillings*

My favourite is spinach for one half and a thick cheese sauce for the other half. This makes a splashy-looking layered cake instead of the traditional way of rolling them up.

Or

squash, goats' cheese & rosemary  
 blue cheese and leek  
 ham and gruyère  
 garlic mushrooms

### *Sweet fillings*

My favourite is just plain lemon and sugar. Or

apple compote and soured cream  
 jam  
 oranges and cointreau  
 frangipane



## Salmon and cream cheese gateau

This is the only thing I regularly do from *Anton Mosimann, Naturally!* though when I looked through it again, I remembered some good vegetable strudels that went a long way (page 139).

1. Make a pile of pancakes and let them cool.
2. Add chopped chives to the cream cheese.
3. Layer the pancakes alternately with salmon and cheese mix and stack them up to make a cake shape.
4. Press down and trim the edges of the cake (he puts chopped chives round the edges but that's too fiddly for me).
5. Cut into wedges when set (in the fridge).

### *Aubergine, onion and yoghurt mould*

1. Fry onions and garlic and set aside.
2. Fry aubergines on both sides (or on oiled baking sheet in the oven).
3. Arrange aubergines overlapping in the oiled mould and up the sides (keeping enough for the top).
4. Layer the yoghurt and onion mix inside.
5. Top with more aubergines.
6. Leave 30 mins until set.

3 or 4 aubergines cut in slices, salted first  
2 large onions & 2 cloves garlic chopped  
Greek yoghurt  
s&p

Turn out when you get to the picnic site.

### *Carrot spinach timbale*

Josceline Dimbleby was my 'must-cook-from' in the 80s. This is a good one, without its 'waterlily' petals of chicory to decorate as that's too fussy for a picnic.

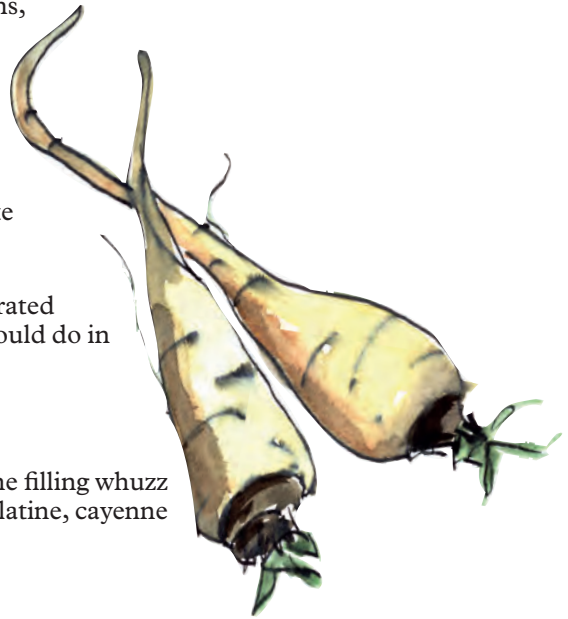
1. Boil spinach till limp and drain.
2. Cook carrots with 3 or 4 unpeeled cloves of garlic.
3. Oil a flan dish and arrange the spinach leaves to hang over the sides.
4. Purée the carrots with the garlic popped out of skins, dissolved gelatine lemon juice, oil, mustard and a spoon of sugar, nutmeg etc to taste.
5. When cool, spoon half into the spinach case.
6. Layer the sliced avocado on top.
7. Pour in the rest of the carrot mix and close the spinach leaves over it.
8. Brush with oil and cover in clingfilm and refrigerate overnight if possible.

1 lb spinach  
2 lb carrots  
2 avocado pears  
1 oz gelatine

Cut into pretty wedges. The dinner party version has grated carrot on top and chicory leaves arranged all round. Could do in individual dishes too.

#### *Haddock version*

She has another version based on the same idea – for the filling whuzz up some cooked smoked haddock with lemon juice, gelatine, cayenne and 2 egg yolks and then fold in the beaten egg whites.



### *Parsnip timbales*

1. Put a mint leaf at the bottom of each of 6 oiled ramekin dishes.
2. Whuzz the cooked parsnips with everything else.
3. Season the mix and cook in the oven for 20 mins or so.

1 lb parsnips cut up  
1 egg  
8 fl oz double cream  
nutmeg  
flat parsley or mint

Release from mould when cold.

## *Watercress roulade with smoked haddock*

8 oz smoked haddock fillets  
½ pt milk  
8 oz chopped watercress  
2 oz butter  
2 oz plain flour  
3 separated eggs  
2 oz gruyère  
filling  
7 oz cream cheese  
2 tbsp chopped herbs  
1 oz ground almonds  
1 oz grated parmesan  
1 tbsp lemon juice  
mace, s&p

1. Line a Swiss roll tin.
2. Poach the haddock in the milk for 6-8 mins; drain the stock.
3. Make a roux with the butter and flour and add the fish stock.
4. Cool slightly and beat in the egg yolk and cheese. Blend with watercress and season.
5. Whisk the egg white till stiff and fold into mixture.
6. Spoon into the tin and bake on quite hot for 20-25 mins. Remove from the oven and cool with a clean tea-towel on top.
7. Skin and flake the haddock and blend with the cream cheese and remaining ingredients.
8. When the roulade is cold, turn it out onto the tea-towel, peel off the paper and spread the filling over. Roll up tightly and wrap in the tea-towel until ready to slice.

## *Meat flatbreads*

The original (*Marvelous Meals with Mince*) calls for beef mince, but I like a mixture of beef, chicken liver and sausage meat. It also needs quite a bit of seasoning, including some chilli flakes.

12 oz meat  
12 oz wholemeal flour  
1 onion  
water to bind  
salt & chilli

1. Fry the onion and then mix everything together.
2. Knead for a few mins.
3. Form klops-sized balls and roll them out thin.
4. Fry like a pancake mixture.

Nice hot or cold.

## *Mel's gefilte fish cakes*

Mel does these when we have what is becoming an annual picnic with Gail and Dari, and Steven and Clarissa at Stratford-upon-Avon. We've got a spot by the river, just below Trinity Church, that has become 'ours' and we start at 5 and are pleasantly ready for a Shakespeare play at 7.30 (there's only just enough time to pack up; picnics take time). Mel (who lives in Iron John's mansion in Broseley) suggests variations like adding a spoonful or two of fish sauce to the mix if you want or/and chopped anchovies. Bits of olive in the mix work as well. Bits of chopped hot red peppers are also interesting.

about 1 lb of filleted white fish  
an equal volume of matzo meal  
2 onions  
1 carrot  
1 egg  
s&p

1. Finely chop up the fish and the onions; grate the carrot; whisk the egg.
2. Put all the ingredients in a mixing bowl and stir.
3. Put the bowl in the fridge for about an hour.
4. Put some flour on a plate.
5. Put some cold water in a little bowl dip; you fingers in; scoop out a gob of the mixture; pat it into a cake, and cover with flour from your plate.
6. In a frying pan, heat up some oil to the depth of about half your fish cake.
7. When hot, put your floured cakes in the oil until brown; takes about 4 mins – each side.

Nice hot as well as cold.



On 11 July 2009, Stephen and I went with Emily and Vita to Knole and had the most memorable picnic ever. We walked from the station to Knole carrying weighty wicker hampers, didn't have a walk in the grounds because it was vaguely drizzling – and didn't even get into the house afterwards (though the girls went backwards up some steps at the No Entry exit and saw a bit of it). And yet we didn't notice and didn't mind because it was a matchless feast; the girls absolutely surpassed themselves. The rain sort of held off during the picnic and we watched cricketers on the green and fallow deer snooped, eager for pickings. Our menu just has to be recorded:

### *Emily*

crayfish cocktail in avocado salsa  
quails' eggs with celery salt  
chicory stuffed with Serrano ham, parmesan and breadcrumbs  
baba ghanoush with pomegranate molasses  
chicken harissa  
Chablis

### *Vita*

aubergine & saffron yoghurt with sesame  
broad bean & pea salad with artichoke hearts, lemon and red chard  
pumpkin and goats' cheese squash  
smoked duck, smoked tuna & chorizo  
couscous salad with saffron  
selection of cheeses, chutneys and soda bread  
3 kinds of chocolate  
lemon-soaked strawberries and blueberries with cream  
French Chardonnay

### *Jane*

tarte aux pruneaux (page 188)  
Oz Chardonnay



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## *Hot picnic food*

I don't want to stray into camping food territory as everybody knows I am not a girl guide sort of person. I can count the number of times I have camped on one hand. So this is just about hot food for picnics, not hearty stews on camp fires. And not about making a fire on the beach and cooking shrimps and mussels found in rock pools (which we did a few times with Jennie in Scotland when all our children were little). In Namibia, when we joined Vita and Joachim on their honeymoon, we had the best-ever picnic breakfast cooked by our guide at Sossusvlei over a sort of converted oil drum.

## Hot food five ways

1. Keeping soups hot (or chilled for that matter) is easy in a thermos flask. Thermos tea and coffee I think tastes dreadful, so I never bother with either.
2. Cooking a casserole en route can be done in a Wonderbag, the South African equivalent of a haybox. Needs about 4 hours, but you can start it off before driving if the journey is shorter.
3. Cooking any fish or meat using a one-off barbecue pack is fun, but you have to be socially responsible about this.
4. Using a wood-chip fish smoker at the destination is very easy too, as long as you bring plenty of newspaper and a large plastic bag to put it in afterwards.
5. You can get mini microwaves, coffee-makers, toasted sandwich-makers, and other gadgets that plug into the cigarette lighter (like our fridgelette), but this is straying into camper-van territory.

## Car engine cooking

Road-testing this was tricky because my family were all reluctant to play ball. Stephen's comment on reading the first draft was, 'This is wholly daft; what about health and safety?' But the ecology of braising as you drive made me persevere. My piece of cod cooked from Mersea Island back to London was perfection: the sausages from London to Guildford pale, but very tasty and done to a turn. Sliced potatoes in a little butter and cream approached a dauphinoise. Ideas to try are listed left. The method is flexible: once cooked, keeping food twice as long on the engine has little effect.

1. Drive for a few mins to warm up your engine, and then stop. Turn off the engine and open the bonnet. Find the engine's hot spots by quickly and lightly touching a finger to metal parts of the engine. As a general rule, the best spot – if you can safely get to it – is on or near the exhaust.
2. To test the area: take a large piece of aluminium foil and form a ball around 8" high. Place it on the engine where you plan to cook and shut the bonnet. Open it and see how much of the foil has been crushed. If the hood didn't touch the foil at all, bulk up the food package so it's thicker and won't slide around. A just-crushed ball of foil is about right for the thickness the cooking packet needs to be. The pressure of the bonnet pressing down on the package will help to keep it in place.
3. Don't jam the accelerator linkage connecting the petrol pedal to

the carburettor or fuel-injection system.

4. Don't block the airflow, nor pull any wires.

5. Place the packages securely in position and drive off.

6. Turn the engine off when testing to see if the food is cooked. It is unlikely to be too hot to handle.

fish  
sausages  
chicken breasts  
lean hamburgers  
potato slices  
mushroom slices  
French beans

anything that can be firmly packaged up in double or triple packets of kitchen foil without any leakage of fat or fluid

aluminium take-away trays might work

*rough guide to cooking mileage:*

sausages: 60 miles

trout or salmon: 60-100 miles

chicken breasts: 60-150 miles

pork tenderloin: 250 miles

sliced, peeled potatoes: 55 miles



# 12

## Salads

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All the salads in this section are suitable for picnics as well as served at home. Where transporting them needs special care, I give a few suggestions about last-minute assembly. I'll often have the salad in a clicky box and the dressing in a separate screw-top jar. If the salad has some element that needs to be mixed in on site, then I'll wrap that in foil or clingfilm and put it inside the salad box they belong to. Some need last-minute assembly – avocados, for example, have that fresh green look only when newly cut.

### *My salad days*

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So to my middle years; Emily comes of age in the year I reach my half century, and there is a party for me on 26 October 1994. We hire a marquee that is meant to attach to the house, but it is raining that night and some rain comes through the flaps by the french doors. Madeline's friend Pip has loaned us several kelims and carpet-bag cushions to create a harem atmosphere in the tent, and I end up buying one of them because the colours have run. The piano is pushed from the front room to a dry spot close by the french doors and the audience in the marquee pauses with their party food mid fork for a cabaret performed by the children and some of their friends. I have written the lyrics and have called it 'My Salad Days are Over'. The tunes are all famous cabaret numbers that I have shamelessly parodied. I morph myself into 'The Demon writer of Finch Lee' and have a chorus sing: 'Swing your keyboard wide, Janey / Make your comments wise. / Freely flows the ink of those / Who criticise'. There is also an ironic skit on 'Let's call the whole thing off'. It refers back to a touch-and-go period of our lives that we had wobblingly got through.

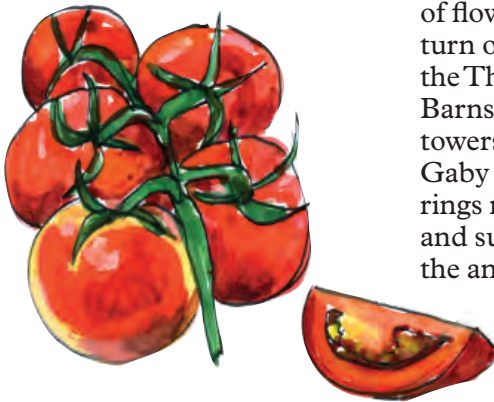


Forty-four years of marriage is a long time and marriages have their cycles of closeness and independence. I was middle-aged; absorbed in child care; somebody younger was more attractive; offence was given; revenge taken; and not very long before this party we had lived apart for one whole year. I wrote a lot of bruised poetry and a wounded chunk of novel. But time has passed and painting with a broad brush is sometimes better than the fine detail of a woodcock quill. All I can say is that whatever we went through has strengthened our

relationship and made us happier and more confident in our companionship. We still laugh at each other's jokes. And it is decidedly 'in sickness and in health'.

By this time a great many springs have 'to yellow autumn turned' and April perfumes in 'hot Junes burned'; no, I am no longer fresh, but 'yet are green'. I do not feel my age. Yet even as I muse about my salad days, events are still in the future that (now writing retrospectively) seem like a long time ago. The channel tunnel between England and France has just opened; Nelson Mandela becomes President of South Africa; Windows 95 has not yet been invented; Princess Diana is to die and give rise to mass hysterical mourning (we too went to see the field of flowers outside Kensington Palace); the excitement of the turn of the millennium fizzles into a damp firework display on the Thames that we fail to see from the roof of the Greenwald's Barnsbury house; two aeroplanes hurtle into New York's twin towers (I watch it happen *live* on morning television because Gaby has a temporary job with Transport for London and rings me up to tell me news is coming in of a 'freak accident'); and suddenly the 21st century is well advanced and marking the anniversary of the First World War.

So to my selection of salads – though for everyday occasions most people will throw into a bowl whatever green leaves are to hand. Yet it is the extra filip, or unexpected ingredient, that marks out a special salad – after all, the word derives from the Latin *herba salata* meaning salted greens.



## Salads

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3 parts olive oil  
1 part vinegar  
garlic, s&p, a bit of sugar and  
mustard

### *Stephen's salad-dressing*

Shake in a jam jar.

3 tbsp sugar  
3 tbsp red wine vinegar  
1 tbsp minced onion  
pinch salt & paprika  
1/8 tsp dry mustard  
1/2 tsp Worcester sauce  
3 drops Tabasco  
1/2 tsp sesame seeds  
2 drops sesame oil

### *Sea World of Florida salad dressing*

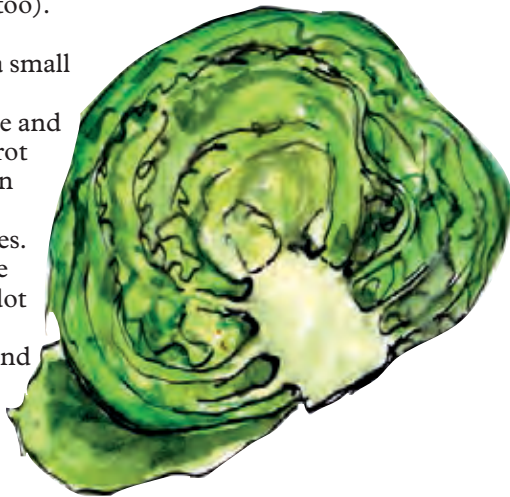
I got this when I was in Orlando with Christina: I think we were giving a joint paper at a conference and had plenty of free time. It was essentially a jolly funded by Oracle Corporation for whom we were doing some rather well-paid consultancy. What an eye-opener Orlando was, not just the grossness of the architecture, but the predictability of Holiday Inn sameness. We'd watched the Sea World dolphins and had dinner at the theme park. I really liked the dressing and asked for the recipe, which they printed out and gave me.

1. Mix all the ingredients.

## Georgia's grand salad de luxe

Georgia is Salad Queen around our family and will throw all sorts of combinations together in the largest bowl she can find (and will probably polish off the lot too).

1. Shake the dressing in a small glass jar.
2. Wash & spin the lettuce and arrange the grated carrot and artichoke hearts on top.
3. Then the sliced radishes.
4. By hand, rip the cheese into small pieces and dot around the salad.
5. Finely chop the mint and sprinkle on top.
6. Drizzle the salad dressing over when ready to serve.



different coloured lettuces  
2 grated carrots  
lashings of artichoke hearts  
4-5 radishes sliced thinly  
nice soft cheese e.g. ricotta/  
young goat/mozzarella  
bunch of mint

### *dressing:*

juice & zest of 1 lemon  
tbsp runny honey  
1 clove diced/minced garlic  
olive oil  
splash of water (loosens the  
dressing and makes it less  
intense)  
s&p

## Polly's fagioli

I don't remember this, but it is in Stephen's file. I think it must have been the time we had lunch in their garden when Reuben was a baby and some boys in the flats opposite threw oranges into the garden, much to Polly's distress.

1. Mix all the ingredients.

beans (can be tinned)  
*dressing:* olive oil, vinegar,  
s&p, fresh mint, fresh basil,  
fresh coriander and mashed  
anchovies  
serve on a leafy bed

## 3 butter bean salads

An old favourite two-ways and a new one. Quantities don't really matter.

1.

Petia does this with cannellini beans and it goes like this: 'The dressing is smashed up garlic, Maldon sea salt, lots of that yellow mustard powder, smashed up black pepper, lemon zest, then lemon juice, olive oil and some of the sunflower oil from the tins of tuna, and the cannellini beans are heated before you bung them in the dressing (without their bean juice though) and I usually make it 24 hours in advance so all the flavours meld together. LOADS of dressing as well, the beans and tuna are practically swimming in it'.

2. & 3.

1. Mix ingredients listed on the right to taste and season.
2. The second one is also nice with fried mushrooms.

1.

tin of butter beans (or cook  
them from soaked)  
tin of tuna  
sliced onion rings  
vinegar

2.

tin of butter beans  
lightly crushed hand-torn  
lumps of feta  
pestled toasted cumin seeds  
lemon juice and olive oil  
parsley  
a sprinkle of za'atar to give it  
some colour

3.

butter beans  
raw courgettes  
sundried tomatoes  
rosemary & sea salt

courgettes  
 aubergine,  
 onion, chopped  
 green peppers, sliced  
 tinned tomatoes  
 crushed cloves  
 coriander seeds

## Ratatouille

Good hot with grated cheese on top as a veggie main, or without it cold for picnics. Quantities pretty immaterial but it has to have: onions, aubergines, courgettes, peppers and tomatoes (tinned are fine) and crushed coriander seeds. All cooked covered for 20 mins and then uncovered, very low, for nearly an hour till all the liquid is absorbed.

My personal secret ingredient – learned from Patty – is a little dash of tomato ketchup put in just at the end. Jane Grigson adds sugar and vinegar which maybe does the same trick.

## Turlu turlu

From *Moro* and a Turkish version of ratatouille – another one that straddles the hot and cold section.

3 courgettes, sliced  
 1 aubergine, wedged lengthways  
 1 onion, chopped  
 3 crushed cloves  
 2 green peppers, sliced  
 3 carrots, sliced in lengths  
 200 g turnip, wedged  
 2 potatoes, cubed  
 3 tbsps cooked chickpeas  
 oil  
 allspice, crushed coriander  
 seeds, s&p  
 tomato passata  
 parsley, coriander

1. Sprinkle sea salt on the aubergines and courgettes and stand for a bit; pat with kitchen paper.
2. Toss vegetables and seasoning by hand in a big bowl (leave out chickpeas and passata and herbs) and put in a roasting tray one layer deep with olive oil; put in preheated oven.
3. Turn in the tray every 15 mins or so until it has all caramelised (about an hour) and then add the rest.

*Moro* says keep back the courgettes for about 45 mins of the cooking but I can't see the point.

## Glass noodle salad

Bo liked this particularly when she came to lunch in the garden once. Ottolenghi, but adapted.

pkt glass noodles  
 swoosh of oil  
 3 garlic cloves, crushed  
 pkt cooked edamame beans,  
 podded (or broad beans or  
 mangetouts)  
 2 sliced spring onions  
 1 fresh red chilli, finely chopped  
 some coriander and mint leaves  
 handful sesame seeds

1. Heat the oil in a wok and add the garlic, then the sesame seeds.
2. When golden, remove from the heat and add the sauce and noodles.
3. Gently mix together, add all the rest.
4. Leave aside till you want it and heat very gently – or it was nice cold. The crispy bits next day were rather good too.



*for the sauce (mix all in a bowl)*  
 chunk of grated ginger  
 1 lime – juice and zest  
 some oil, date syrup, tamarind  
 paste, soy sauce, salt

## Carrott Eastern style

I'm keeping the two 't's in carrott as this is from Hungarian Eva – originally from her friend Rabbi Edit Pragai (who invited me to a Friday night when I was in Budapest) – and I like the foreign sound of the double 't'. Sometimes, at Halloween, you can get black carrots and they look really pretty in this salad.

1. Heat 2 tbsps olive oil gently with the brown sugar until it caramelises.

- Put all the carrots in, and some salt, cook for 3-5 mins.
- Add bayleaves – 1 min more cooking.
- Add 4 star anise, 8 cloves; cook for 1 more min.
- Add small handful of washed raisins.
- Put in the fridge.
- Some would take out bayleaves, cloves and star anise, but Eva didn't and they added to the interest.

1 kg carrots cut in 2 mm slices  
 1 tbsp brown sugar  
 2 tbsp olive oil  
 4 star anise, 8 cloves, 5 bayleaves, small handful of raisins

## Moroccan carrot salad

The one in *Plenty* (adapted). I was hanging about waiting for a lunch guest once and added this as an extra salad. Takes almost more time to read the list of ingredients than to make it.

- Chop the carrots to roughly the same size, shape ad lib, and cook until tender but still crunchy, about 10 mins. Drain and leave to dry out.
- Heat the oil in a large pan and sauté the onion over medium heat until soft and slightly brown, about 12 mins. Add the cooked carrots to the onion, followed by the sugar, garlic, chilli, spring onion, cloves, ground ginger, coriander, cinnamon, paprika, cumin, vinegar and preserved lemon.
- Remove from the heat. Season liberally with salt, stir well and leave to cool.
- Serve with thick coriander yoghurt.



2 lb carrots  
 5 tbsp olive oil  
 1 chopped onion  
 1 tsp sugar  
 3 garlic cloves  
 sprinkle of chilli flakes  
 1 chopped spring onion  
 part tsp each of ground: cloves, ginger, coriander, cinnamon  
 1 tsp sweet paprika  
 1 tsp ground cumin  
 1 tbsp white wine vinegar  
 1 tbsp chopped preserved lemon  
 salt  
 lots of chopped coriander  
 Greek yoghurt

## Insalata tricolore

I once went to a picnic on a neighbour's allotment. It was a lovely day and most people were photographing or drawing, or just poking about admiring neat rows of tomatoes and beans, as well as marvelling at shed follies made of all sorts of found bits of building wood. Our hostess grew willow as her main crop for the baskets she made professionally. When it came to picnic time, one lady took out a packet of mozzarella cheese, an avocado and a sharp knife; picked some tomatoes off a vine and assembled her salad contribution on the spot. I was impressed and copied her a few times, though never with such insouciance – I tend to fall back on the clikky box with presliced, separated elements.

- Arrange in stripes of green, white and red (in the order of the Italian flag).
- Drizzle over the dressing.

1 large ripe tomato, cut into 6 slices  
 1 ripe avocado, cut into 6 slices  
 1 large ball of buffalo mozzarella cheese, sliced  
 extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling  
 balsamic vinegar  
 s&p

## Salade Niçoise

Any combination of the ingredients to the right (last 3 optional) and a dressing with plenty of garlic.

lettuce hearts or a crisp Cos  
 black olives  
 halved hard-boiled eggs  
 anchovies  
 tuna chunks  
 pimento  
 quartered artichoke hearts  
 tomato

- 3-4 red & yellow peppers
- 1-2 fennel
- anchovies

*for the dressing*

red wine vinegar; olive oil;  
sunflower oil; mustard; garlic;  
chopped walnuts; seasoning.



- 3 medium aubergines, cut into slices 2cm thick, or into wedges
- olive oil for brushing
- 2 tbsps pine nuts, toasted
- lots of pomegranate pips
- large fistful of basil leaves
- s&p

*saffron yoghurt*

- a small pinch of saffron strands
- 3 tbsps hot water
- 180 g Greek yoghurt
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 2 tbsps lemon juice
- 3 tbsps olive oil

- 2 medium aubergines, charred
- 3 sweet red peppers, oven-cooked
- 1 ripe tomato, finely chopped
- juice of 2 lemons
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- crushed garlic; tsp ground cumin
- chopped parsley
- 3 tbsps hazelnuts, chopped and roasted
- ½ tsp hibiscus salt

## *Pepper and fennel salad*

1. Roast, skin and slice some red and yellow peppers
2. Slice a couple of fennel – blanched first.
3. Add all hot, with a dollop of anchovy fillets, into the dressing.

## *Esther's yellow pepper salads*

She did one that was just oven roasted (put in a plastic bag when cooked and that makes them easier to peel). Sliced up and put into a dressing while hot. A salsa verde or one with pomegranate molasses.

Another was halved peppers with pesto inside and a half tomato put on top of that. Half a pepper per perspn. And baked in the oven till ready. Hot or cold.

## *Aubergine & pomegranate*

This is from Ottolenghi and I've made it a few times; usually it is completely knock-out, but I have had it fail on a couple of occasions and I can't identify quite why. I think the crucial thing is to make absolutely sure the aubergines are completely roasted and not be too mean with the oil – which I do tend to be on fatness grounds, forgetting that you can get rid of some of the excess with kitchen paper.

1. For the sauce, infuse the saffron in the hot water in a small bowl for 5 mins. Pour the infusion into a bowl containing the yoghurt, garlic, lemon juice, olive oil and some salt. Whisk well to get a smooth, golden sauce. Taste and adjust the salt, if necessary, then chill.
2. Preheat the oven to quite hot. Place the aubergine slices on a roasting tray, brush with plenty of olive oil on both sides and sprinkle with s&p.
3. Roast for 20-30 mins, until the slices take on a beautiful light brown colour. Let them cool down.
4. To serve, arrange the aubergine slices on a large plate, slightly overlapping. Drizzle the saffron yoghurt over them, sprinkle with the pine nuts and pomegranate seeds and lay the basil on top.

## *Chris's hibiscus aubergine salad*

Chris is an inventive cook who probably doesn't use books much, but this one is from *Purple Citrus and Sweet Perfume*.

He introduced us to it in France on a wonderful hot August evening. I bought the book after that and did it once with za'atar until I found a jar of hibiscus flowers which although sweet, and therefore not salt, added a certain je ne sais quoi.



1. Mix all together.



## *Lentil salad*

1. Boil lentils in fresh water for quite a long time.
2. Add butter and salt when cooked, but not mushy.
3. Pour over dressing while hot.
4. Scatter on the onion and egg.

If made ahead of time, keep the onion and eggs separate, and mix in just before serving so the onions remain crisp and the egg doesn't discolour.

½ lb brown or Puy lentils  
soaked overnight  
a dressing with lemon juice and  
a tsp ground coriander  
finely sliced onion  
chopped egg (optional)

## *Celeriac and lentil salad with hazelnuts and mint*

Ottolenghi's *Plenty* again (but shortened here). Works really well.

1. Toast the hazelnuts and chop coarsely.
2. Combine the lentils, water, bay leaves and thyme sprigs. Cook for 15 to 20 mins or until the lentils are tender but still firm.
3. Combine the olive oil, 2 tbsp hazelnut oil and vinegar in a large bowl. Season and whisk.
4. Drain the cooked lentils, and add to the oil and vinegar dressing while they are hot. Stir well.
5. Cook the celeriac for 8-12 mins until it is tender but still firm. Drain and add to the lentils. If serving immediately, add the hazelnuts and mint, rest of the hazelnut oil, and toss.
6. If making ahead, stir in hazelnuts and mint just before serving.

½ cup hazelnuts  
1 cup puy lentils  
3 cups water  
2 bay leaves  
4 fresh thyme sprigs  
1 lb + celeriac, peeled and cut  
into ¾" batons  
3 tbsp each olive oil and  
hazelnut oil  
3 tbsp high quality red wine  
vinegar  
4 tbsp chopped fresh mint, s&p

## *The Master's celeriac remoulade*

This is from the Master, Prue Cooper (2014), who cooks her own suppers (I cannot imagine how). She uses the posh mayonnaise from Waitrose – Delouis, better than Hellman's but more expensive.

1. Grate the celeriac, in the Magimix, and put straight into a bowl with lemon juice and a bit of water, so every bit gets some lemon, to stop it going brown.
2. When all done, squeeze handfuls of the grated celeriac to get rid of all the liquid, and mix into enough mayonnaise mixture to be sure it is all well covered, but not so much it gets claggy.

1 celeriac  
lemon juice  
mayonnaise mixed with Dijon  
mustard, crème fraiche and  
chopped parsley

The disadvantage is that it can't be done too far in advance. One could not risk leaving it on plates for 3 hours for a Master's supper.

## *Coleslaw*

The way I like it is this. Yes, I use a proprietary mayonnaise – save making your own for when you really can taste the difference; in this salad, you can't.

1. Blend the Hellman's with the whole egg and add a bit of olive oil so it's thick cream consistency.
2. Magimix all the vegetables with the appropriate cutters and toss all together in a big bowl with as many sultanas as you like.
3. Pour over the mayonnaise, toss all with your hands.

It improves over time, though can sometimes get a bit liquidy and needs re-tossing.

2 peeled and finely shredded  
carrots  
equal shredded amount of white  
cabbage  
a little bit of shredded onion  
sultanas  
1 egg  
large spoon of Hellman's  
oil

charlotte (or similar) potatoes  
 sultanas  
 1 egg for the mayonnaise and  
 other eggs to chop in hard-  
 boiled  
 large spoon of Hellman's  
 oil

## Potato salad

Same as previous except use cooked waxy potatoes instead of cabbage, onion and carrot and slice and dress it while the potatoes are still hot. I like it with hard-boiled eggs and sultanas. Clarissa once did a nice version of a potato salad with a sorrel sauce – but where do you get sorrel from without an allotment? Some people like to add chopped gherkin, but I don't. Orange zest can be quite nice for a change. And hazelnut halves tossed on before serving make a nice variation.

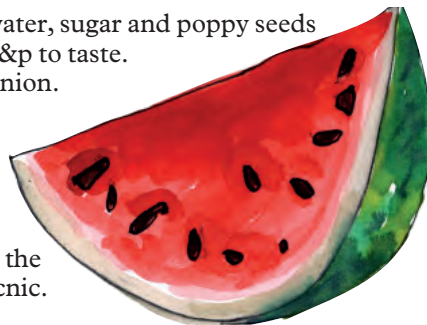
## Cucumber and watermelon salad

Wonderfully refreshing. There's some wastage if you make the melon into balls, but it looks so appetising and somehow tastes nicer.

¼ pt cider vinegar  
 ½ pt water  
 ¼ pt sugar  
 1 tbsppoppy seed  
 3 oz green onion, finely  
 chopped  
 1½ lb seedless sliced (or balled)  
 watermelon  
 2 cucumbers, peeled and sliced  
 s&p

1. Mix together the vinegar, water, sugar and poppy seeds in a bowl and season with s&p to taste.
2. Stir in the chopped green onion.

If taking to a picnic, put the watermelon and cucumber in a cliky box and the marinade in another. Drain the salad of any excess liquid and pour over the dressing when you get to the picnic.



## Candied-peel pea salad

frozen peas are fine – any  
 quantity  
 green olives, candied peel,  
 garlic, root ginger, lemon juice,  
 sunflower oil, paprika. I use  
 my own candied citron and  
 preserved lemons.

I served this to Hazel Bell when she came to lunch: we used to see each other quite often at a variety of publishing and social occasions. It was at her 70th that I learned that you can print photographs onto cake icing.

1. Cook very gently in a covered saucepan for 10 mins (no water).
2. Add mint or parsley. I also add yoghurt – though it isn't in the original recipe.

## Orange salads – fourways

A complete doddle and just so refreshing – lovely with cold meats. I'm rather keen on orange salads and there are lots of variants. The chicory one is prettiest if you can get the white ones and the purple-edged sort, but only posh Waitroses seem to have the second.

sliced oranges  
 French dressing made with  
 orange or lemon juice instead of  
 vinegar

chicory  
 thinly-sliced radish  
 a firm avocado  
 carrot and celeriac juliennes

Sliced and arranged in any way that pleases. I like to fan out the avocado (if for a picnic, that needs to be done on the spot so that it doesn't discolour).

## *Mango chicken salad*

Josceline Dimbleby says use tinned mangoes but I never have, though buying them ripe is a bit of a lottery. Stephen is always surprised by this one – which I have trotted out every few years. The original steams chicken breast fillets over a vinegar and water solution till the chicken goes pale, but I now tend to do it when there's some leftover chicken.

She whuzzes the mango with its tin juice, clove of garlic, mayonnaise or crème fraîche, and cayenne and mixes this over the cold chicken, but I have taken to including half or more of the mango in slices. Then sprinkle pan-toasted cashews on top – I tend to put these in a screw of clingfilm to add in the last minute if on a picnic to keep them crunchy.

chicken  
mango  
cashews  
garlic  
crème fraîche  
cayenne

## *Cecily's smoked haddock salad*

I got this from Cecily when she was teaching me the violin: it's just a potato salad with smoked pepper herring flaked in. Ridiculously easy and everyone always has seconds.

1. Pull apart the mackerel with your fingers.
2. Mix it all up and dot with parsley.

salad potatoes, boiled and sliced  
smoked mackerel fillets  
mayo with crème fraîche (about ½ and ½)  
bit of lemon juice

## *Helen & Julian's Barbican-Met salads*

Not so much a recipe as a homage to new friends Helen and Julian who have had us several times to their Live from the Met screenings at the Barbican cinema with canapés beforehand and supper afterwards in their 37 to 39th-storey flat in the Cromwell Tower. Always à la Glyndebourne and always lavish and inventive. We've had (at various times):

salmon trout surrounded by salmon and prawns in sour cream with cayenne or something pleasingly hot  
roasted squash stuffed with couscous and tomato  
fagioli with chestnut (nice combination)  
borlotti with enchiladas  
broccoli and cashew nut  
potato slices vinaigrette  
sweet potato and red pepper salad  
aubergine and pomegranate (page 158)  
beans with a pesto dressing  
lentil salad with chicken bits (or was it quorn?)  
mangetouts with hazelnuts & pomegranate seeds  
aubergine pâté  
rocket salad



# 13

## Tea

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I don't really do teas, as it is an indulgence that isn't necessary and cakes and biscuits are things I can easily resist. But there's something very appealing about thinly-sliced, crustless triangles of sandwich and ridiculous little fancies prettily arranged on a cake stand. I don't have one, as it happens, nor is it needed for a once-a-year tea occasion. I don't especially like tea, the drink, in any case and rarely take more than half a cup. Champagne teas, though – that's a bit more like it.

Tea is the preserve of childhood, of doll's tea parties, teddy bears' picnics, of coming home from school to bread-and-butter and jam, and later feeding one's own hungry darlings. Biscuits and cakes are things you make with your children, and they scrape out the bowl and lick the spoon. I don't have a feeling for baking so I have to follow a recipe to the letter and even then my sponges don't rise. All the same I have probably spent a number of hours in the kitchen making cakes and biscuits so I've dug out my little yellow folder of cut-outs and transcribed some that I did again and again.

No Black Forest gems here – there are books for that, including the seven-page perfection of the Heston gateau – *The Fat Duck Cookbook* (2009). I'm not that mad. I'd rather read a good book, though: 'There are those who find Jane Austen tea-tablish; as there are those who think that Mozart tinkles'. Had to get them both in.

High tea would figure quite often in my own childhood on Sundays – something of a disappointment if I remember as it was a stark, cold collation and left too much empty evening. Stephen's parents also went in for High Tea on a Sunday and it was quite a feature when our children were small. The 'old bags' (that's us now) had some matching square Pyrex dishes and everything was always neatly sliced in its little compartment – ham, salami, tomatoes, eggs thinly-sliced by a special egg mandolin with anchovies and gherkins on top, rubbery cheese as well as little packets of La Vache Qui Rit, scrolls of butter and halved bridge rolls. Nada always did the compartments; Jojo baked a cake and made the tea. Although everything was usually prepared beforehand, it still always seemed to take hours before it was all put on the table. It was at one such moment of Joan not quite focussing on the relationship between the teapot and the kettle one Sunday that we got the first glimmer of her onset of dementia. Ludek was

himself entering into the final stages of the bone cancer from which he died and I can see him now trying to help her and expressing an anxiety about her future that we didn't at that time understand. He'd seen more of her forgetfulness than we had and clearly couldn't see how she was going to cope. She didn't.

## Making things

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Tea is popularised in 'The Great British Bake-Off' TV series which had an unexpected, country-wide cake-tin-purchasing success. It spawned a huge resurgence in bakery tutorial programmes, as well as band-wagons being jumped on by the likes of Brown's Hotel which runs a price-rich and chocolate-high 'tea-torial' during which you mostly watch delicacies being made and then sit in style to sample them.

So this is the place for the tutorials and courses Stephen and I have been on over the years. You're very 'coursey' (to rhyme with horsey) one of the children said once. Over the years we have done day, weekend or week-long courses – together or separately; sometimes with one or other daughter or son. Apart from cooking courses, the list includes: life-drawing; weaving, spinning and dyeing; ornamental-turning; green chair-making (otherwise known as bodging); jewellery; blacksmithing; silversmithing; marbling, felt-making, paper-making; willow basket-making; glass blowing, kiln-forming and engraving; Photoshop manipulation; verre églomisé; bookbinding; singing lessons (me); piano lessons (him); bee-keeping; sailing; colour theory; French conversation; one year of garden landscape design; several years of learning the violin/guitar; and a degree in glass. Not to mention self-taught enthusiasms for: knitting; silk-tie painting; macramé; appliqué; patchwork quilts; box-making; watercolours; gilding; dolls-house construction; and, in childhood, working our way through probably all the Dryad Handicraft Leaflets including: bamboo pipe-making; glove-making; scraperboard; lino-cutting; cane-work; cross-stitch; raffia work; calligraphy; smocking; puppet-making – what did we *not* try our hand at! I look round the house and the evidence of dilettante artistic achievement is everywhere.

I've not counted it all up before and looked at on the page it looks almost like a nervous tic; this constant need to be making something different. Admittedly, this is spread over about 50 years. There are boundary lines between therapy and art that take some teasing out. My own view is that art transcends the personal and opens out into generalised experience. That is why in glass-making, which I hope is my final passion, I have come to favour abstract forms that allow those who look at them to write their own story: one that need have no reference to my original intention in making the object. A successful



piece of art has levels of meaning beyond those that the artist is aware of. I believe this to be true in music and literature as well.

Stephen has always been the master craftsman in our family and I the butterfly dabbler, not bad at a number of artistic things but expert in none. Take the quite cheerful little watercolours in this book – some charm, but not the work of a trained artist. Yet all through my life people have said to me, ‘Oh you are so artistic’. I see this now as a myth that my mother made me believe in and perhaps I subconsciously engineer others to reinforce it. There are lots of forms of creativity and I passionately believe it is *not* only to do with making things with your hands. It can be in creating successful relationships.

Stephen is a meticulous maker. His lute-making hands (and 70s hippy haircut) were featured on the v&a poster of ‘The Craftsman’s Art’ in 1973, while my two appliqué embroideries were last-minute additions to the exhibition. He later graduated to the Crafts Council Advisory Committee while I diverted into publishing. Then, in 1979, the BBC made a documentary on him in their ‘In the Making’ series, and there was a certain amount of media attention, recorded in box-files; crumbling bits of newsprint yellowing at the edges. In 2006 he became Master of the Art Workers’ Guild, where I joined as a Brother a few years later. He is undoubtedly the ‘real thing’ and I the ‘also ran’. I say this with pride in his achievements and no resentment on my side as it is a matter of temperament and I simply am not a perfectionist and never will be. My motto is taken from *King Lear*: ‘In striving to perfect, oft we mar what’s well’ – only I’ve had that quote wrong for years because it is: ‘Striving to *better*, oft we mar what’s well’ and I think that mis-memory says a lot about me.

And so to courses in cookery where I do strive to ‘better’, but in the end it is all eaten and there are very few truly memorable artistic occasions.

Foremost are Ivan Day’s marvellous weekend courses, including a 40th wedding anniversary one designed just for our family (with aprons that I printed to match) themed around anniversary fare. This was a highlight occasion – even I think for Ivan – and the room was at one time so humming with enjoyment that we burst spontaneously into a moment of four-part harmony. We have done Ivan’s Regency cooking and Christmas cooking as well as treating all three children to one of his Cumbrian masterpieces. I’ve also picked up a surprising number of tips (including how to hold a chopping knife) from Anna Colquhoun on her preserving and themed cooking days (as well as our own tailor-made pastry course). And there have been other days out cooking – Masterchef once with Vita (who was one of the three singled out in a competitive little ready-steady-cook experience we did together); bread-making at



Paul (Stephen and Emily did that one) and the entire family dessert-making at Sucre in Amsterdam – the white chocolate ice-cream (page 198) and the orange tuiles (page 203) firmly in my to-make-again collection. Vita and I did a sushi morning learning to manipulate sticky rice – fun once or twice afterwards, but it didn't stick in my repertoire.

All these explorations into making things demand a certain panache in their presentation – so these tea-time favourites are being set out on the imaginary three-tiered cake stand that I will never own.



## *First tier*

### *Cucumber sandwiches*

1. Freshly made with just-baked white bread.
2. A good butter with cracked sea-salt in it.
3. A bit of marmite on top and the cucumber slices so thin you can see through them.

cucumber slices  
bread  
butter  
marmite

### *Drop scones*

I once listened to a short story on the wireless set in a time when the village telephone operator knew everybody's business. In the story she contacts one of the out-lying farms to let the farmer's wife know that a visitor is walking up from the village and comes up with a line that I took a fancy to: 'So you've just time throw up a drop scone' (said with a Welsh accent). Not only are the ups and drops pleasing, but I've ever since seen these as a quick standby if tea is suddenly to be featured.

1. Mix like a pancake.
2. Drop in little batches of about 3 in a pan and turn over as they puff up.
3. Serve with jam or syrup.

4 oz self-raising flour  
2 tsp sugar  
1 egg  
1 tbsp melted unsalted butter  
milk to mix

### *Crumpets*

1. In a jug mix cold milk and hot water, stir in melted butter and egg.
2. Add a little of this mixture to the yeast in a teacup and stir to a cream.
3. Put flour in a bowl and pour over the yeast. Add milk mixture and stir with a wooden spoon until well blended.
4. Cover and leave for 1-1½ hours till thick and bubbly.
5. Fry in batches of 3, cooking slowly so surface is full of little holes and begins to set; then flick them over. Each batch will take about 4 mins.
6. Keep warm in the oven till all done.

½ lb flour  
½ oz fresh yeast  
¼ pt each milk and water  
¼ oz butter  
½ tsp salt

basic breadmaker mix (page 56)  
using ½ milk and ½ water  
add 1 tsp each ground mixed  
spice, cinnamon, nutmeg  
slightly more butter and sugar  
1 egg (duck if possible)  
orange zest  
4 oz mixed dried fruit

## *Teacakes*

The original didn't use a breadmaker, but it is spectacularly good with it.

1. Tip all into breadmaker on dough setting.
2. When ready, divide into 10-12 balls, flatten them and place on tray with parchment; cover with oiled clingfilm and allow to rise again.
3. Bake for 15-20 mins on medium.

Eat warm split in half and with best butter and jam.

## *Jojo's date bread*

2 oz marg  
6 oz softened brown sugar  
¼ pt water  
8 oz plain flour  
½ tsp salt  
1 tsp soda bicarb  
3 oz chopped dates

1. Melt the marg and sugar in warm water.
2. Mix dry ingredients in large bowl, making a well in the centre.
3. Pour in melted mixture, beating gradually until it is smooth.
4. Bake one hour in medium oven (gas 4 as was).

## *Cubic eggs*

This is from Nada and Jojo High Tea days – a small plastic device that you put a hard-boiled egg into when it is still warm, screw it in and turn it out when cold. The egg and yolk go into a neat cube. A daft novelty item that I remember intriguing the children when they were young. It's in some forgotten drawer somewhere waiting for a reincarnation: studded to make dice perhaps?

## *Nada's miseria*

I don't know why it's called miseria – but it is a traditional Polish dish that he always made for Sunday High Tea. Stephen says he didn't add the sour cream so maybe that's my own variant. With yoghurt instead, and the cucumber grated, it becomes tzadziki.

2 large cucumbers, peeled  
and sliced  
carton sour cream  
4 tbsps white vinegar  
fresh dill to taste  
s&p

1. Place sliced cucumbers in a colander, salt with coarse sea salt and let sit for 20 mins.
2. Mix dill and vinegar in a medium bowl. Drain and add cucumbers and toss.
3. Leave to stand (up to 16 hours).
4. Add sour cream, s&p to taste.

## *Jojo's Welsh rarebit mix*

I'm glad to have found this lurking in a file that Gaby made once. It's a nice little high tea standby for when little young persons come to stay. I am looking forward to that.

6 oz cheddar  
2 oz butter  
2 eggs  
1 tsp mustard  
s&p

1. Liquidise ingredients and store in a jar and use within a few days.
2. Spread on toast and bubble under the grill.



## Deconstructed biscuits

Chocolate biscuits wrapped in foil were what you had for tea at other people's houses, not at my house. We had doorsteps of bread and butter with jam, but I can't remember cakes or biscuits. At Barbara's house in Meadway Court, there were two treats: her mother Lois would read a story to us while we had tea, and we would reduce a Penguin biscuit to its constituent parts. Scrape off all the chocolate, then all the filling and eat each section separately. Silly, and yet a great pleasure.

And while we're on biscuits, mention should be made of Stephen's two-week stint on the factory baking floor of McVitie & Price when he had not paid proper attention to the oven temperature and burnt a hundred yards of biscuits that came tumbling off the rollers in a humiliating heap at his feet as his line manager deflected the batch from its normal path.

## Flapjacks

I do a batch of these for Stephen in his workshop when I'm feeling nice. Can't always find the recipe so here it is from November 1989 when I got it from somewhere – probably the back of a golden syrup tin.

1. Melt first three and take off the heat.
2. Add the oats till it's a soft consistency.
3. Bung in a greased square tin in the oven for 20 mins.
4. Slice into squares while still warm.
5. I sometimes add a pinch of ground ginger or raisins before baking.

6 oz marg  
3 oz sugar  
3 big tbsp golden syrup  
8-10 oz porridge oats

## Gingerbread men

1. Sift together the flour, bicarbonate of soda, ginger and cinnamon. Add the butter and whuzz to breadcrumb stage. Stir in the sugar.
2. Lightly beat the egg and golden syrup together, add to rest and whuzz again until the mixture clumps together. Tip out, knead briefly until smooth, wrap in clingfilm and leave to chill in the fridge for 15 mins.
3. Line two baking trays with parchment.
4. Roll the dough out to a ¼" thickness on a lightly floured surface. Cut out gingerbread men shapes (Christmas trees and so on) and arrange on the baking tray with gaps between.
5. Bake for 12-15 mins, or until lightly golden-brown. Leave on the tray for 10 mins and then move to a wire rack to finish cooling.
6. Decorate with the writing icing.



12 oz plain flour  
1 tsp bicarb  
2 tsp ground ginger  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
4½ oz butter  
6 oz light soft brown sugar  
1 egg  
4 tbsp golden syrup  
writing icing to decorate

## *Brownies*

This is what I did when the children were young, but the BBC website has a recipe that runs into 900 words and needless to say uses butter and best dark chocolate, and also has bits of chopped white and ordinary milk chocolate chopped in. This is shorter.

3½ oz marg  
7 oz sugar  
2 eggs  
½ tsp vanilla  
pinch salt  
2 oz drinking chocolate  
3 oz self-raising flour

1. Cream the marg, sugar and add eggs, chocolate and flour.
2. Pour into greased tin and bake ½ hr on medium.
3. Cut into squares while still warm.

## *Jennie's millionaire's shortbread*

When our children were all little, we used to buy this in St Andrews every time we went there. Here's Jennie's home-made version, given to me in 1988 (written on the back of a Greyfriar's Primary School milk distribution notice), but frankly there was a bakery in the High Street that just made the best so we did not make it often.

8 oz flour  
2 oz sugar  
4 oz butter  
4 oz caster sugar  
4 oz butter  
2 tbsp golden syrup  
1 small tin condensed milk  
6 oz cooking chocolate

1. Rub together the first three ingredients and press into a square tin and bake for 20 mins on medium.
2. Bring the toffee ingredients to the boil, stirring continuously.
3. Cool a little and pour over the shortbread.
4. Melt the chocolate in a double boiler with a little water and then pour over the top.
5. Cut in squares when still a little warm.

## *Florentines*

Based on Delia, these are just divine and one might as well make double quantities. I've just thrown in piles of whatever nuts and fruit I have around, plus my preserved citrons and oranges in lieu of the angelica. Slimming, they ain't.

1 oz butter  
3 oz sugar  
2 oz plain flour, plus extra for  
dusting  
2½ fl oz double cream  
2 oz whole almonds, blanched  
2 oz ready-flaked almonds  
1 oz pistachios, macadamias,  
pecans or whatever  
1¾ oz sultanas or raisins or  
dried cranberries  
2 oz whole candied peel  
1 oz glacé cherries  
1 oz angelica  
5 oz dark chocolate (or white  
chocolate for half of them)

1. Melt butter, sugar and flour, over a very low heat, and gradually add the cream, stirring to keep it smooth.
2. Chop and add all the remaining ingredients, except the chocolate. Stir thoroughly and cool.
3. Place heaped tsps of the mixture on to baking sheets lined with parchment, spacing them about 1" apart. Flatten each spoonful with the back of the spoon, then bake on a high shelf for about 12-15 mins, or until golden.
4. Take them out of the oven and leave to harden for 2-3 mins, before quickly removing them to a wire rack to cool.
5. Melt the chocolate in a basin over a saucepan of barely simmering water.
6. Place the cooled Florentines, base up, on a wire rack and, using a brush, coat the underside of each Florentine with warm melted chocolate.
7. Just before it sets, make a patterned, wavy line on each one, using a fork.

## Marion's almond biscuits

It's nice to have something from Bertek's side of the family and these are some biscuits I used to make a lot because they are easier than Florentines and very good. I suspect you could use up an egg white or two on this. Marion was Bertek's wife, and family lore had it that she used to know Frieda Lawrence. Marion was steeped in English literature and did live in Nottingham, so it is possible, and she was 10 years older than Bertus, but nothing after her death corroborated that they had known each other.

1. Fill a buttered tin with melted chocolate and allow to set.
2. Mix everything else and spread over the chocolate.
3. Bake on a low to medium for  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour.
4. Cut into fingers after 5 mins.

8 oz chocolate  
2 oz each of glacé cherries,  
coconut, ground almonds,  
sultanas – all chopped up  
3 oz sugar and 2 oz butter  
1 egg

## Meringues

I've got two meringue associations, one with Joszi who used to give us massive meringues as big as saucers and soft in the middle, the other as some sort of friendship symbol with Susanna – though neither of us remembers why.

1. Clean the equipment rigorously – one tip is to wipe a lemon quarter round everything.
2. Whizz eggs to stiff peak stage, starting on slow and speeding up when they get frothy. Add optional vinegar or cream of tartar.
3. Whisk the sugar in on fast speed, about a tbsp at a time, until you have a stiff and glossy mixture with a satin sheen.
4. Spoon onto baking sheets lined with parchment or rice paper.
5. Bake for about 45 mins. The general principle is: they go into the oven at 150°C, the temperature is then immediately reduced to 140°C for the actual baking and, once baked, the oven is turned off and the meringues are left in there, undisturbed, until the oven is completely cold.
6. Wedge two together with thick whipped cream.

2 oz sugar to 1 egg white  
teeny bit of cream of tartar  
(some people use a drop of  
vinegar)



## Macaroons

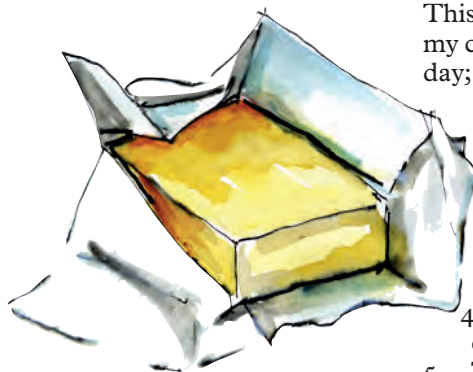
Why the internet isn't always helpful: I just wanted this simple recipe. Lots of recipes came up on Google, but they were all too complicated: mostly for those French bobbles in pastel shades (and I'm not saying I wouldn't like to master those). This is the quick use-up-egg-whites one.

1. Mix almonds and sugar and add essences.
2. Add unbeaten egg whites.
3. Stir in cornflour and 2 tsp water.
4. Arrange on rice paper and bake for 15 mins on medium.
5. Can put a half almond slice on top of each one.

rice paper  
4 oz ground almonds  
6 oz sugar  
2 egg whites  
1 tbsp cornflour  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp vanilla and/or almond  
essence

### *Sponge cake in general*

This is the theory – but I just don't have sponge fingers. Sometimes my cakes come out OK, but I had to throw one away only the other day; flat, solid and characterless.



1. Traditionally made with four ingredients – eggs, sugar, flour and butter.
2. As a general rule the weight of the flour is equal to the weight of the sugar, and roughly half the weight of the eggs. ratio: 1: 1: 2.
3. Butter can be variable and even left out entirely or substituted with oil.
4. Added flavourings include chocolate, vanilla, coconut, coffee, fruit pulp, carrot, and ground nuts.
5. The basic principle is to get as much air as possible trapped in the mix of egg and sugar.

### *Angel cake*

For using up egg white so this is a small version to be doubled if this is the main feature.

2 oz plain flour  
1½ oz icing sugar  
4 egg whites, at room temperature  
2½ oz caster sugar  
¼ tsp salt  
½ tsp cream of tartar  
½ tsp pure vanilla extract  
fresh fruit to serve

1. Whisk egg whites until quite frothy. Add the sugar, salt, cream of tartar and vanilla extract, and continue whisking until the mixture forms stiff peaks.
2. Sift the flour mixture over the egg whites and fold in very gently with a large metal spoon until well blended.
3. Spoon the mixture into an O-shaped tin, making sure there are no air pockets. Bake for 35 mins or until well risen, golden brown and springy to the touch.
4. Invert the cake, still in the tin, onto a wire rack and leave to cool completely, upside down. When it is cold, slide a long knife around the side of the tin to loosen the cake, then invert it onto a serving plate.
5. Just before serving, fill the hollow centre with some fresh fruit and serve with cream.



## Joszi's Mohnstrudel

This is something I associate with my cousin Joszi who was (is) a brilliant cake-maker. She is 22 years older than me so it is an uneasy cousinship as the generations have got out of sync. When my father died, she came over with some white lebkuchen that she gave to Vita (who was at home for some reason) and told her to make herself scarce. She wanted to tell me how angry she had been at my mother all the years and how Lotte had kept Joszi, Alice and Elli from their uncle and only surviving older relation.

I listened (she had a point) but afterwards I wondered why such undue haste to unleash feelings that must have been pent up for years. Perhaps she felt my parents should have adopted the three girls, but my brother was a six-month-old baby when the girls arrived off the Kindertransport and they lived in a very small flat. I would never have been born if that had happened so I can't regret their decision. Joszi softened later when some affable letters from Lotte turned up.

This makes 2 strudels as it's a bit of bother so might as well make one for the freezer.

1. In a small bowl, mix dry yeast with a pinch each of flour, sugar, and salt in 1 tbsp of warm water and set aside for 10 mins to activate.
2. Warm milk, melted butter, and lightly beaten yolks; over low heat.
3. Mix flour and salt in large mixing bowl. Make a hollow in the centre and pour frothy activated yeast mixture into it and cover with flour; add milk mixture to flour and mix into a dough; knead for 5-10 mins then cover and put dough in a warm place and let rise for 1 hour.
4. In a saucepan, mix sugar and water for filling. Bring sugar/water mixture to a boil then reduce heat. Mix in poppy seed and other filling ingredients (except rum). Stir on low heat for 5 mins, then remove from heat, stir in rum, and set aside.
5. Fold risen dough several times and knead for 5 mins on floured surface. Divide dough in two equal halves and knead each half again briefly. Form both halves into balls and let rest for 5-10 mins.
6. Roll one dough ball out with rolling pin until about 12 x 18". Spread half the filling over surface of dough leaving 1/2" clear at the edges. Sprinkle some raisins over. Roll strudel from narrowest end forming a 12" long roll. Place strudel in half of a greased and floured baking pan. Repeat process for second strudel.
7. Brush strudel with lightly beaten egg white and let it rest while the oven heats up.
8. Bake for 45 mins to 1 hour and cool.

2 lb plain flour  
1 tsp salt  
1 packet of yeast  
1/2 pt of milk  
1/4 lb unsalted butter  
2 egg yolks  
3/4 lb ground poppy seed  
1/2 lb sugar  
1/4 pt water  
3 tbsp melted butter  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
2 tbsp honey  
1 tbsp lemon juice  
3 tbsp rum  
raisins (to taste)  
1 egg white to brush the top



Serve warm or room temperature, in 3/4" slices, topped with icing sugar.

## Sephardi orange & almond cake



This cake has north African and Spanish roots and is associated with Sephardi Jews around the Mediterranean, which isn't my background, but I think it sits well with this short section of Jewish cake desserts, and also I succeed with it every time. I've found various versions of it (one uses clementines) and this is an adaptation. It makes a lot of cake – enough for 18 at one bring-a-dish occasion – so half this for ordinary occasions (though it freezes well and unfreezes quite quickly). Good served as a pudding with freshly sliced blood oranges and whipped cream. Use a proper tin rather than a silicone mould as it tends to stick to the bottom, so line it with parchment.

Try same idea with lemon and hazelnuts.

1 egg to 2 oz sugar to 2 oz almonds – easier to remember, 1: 2: 2

large unwaxed oranges  
a dash of olive oil for greasing  
the tin  
6 eggs  
12 oz white sugar  
2 tbsp orange blossom water  
1 tsp baking powder  
pinch of salt  
12 oz almonds, coarsely ground

1. Boil the oranges in water for a couple of hours or until the rind is soft – till the tines of a fork slip in easily.
2. Heat the oven (with no fan) to 180°C with a rack just below the middle.
3. Whisk the eggs and sugar together until light, creamy and three times their original volume. You should be able to dribble a line of batter off the end of the whisk into a complete figure of eight before it sinks into the mix.
4. When the oranges are done lift them out and cut them in half to remove any pips. Then whuzz – rind, pulp and all – to a purée.
5. Mix in the orange blossom water, baking powder, salt and ground almonds. Then mix in the orange purée.
6. Pour the batter into a prepared cake tin and bake for around 50 mins or until evenly browned on top and cooked through. Rotate the cake half way through baking if it is not browning evenly on top.
7. Let the cake cool in the tin before carefully turning it out. This deliciously moist and fragrant cake will keep well in the fridge, wrapped, for several days.

## Cesca's carrot cake

4 eggs  
2 cups plain flour  
2 cups brown sugar  
3 cups grated carrot (2 lb)  
1¼ cups corn oil  
1½ tsp soda bicarb.  
1 tsp salt  
2-3 tsp cinnamon  
could add walnuts  
*topping:*  
½ lemon  
vanilla essence  
½ lb butter  
½ lb cream cheese  
8 oz icing sugar

When Cesca discovered I had her carrot cake in my collection, she was surprised; she kept it a guarded secret, she said, and had only given it out to a very few people, ever. I don't make it very often so I am no competition to her signature dish – and nor, Dear Reader, must you be.

1. Mix.
2. Cook for 30 mins.
3. Topping on when cold.

That's all her recipe says.

## *Jojo's chestnut torte*

1. Mix all the ingredients, form into a roll and freeze.
2. When set, dribble over a chocolate glaze made from plain chocolate melted gently in butter and water.
3. Put back in freezer. Take out a few hours before cutting into slices.

tin natural chestnut  
tin sweetened chestnut  
icing sugar to taste  
vanilla or rum flavour  
chocolate bar

## *Chestnut cake*

I made this for a fellow Brother at the Art Workers' Guild who has to have gluten free, and it was light and springy. There was enough for a smaller base, which I spread with sweet chestnut from a tin and topped with pear halves (feather cut) and caramelised. A discovery!

1. Butter and line a cake tin.
2. Beat egg yolks and sugar until light and creamy. Stir in the crème fraîche and lemon zest. Add the sifted flour and baking powder.
3. Whisk 4 egg whites until stiff; then fold into the cake mix using the whisk blades.
4. Pour into the tin and bake for 35-40 mins until the cake feels firm to the touch. Cool in the tin for 5 mins, then turn out and cool completely on a wire rack. Dust with icing sugar and serve.

125 g caster sugar  
4 eggs, separated  
200 g tub crème fraîche  
1 large unwaxed lemon  
125 g chestnut flour  
2 tsp baking powder  
icing sugar, for dusting

## *Alice's walnut torte*

1. Beat egg yolks and sugar till pale.
2. Add ground nuts and lemon rind, fold in beaten egg whites.
3. Bake slowly in a medium oven.
4. Icing: lemon juice and icing sugar, mix until it is spreadable. Decorate with walnut halves. Or my preference is to make the base larger and thinner and spread it with fruit and a glaze.

4 oz sugar  
4 oz ground walnuts  
4 egg yolks,  
4 egg whites  
grated lemon rind

## *Uncooked almond cake*

This was an ancient photocopied page in my cuttings collection with annotations that looks like Jojo's hand. She'd written 'absolutely delicious' at the top. The original says to use strips of waxed paper to help unmoulding and I think that must have been before clingfilm arrived. It also says to decorate the top with candied violets – but you can't get those where I live. 'No call for them' say the local shops. Paris certainly; maybe Fortnum's.

1. Dry out the sponge fingers in a very low oven, without allowing them to brown.
2. Line a mould with clingfilm – extending over the edges (for easy unmoulding); then line that with the sponge fingers saving a few for the top (as for summer pudding).
3. Cream the butter and sugar, then mix in the almonds, the extract and eggs one at a time.
4. Spoon over the sponge fingers, cover the top with more fingers and set a saucer on top with a weight on top of that.
5. Leave, weighted, in the fridge for 24 hours.
6. Unmould and serve with whipped cream.

pkt sponge fingers  
4 oz unsalted butter  
4 oz sugar  
¾ lb blanched almonds  
tsp almond extract  
2 eggs

double cream to serve

## *Hazelnut chocolate cake*

Jojo often made this when we all trooped over to Finchley for Sunday High Tea – usually in a long tin, D-shaped in section so it turned out nicely domed. There is a groove in the top for a runnel of marmalade. I've still got this tin.

8 oz plain dark chocolate  
8 oz butter  
8 oz sugar  
8 oz ground hazelnuts  
4 oz fresh breadcrumbs  
6 eggs  
grated rind of 2 oranges  
orange marmalade

*glaze:*

4 oz plain chocolate  
1 dessertspoon honey  
2 oz butter  
whole hazelnuts and strips of  
orange rind to decorate

1. Butter a tin and dust with flour.
2. Melt chocolate in a bowl over hot water.
3. Whisk butter and sugar till fluffy and add eggs.
4. Add in the melted chocolate, the ground nuts and the breadcrumbs. Then the orange zest.
5. Spoon into tin and level the top.
6. Bake for 25 mins – don't overbake; the centre should be firm to a very light touch.
7. Cool in tin and then turn out.
8. Melt the glaze ingredients in the same chocolate bowl used before; stir till smooth and starting to thicken.
9. Spread with a thin layer of marmalade; then pour over the glaze, covering the sides as well.
10. Decorate with the orange strips and whole nuts.



## *Auntie's apple cake*

This came from someone at Emily's playgroup. I don't remember her name, but her son was (poor chap) the playgroup 'bully' – which just means he hadn't yet worked out how to be socialised. He and Emily must have played together, though, as how else would I have got this recipe which was a favourite tea-time offering for some years, and one of the few recipes in which wholemeal flour on its own really works. I don't know who 'auntie' was.

5 oz whole wheat flour  
4 oz butter  
2 eggs  
4 oz brown sugar  
1 tsp baking powder  
water or fruit juice to mix  
cored eating apples cut into  
crescents  
brown sugar  
cinnamon

1. Cream the fat and sugar till fluffy and beat in the eggs.
2. Mix flour and baking powder and fold in with the juice to make a soft mixture.
3. Spread over a greased Swiss roll tin.
4. Arrange the apple in overlapping rows over the raw cake mix. Sprinkle the top with sugar and cinnamon.
5. Bake for 25-30 mins on medium.
6. When cool, cut into squares along the apple lines.

## *Babysitter's marmalade cake*

I got this from one of the mothers in the babysitting circle we used to belong to. You swapped tickets worth half an hour of your time: double time after midnight.



1. Cream the fat and sugar.
2. Add rest.
3. 1-1½ hours in medium oven.

### *Georgia's upside-down cake*

Georgia's comments on our household cuisine put us in the upside-down category with this comment:

My biggest home memories of your house/kitchen are Krakow eggs, pain perdu with oranges, the lute pie, obviously artichokes with brown butter, tooth-busting turrón at Christmas, endless rounds of smoked salmon on chollah, the extraordinary tomato symphony, things coming out of moulds, things being squozen and whuzzed, flocks of ducks, geese, pigeons, pheasants and other birds, frighteningly old glasses filled with heavenly sticky wines, bad foreign accents, repeated jokes, Stephen never getting up to help, Gaby wriggling in his chair, debate, laughing, crying. So. I guess if I had to invent a dish to sum all that up, it would be some sort of pigeon cooked in sauternes, with a Russian accent (dill?), atop a tomato jelly in a Victorian mould with some whuzzed artichokes and a slice of orange on the side.

I think an upside-down cake recipe was meant to follow as a metaphor and I didn't chase it up as I liked it like this.

### *Rosie's panforte*

Rosie sent me a photocopy of a newspaper recipe (Rowley Leigh, probably from *The Guardian*), but I always think of it as hers and I do it most years. The figs give it a softness.

1. Toast and chop the walnuts.
2. Mix together all the dried fruit chopping it as you go.
3. Add nuts and spices.
4. Bring honey very gently to the boil to soft ball stage.
5. Pour into the mixture and stir well, and quickly knead into a malleable mass that you can roll into a 3 cm thick disk.
6. Lay 3 layers of moistened rice-paper on a baking tray and flatten the disk on top.
7. Bake on a low oven for about an hour (I think it's often longer).



- 6 oz self-raising flour
- 6 oz marg
- 3 eggs
- 6 oz sugar
- ½ tsp each of salt and baking powder
- 3 heaped tbsps marmalade

- 200 g almonds
- 200 g walnuts
- 200 g mixed candied fruit: orange and lemon peel, glacé cherries, angelica etc.
- 100 g honey
- 50 g flour
- 150 g dried figs
- 60 g cocoa powder
- ¼ tsp each of powdered cloves and coriander
- ½ tsp nutmeg
- ¼ tsp white pepper
- ¾ tsp cinnamon
- rice paper and icing sugar

## Granny's Schokoladenfisch

This is the only thing I ever knew my grandmother to make, and I don't think this is quite it, but it's the nearest I can get by combining various sources. I remember a chocolate powder effect – maybe she rolled it in cocoa. It was somehow more gritty than smooth chocolatey. When you sliced through it, there were lots of 'bits' in each slice. I didn't like it all that much. She would send us one for Christmas and that was her family present.

100 g unsalted butter (soft)  
150 g caster sugar  
2 large eggs  
250 g of dark chocolate  
2 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder  
250 g blanched split almonds  
75 g natural almonds (unskinned), roughly chopped  
75 g hazelnuts (roughly chopped)  
50 g pistachio nuts (roughly chopped)  
100 g candied lemon peel  
pinch salt  
40 g cornflour

1. Grease a fish-shaped tin.
2. Melt the chocolate carefully in a bain marie.
3. Cream the butter and sugar together and beat in the eggs. Add warmed butter, nut, dried fruits, cocoa and chocolate.
4. Transfer this mixture, still in its bowl, to the fridge to firm up a bit for 20–30 mins.
5. Grease the fish form, dust with more cocoa powder and pack the mixture into it. Return to the fridge for another 15 mins and then turn out (if you can).



If there's any mixture left over, make it into a fat sausage shape, dusting with icing sugar and tying it round with thin string to make it look like a salami.

## Pasta di mandorla

Marzipan fruits made at Christmas mostly. Emily always buys them for me whenever she sees them abroad. Also marzipan pigs. We drooled together over shops selling them as fruits and vegetables in Sicily one year; in Paris another; and in Barcelona a third. There are two methods and I am never sure which is better and do whichever I feel like at the time. The cooked is slightly stickier. Make into the desired shapes and paint with food colouring. Very therapeutic.

1 lb icing sugar

1 lb ground almonds

2 egg whites to bind – or you can use a little water mixed with brandy

½ tsp vanilla essence

1 tsp lemon juice

### Uncooked marzipan

1. Sift the icing sugar in a bowl with the ground almonds.
2. Add the remaining ingredients and mix to make a stiff paste. Knead until smooth.

8 oz granulated sugar

6 oz ground almonds

1½ oz icing sugar

pinch of cream of tartar

1 egg white, lightly forked

5 tbsp water

½ tsp vanilla extract

### Cooked marzipan

1. Put the sugar and the water in a heavy-based saucepan and cook on a low heat until the sugar has dissolved.
2. Add cream of tartar and bring to the boil until the sugar reaches 116°C – soft ball stage.
3. Remove from the heat and mix the mixture until it turns cloudy, then add ground almonds and vanilla extract. Add to the pan the egg white, return to a low heat and stir for a couple of mins.

# 14

## Desserts

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**E**veryday suppers are followed by fruit, but we do all love a delicious and wicked concoction on a feast day and in this section are some of my favourites. The connection between puddings and my cross-sectional musings about my life isn't an obvious match, but put it this way. I like the dessert trolley approach in restaurants where you hesitatingly choose between mouth-watering wickednesses (and sometimes are offered a taster platter of five or more wincey little morsels). That's the banquet approach that I've already said I favour for picnics. The original English meaning of the word banquet actually means an aftercourse of sweetmeats, nuts and confectionery novelties, not a large formal or state meal. It would often be served in a separate room or garden building. Freedom of choice – separate room – sweets? Does that work? Never mind, this is the section on a room of one's own.



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### *Freelancing*

I have always had my own room for my freelance work, and I dream of a garden folly from time to time, so I can go 'out' to work. I think every room in our house has at one time been 'my' room and my favourite is the current glass desk up in the eaves with two skylights above it in the attic. Behind me is a jungle of hoarded stuff – picnic baskets; wooden toys and children's picture books; skis and toboggans; art works galore; rolls of brass-rubbings, architectural student drawings, book-binding leather and marbled papers; boxes of hand-spun wool; a chandelier frame for a project I have for years been wanting to do; computer devices and paper of all kinds.

I went freelance before we were married and got my first commission for a book from Longman, the publisher I had left. It was for their Then & There Series and titled *Cortes and the Aztecs* and I allegedly researched it on our three-month honeymoon in Mexico. I say 'allegedly' because I think we made that an excuse for going away for so long, but in fact it was a slim little volume for schools and gathered together from secondary sources. The next book was *Fashion in the 20s and 30s* published by Ian Allan in 1973, the year Emily was born, and I still remember how my agent rapidly pushed me into a seat so my 'bump' was instantly shielded by the table when we

met the publishers so that they wouldn't take one look at me and withdraw the contract. I wrote the second one, *Fashion in the 40s and 50s*, in the year Vita was born, but by the time they requested the 60s and 70s I was too much into the thick of child-rearing, and also I didn't feel I had enough distance to be able to do the period any justice. I now have 20 authored and co-authored books to my name, some of which are original and some are frankly journalism in book form – research a subject, any topic, and then write about it. There *was*, as it happened, a moment at which I could have become a food writer. I was asked if I would go round Ireland and write about Irish food. But I couldn't drive at the time so I had to decline. That's how haphazard it was before ubiquitous specialisms. I don't regret it. I've enjoyed my mixed bag, and it's nice to be published by the British Library and Oxford University Press (though neither impressed me as publishers).



When Vita was about one, I became a fiction reader first for Granada, then Penguin and Picador and I was paid £8 a book and that gradually rose to £25 a book a few years later – I think I was a reader for six or seven years. I would read ten novels a month and what was required was a reasonably detailed plot summary followed by a commentary on the book and assessment of whether it fitted the particular publisher's list. This was all before word-processing and I couldn't type. I wrote my reports out in longhand and took them to typist Kate Weber who lived a walk across the Heath from Lissenden Gardens by the Hampstead Heath little line. I would walk over with a pushchair (Vita inside and Emily trotting along) and stop at the One O'clock Club where there was a little group of us watching our little ones clambering over various assault courses (some of which have been health-and-safetied out of existence now).

Later, when we moved to Muswell Hill, I had a little arrangement with Johnnie Yglesias who was head of design at Penguin and lived nearby: he would bring home a packet of books and I would deliver the last lot back to him with the reports. He lived next door to Shula from *The Archers* – the actor that is. Why is that relevant? Only how the memory sequences itself – I see their swimming pool in my mind's eye associated with a brown-paper package of books and manuscripts, though I never saw the Archer-moneyed pool itself, and the books were never wrapped up.

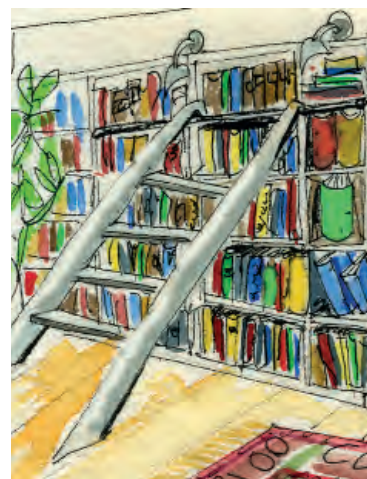
Most of these were bound copies because Penguin, at that time, did paperback versions of books that were first published in hardback. So they were all worthy novels that had survived several rounds of editorial scrutiny. As a reader, what you had to know was what would make a good 'Penguin' book, or 'Granada' book and this was something you had to gather by sixth sense – largely a matter of being on the same wavelength

as the editor one was reading for, which I was. I remember pressing for Granada to take an Anita Brookner novel before she won the Booker prize. The editor agreed and the sales team grudgingly said they'd see if they could shift some. It turned out to be thousands. In this way I read Barbara Pym, Ursula Le Guin, Anne Tyler, Alasdair Grey, Jerzy Koskinsky, Martin Amis, Joyce Carol Oates, Gore Vidal, Ahdaf Soueif, Susan Sontag, A. S. Byatt, Doris Lessing, Shusaku Endo, Tobias Wolff, Barbara Trapido, Penelope Fitzgerald, Salman Rushdie (before he was known) and even Iris Murdoch. Many more famous writers (I still have my little notebook in which I logged book titles); quite a lot of complete rubbish and a great many well-behaved but perfectly indifferent novels too. These were the hardest as I felt a sense of responsibility to be fair to those books that were really very good, but no one would miss them if they weren't put into paperback.

The editors were quite canny: they would keep their readers going with just enough of the cream of good novels to make it feel like a privilege to be paid to read (albeit a pittance) but a good bit of slog wading through indifferent manuscripts too. It often puzzled me why they would need a reader's report on Iris Murdoch (and I put hours of careful thought into *The Philosopher's Pupil*, which came to me in typescript) and I came to the conclusion that the publisher needed a quick digest of the story and then some pithy critical comment so he could negotiate through the conferences with the sales team (who actually held the power). This is all before bidding wars changed the way novels were bought, and how they were marketed. I still remember my comment on *Midnight's Children* and I stand by it: 'This is the sort of book that will win prizes, but I found it unreadable'.

I got my come-uppance in the end with a manuscript by James Clavell, which arrived on the back of a motorbike in three quire-sized boxes of typed manuscript – 1,500 pages; could have been more. Would I shorten it? I should have said No, but I was obscurely flattered as this looked like a real editorial job. What I did not do was treat it as a test of my mettle and completely ignore the pence per hour imperative. I should have read it very carefully twice all the way through, then made careful notes, then perhaps suggest a plot line or two that could be omitted without altering the sense of the whole. What I actually did was march through all 1,500 pages deleting the bits I was bored by (reams on Japanese Civil Service exams I dimly seem to recall). I'm fairly sure this became the novel *Gai-jin* – though it was called something else at the time. The novelist was (and rightly so) appalled by my cavalier scissoring. Nothing was said; but I never worked for Penguin again.

It was time to stop anyway. I had lost my excitement and was no longer approaching each unknown author as if this





would be the next major find. It took years before I was able to read a novel for pleasure again and even longer before I could bring myself to buy one.

Writing the reports kept me limbered up in putting sentences together. But I wasn't thinking about it in the right way. It took one of those moments, like Sarah making the soup, when I learned something fundamental about writing; about taking care over how one idea follows from another. A colleague of Stephen's had arrived earlier than expected, so I asked him to read an article I had written to give him something to do. It was the first of many that I wrote for *The Strad* in after years, and being the first, I wanted to make an impression. I was also passionate about the subject, having taken up the violin at the age of 36. This was on learning to play an instrument late in life and was called 'That Strain Again'. He read it twice with care and attention to detail, and then quizzed me on points of punctuation and about what I meant and why. I discovered how important it is to read your own work as a reader would.

This became so much easier when word-processing came in and I was so in love with it that I got involved with software companies and wrote manuals for them.

All the literature accompanying anything to do with computers was illiterate and I thought I could do better and that there would be money in it. That's in the technology section in Chapter 16 and may have

been a Keatsian Chamber of Maiden Thought moment in my life when many doors are set open and perhaps I took a wrong one, being 'intoxicated with the light and the atmosphere,

[and seeing] nothing but pleasant wonders'. Word-processing *was* a wonder and I was a very early adopter, but it put me into a technology box that I've escaped from with some difficulty.

It's not clear how a mixed portfolio of work provokes a four-season selection of puddings and dessert recipes – diversity and opulence maybe? We're pushing at the edges of relevance here, but let's not worry about that. Desserts are an irrelevance in any case, in the sense that one can easily do without them, and yet what poems some of them can be. Especially those in this selection.



## Marmalade bread-and-butter pudding

From Delia's *Winter*. There's also a chocolate version; substitute dark chocolate, white sugar and rum for the marmalade, Demerara and candies peel. Day-old bread soaks up the juices better than fresh.

1. Butter the bread on one side, then spread the marmalade on 3 of these slices, and put the other 3 slices on top (buttered side down) so you've got 3 rounds of sandwiches. Butter the top slice and cut each one into quarters.
2. Arrange the sandwiches, butter side up, overlapping each other in the baking dish and standing almost upright.
3. Whisk the milk, cream, eggs and sugar together and pour this all over the bread. Scatter the surface of the bread with the grated orange zest, sugar and candied peel.
4. Bake for 35-40 mins in a hottish oven until it's puffy and golden and the top crust is crunchy.
5. Serve the pudding straight from the oven while it's still puffy.

2 tbsp orange marmalade  
6 slices day-old white bread, crusts on  
2 oz butter  
10 fl oz whole milk  
2½ fl oz double cream  
3 eggs  
3 oz sugar  
1 orange zest  
1 tbsp Demerara sugar  
1 oz candied peel, finely chopped  
  
crème fraîche to serve

## Margaret's croissant-and-butter pudding

I have had this several times at her fabulous buffet parties (when there are chairs and tables all over the house including on the upstairs landing). It works equally well with panettone.

1. Butter a baking dish. Halve and butter croissants, then put halves together, cut into three and lay in dish. Add sultanas to taste.
2. Beat eggs and add to mixture of milk, cream and warmed syrup. Pour over the croissants and leave for 15 mins.
3. Bake in pre-warmed medium-ish oven for 50 mins.

6 croissants (or sliced panettone)  
2-3 tbsp syrup  
2 oz butter  
10 fl oz milk  
10 fl oz single cream  
3 eggs  
sultanas

## Pumpkin pie

This is the one I do every year – it's from an unidentifiable newspaper; possibly *The Guardian* late 70s. The quantities aren't critical and if there's some left over to make another small tart it's nice to add some apple or pear purée to the filling to bulk it out.

1. Put the ingredients into a Magimix in the order listed (right) and whuzz.
2. Pour into pastry cases and bake for about an hour on medium.
3. Optional American extra: make holes in the hot-cooked pie and pour in brandy.



2 x 9" sweet blind-baked pastry cases  
1 lb cooked, drained pumpkin  
6 oz dark brown sugar  
2 tsp cinnamon  
½ tsp each: ginger, nutmeg, salt  
6 oz milk or single cream  
4 eggs  
8 oz double cream  
a good glug of brandy

sweet pastry case  
 8 oz boiled, peeled sweet potato  
 3 oz melted butter  
 3 oz dark brown sugar  
 6 oz single cream  
 2 large eggs  
 grated nutmeg and a spoon of  
 cinnamon  
 3 tbsp brandy  
 6 oz shelled walnuts

sweet pastry case (12" size)  
 4 oz unsalted butter  
 4 oz maple syrup  
 1 tsp vanilla extract  
 8 oz brown sugar  
 8 fl oz cream  
 3 eggs  
 12 oz pecan halves



*biscuit base*

10 or so ginger nuts, hobnobs or  
 digestives  
 about 2 oz butter

*filling*

1 lb creamed cheese (ricotta;  
 mascarpone or curd)  
 a bit of crème fraîche  
 2 oz icing sugar  
 flavouring (lime zest and juice  
 or vanilla pod)  
 3-4 eggs  
  
 ½ lb sugar  
 6 tbsp butter  
 ¼ pt heavy cream

## Sweet potato pie

From the same source as the pumpkin pie.

1. Put the all ingredients except the walnuts into a Magimix in the order listed (left) and whuzz.
2. Chop half the walnuts and add to the mixture.
3. Pour into pastry cases and arrange the rest of the walnuts in a circle all round the edge of the pie.
4. Bake for about 40 mins on medium to high, testing with a skewer as you would for a baked custard.

## Pecan pie

1. Melt the butter, syrup, vanilla extract and sugar over a low heat. Cool for 5-10 mins so the eggs don't cook when you add them.
2. Add the cream and then the beaten eggs.
3. Arrange the pecan halves evenly in the pastry case and carefully pour over the syrup mixture.
4. Bake for 40-50 mins on medium – the pie will be golden-brown, but the filling should still be slightly soft.
5. Serve with cream.

## Caramel nut cheesecake

The original is Ottolenghi whose recipe makes the whole thing seem incredibly complicated with lots of stages. If you think 'cheesecake' and just make it up according to what cheese you have got then the 2 caramels are the only extra spin – and it is divine.

1. Whuzz the biscuit base with melted butter and pack into a loose-based tin.
2. Whuzz the filling and pour on the base.
3. Bake until set – you have to keep looking in the oven.
4. Caramel 1 – this is just a praline and it's worth making extra to keep in a screw-top jar for the next time you do this.
5. Caramel 2 – butter and sugar caramelised and then add cream. I don't think the quantities matter (but details below).
6. When all cold, pour caramel 2 over the cheesecake and sprinkle with caramel 1. Nothing more complicated than that.

### Making a caramel

1. Heat the sugar very gently without water; don't stir, but carefully shake the pan till the sugar dissolves and goes a golden amber.

### Caramel 1

1. As above, with toasted nuts added to it (macadamia in the original; pecans I thought were better).
2. Pour mixture onto greaseproof paper and let it go hard.
3. Break it up with a rolling pin (stop the bits flying about with a cloth on top).

### Caramel 2

1. Make a caramel; add the butter and whisk until it has melted.
2. Take off the heat and slowly add the cream. It'll froth up and you might have to return to the heat to melt all the sugar in it.
3. Whisk till smooth and let it cool.



## *Cheese cake*

My standard one, but there are lots of versions and I don't use a recipe any more.

1. Make a base with the crushed biscuits and butter.
2. Mix all the rest and pour on top.
3. Bake for 40-45 mins on medium.
4. Serve as it is or with fruit and a glaze on top.

## *Polly's tiramisu*

Literally 'pick-me-up'. This was what Polly always offered for bring-a-dish occasions so these are party quantities.

1. Mix the 2 liqueurs and add half the mixture to the coffee to create a 'bath' to dip the biscuits in.
2. Bathe one packet of the sponge fingers in the bath, individually, and lay in base of serving dish, though you could equally lay one pack of fingers in base of dish and pour half of coffee-brandy mix over it.
3. Whisk the egg yolks with sugar and vanilla essence; add the two creams and the other half of the coffee-liqueur; mix and blend.
4. Whisk egg white with pinch of salt to soft peaks and fold into the cream mixture.
5. Pour half the mixture over the sponge fingers (already in dish).
6. Repeat with one more layer – bathing the other pack of fingers individually.
7. Chill for 8 hours.
8. Grate dark chocolate over the top.

## *Lotte's Schaumomelette*

She would knock this up in a flash if there was no pudding and we children (presumably) demanded one. This is another item I had forgotten about until I ransacked my memory, and I am glad to bring it back into the repertoire for those occasions when hosting a sudden *ad hoc* supper arises (and it does, surprisingly often) and one doesn't have a dessert in mind. I'd be inclined to have a bit of compote or sliced orange with this if the ingredients and time are available.

1. Mix the two together and fry in butter on one side only.
2. Fold in half in the frying pan and drop onto the first plate.
3. Dust with icing sugar.
4. Serve immediately and continue to the next plate.

## *Omelette soufflé Rothschild*

I had this at Le Gavroche and didn't know that it is one of their signature dishes. It was perfection out of this world that I can't hope to match. While looking for the recipe online (and I think this is it) I found a YouTube video of the chef himself making another version of it with poached pears and salted caramel, which looked quite as delicious as the restaurant classic. Rothschild himself (whose chef was Carême) apparently had it with any seasonal fruits.

8-10 digestives or ginger nuts  
2 oz melted butter

1 lb curd cheese  
rind and juice of 1 lemon  
4 oz sugar  
1 tsp vanilla essence  
3 eggs  
sultanas

4 fl oz each of brandy and  
marsala (or port)  
8 fl oz strong espresso coffee  
2 pkt sponge fingers  
3 tbsp sugar  
3 eggs, separated  
drop vanilla essence  
250 g tub of mascarpone  
4 fl oz double cream  
plain chocolate – grated  
pinch salt

*per person:*

1 egg yolk beaten with sugar  
1 egg white, fluffed up to soft  
peaks



- 2½ oz dried apricots, chopped
- 250 ml white wine
- 5 tbsp caster sugar
- 1 vanilla pod, split
- 1 tsp cornflour
- 3 egg whites, whisked to soft peaks
- sprig fresh mint



- ½ pt milk
- ¼ oz butter
- 2 oz fresh white breadcrumbs
- 1 oz sugar, plus 1 tsp
- grated lemon zest
- 2 eggs
- 2 tbsp red jam

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
2. Bring the chopped apricots, white wine, 2 tbsps of the sugar and half of the vanilla pod to the boil in a pan. Reduce the heat slightly and simmer for 5-6 mins, or until the fruit has broken down and the liquid resembles syrup.
3. Spoon half of the syrup into a separate pan and reserve the other half. Add the cornflour to the apricot syrup in the pan and stir until the mixture is well combined and thickened.
4. In a bowl, add the remaining caster sugar to the whisked egg whites. Scrape the seeds from the remaining vanilla pod half and add to the whisked egg whites. Whisk together until the mixture is well combined and stiff peaks form when the whisk is removed.
5. Fold the thickened apricot syrup into the whisked egg mixture.
6. Grease the smallest ovenproof frying pan you own with a little butter, then spoon the mixture into it. Transfer the pan to the oven and bake for 5-6 mins, or until the top of the 'omelette' is pale golden-brown.
7. Tip out and spoon the remaining apricot syrup around the edge of the plate. Garnish with a sprig of fresh mint.

### *Susanna's Queen of Puddings*

This is from her swallowing book, but her original quantities were a bit wodgey so I have adapted it a bit with a Delia health-check. Susanna says red jam, but other sources suggest it should be raspberry (and it is pretty nice with fresh raspberries that have gone a bit squashy).

1. In a saucepan warm together the milk, butter and lemon rind. Whisk the egg yolks with 50 g of the sugar and pour into the milk, stirring well.
2. Place the breadcrumbs in a greased 20 cm oven-proof pie dish and strain the mixture all over them; leave to stand for 15 mins.
3. Bake in the centre of the oven for 25-30 mins until lightly set, then remove from the oven. Warm the jam and spread it over the pudding.
4. Whisk up the egg whites stiffly and add half the remaining sugar; whisk again and fold in the remaining sugar. Pile the meringue on top of the jam and bake for a further 15-20 mins until the meringue is lightly browned.

### *Pavlova*

1. Using the meringue technique on page 169 and about 4 egg whites, make one big oval or round meringue.
2. Top with whipped cream or crème Anglaise (page 193).
3. Top that with fresh summer fruits.

### *Snowballs*

I don't know why I am giving this recipe. Stephen and I did it once in our flat in Lissenden Gardens and to be frank they were a disaster. I seem to remember the two of us in fits of giggles in our kitchen while the guests were in the room with the dining table (overlooking

Hampstead Heath Lido) talking amongst themselves. It's from *The Delectable Past* by Esther Aresty (1964), given to us as a wedding present by pals from Longman days, now vanished from our lives. What can have possessed us to do it? Memorably terrible.

1. Prepare the meringue.
2. Roll out a thin square of sweet pastry for each apple, large enough to encase it entirely.
3. Sprinkle each apple with sugar and cinnamon.
4. Spread meringue on the bottom of the apple and set in the centre of the pastry square.
5. Fill the core with the pineapple (or marmalade or other preserves).
6. Cover the apple entirely with the meringue about ¼" thick.
7. Wrap the pastry round the whole, join all the edges completely and pinch them all closed.
8. Bake in a hot oven for 10 mins, reduce slightly and bake for another 40 mins.
9. While the apples are still warm, place a dab of icing at the top and allow to dribble down the pastry.

I can only say – does this sound as if it would work?

## *Baked Alaska*

This does work because the meringue is on the outside. I have made it, but I don't think I would do it very often. I was in France on my own with the three children on Emily's 18th birthday and after we'd had the dinner we ordered, the restaurant came out with an omelette à la norvégienne, which is what the French call it (candles on top of course). I couldn't manage any more and Vita ate my share: it was pay-back time for the occasion in Radovljica with Pavel, when we were served heavy chocolate pancakes before the meat course (comprising salami and cold cuts). Vita was eight then and not well and I absolutely had to eat her share. It was terribly difficult to do.

This is Mary Berry's recipe built on top of a round of Genoese sponge, but I quite like Nigella's idea of cutting a panettone in half and scooping out the middle of the lower half to make a container for the ice-cream (bought in her case) and encasing that in the meringue.

1. *For the vanilla* ice-cream, use a good bought one or follow the recipe on page 194.
2. *For the meringue*, whisk the egg whites to stiff peaks and whisk in the sugar (see page 193).
3. *To assemble*, spread the jam over the circle of sponge cake; arrange scoops of ice-cream in a pyramid shape on top, leaving a ½" border. Spoon the meringue all over the ice-cream, ensuring there are no gaps, and use the back of a spoon to make a swirl pattern.
4. The Alaska can be frozen until needed.
5. To cook bake in a hot oven for 8-10 mins, or until golden-brown all over.

large baking apples peeled and cored  
pie pastry  
meringue (2 tbsp sugar per egg white (see page 169 – 2 egg whites for 5-6 apples)  
sugar and cinnamon, mixed  
a crushed pineapple  
icing made with icing sugar



8" circle ready-made sponge cake  
about 1" thick  
vanilla ice-cream

*for the meringue*  
3 egg whites  
6 oz sugar

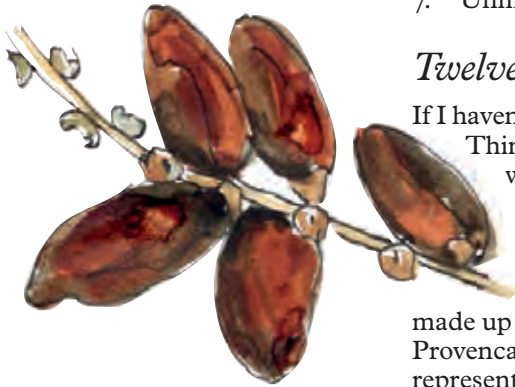
*to assemble*  
2-3 tbsp cherry jam

## *Bombe surprise*

While we're on surprise insides, this is a Josceline Dimbleby recipe that was basically a lemon ice-cream lining a pudding basin with chocolate curls inside (I used milk flakes) so that when you cut a slice with a hot knife, chocolate unexpectedly tumbles out.

white of 2 eggs  
juice and zest of 3 lemons  
6 oz sugar  
2 leaves gelatine  
½ pt whipping cream  
grated dark chocolate

1. Stiff peaks with the eggs.
2. Soften and melt gelatine in lemon juice.
3. Pour over egg whites.
4. Add whipped cream.
5. Line a pudding bowl and freeze.
6. Scoop out excess from the inside of the bowl and fill with grated chocolate. Cover the bottom with the scooped out ice-cream so it is all sealed in.
7. Unmould when ready to serve.



## *Twelve Things*

If I haven't had time for a real sweet, then we'll rustle up a Twelve Things platter – our largest Kangxi charger divided in sections with nuts, dates, fat pale raisins, apricots, mini biscuits, marzipan, orange slices, grapes, macaroons and chocolate squares, or whatever little treats the store cupboard furnishes. I don't remember now where that idea came from; someone maybe did it on Twelfth Night and we've made up our own version of it. The French go one better with their Provençal Treize Desserts served after a Christmas dinner and representing Christ and the 12 apostles.

## *Spring-formed*

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Some of these are made in spring-formed tart tins: hence my sub-heading. One needs to use one's judgement here, as a very wet filling will leak through sometimes. This is a section about tarts and different names for the same idea. A tart is usually an open fruit pie, and a tartlet or tartelette is an individual version. The word tarte is Middle English, from Old French, and comes from the Latin torta, a kind of bread. But now a torte is usually a layered cake whereas a tarte flambée is usually savoury, and a tartine is an open sandwich. Then there is clafoutis (page 201) which is a kind of a custard tart, as is a flan. The tatin is an upside-down tart. A 'conversation' is a puff pastry tart with sugar glazing and an almond or cream filling – in other words a pithivier. And a galette is a round flat pastry, pancake, or cake, sweet or savoury. So lots of words for the same concept.

Some of the general comments on quiches (page 100) and on pastry (page 60) apply here too.

## *Fruit tarts in general*

Any fruit tart follows this general principle.

1. 1 pâte sucrée pastry case baked blind.
2. A layer of crème patissière or frangipane spread on top.
3. Scatter the fruit on top (or arrange in colourful patterns).
4. Paint an apricot glaze on top (some tbsps apricot jam thinned with water, then boiled and sieved).

## *Crème patissière & frangipane*

This is thicker than the crème Anglaise on page 193 and the standard filling for sweet choux buns and other patisserie. With ground almonds, it becomes a frangipane. Both work well with fruit tarts. It's got to be the Julia Child recipe.

1. Gradually beat the sugar into the egg yolks and continue beating for 2 to 3 mins until the mixture is pale yellow and forms a ribbon.
2. Beat in the flour.
3. Beating the yolk mixture, gradually pour on the boiling milk in a thin stream of droplets.
4. Pour into saucepan and set over moderately high heat. Stir with a wire whisk, reaching all over bottom of the pan. As sauce comes to a boil it will get lumpy, but will smooth out as you beat it.
5. When boil is reached, beat over moderately low heat for 2 to 3 mins to cook the flour. Be careful custard does not scorch in bottom of pan.
6. Remove from heat and beat in the butter, then vanilla extract (or almonds and essence). If the custard is not used immediately, clean it off the sides of the pan, and dot top of custard with softened butter to prevent a skin from forming over the surface.

It will keep for a week under refrigeration, or can be frozen.

## *Ivan's tamarind tart*

Ivan's recipe is so scrappy, it's hardly there at all. All the same, it's a reminder of how to make the tart and it really is delicious. The original is from Charles Carter's *The Complete Practical Cook* (1730) and goes like this.

First freet [sic] a Dish with Puff-paste and lay your Prunellas or Tamarindes into the bottom of the Dish, two rows of them; then boil up a Quart of Cream, and draw it up thick with the Yolks of 10 Eggs, some sugar, a stick of Cinnamon, and a Blade of Mace; fill up your Dish with it over your Tamarindes, bake it and serve it.

Ivan says: 'What I do is to remove the seeds from the tamarind fruits and roll the flesh into little balls which I scatter round a blind baked pastry case before I pour in a cinnamon-and-mace flavoured custard'.



8 oz granulated sugar  
5 egg yolks  
4 oz flour  
1 pt boiling milk  
1 tbsps butter  
1½ tbsps vanilla extract

*for frangipane, add*  
4 oz ground almonds  
1 tsp almond essence

puff pastry  
tamarinds (or buy a packet of ready-made pulp)  
cinnamon  
mace  
crème Anglaise (page 193)

1 sweet pastry case baked blind  
 20 or so prunes (or dates)  
 pitted and stuffed with bought  
 marzipan  
 a basic crème Anglaise (page  
 193) mix using an extra egg yolk  
 (2 eggs + 1 yolk to 2 cups of  
 cream)  
 sugar and flavouring to taste



500 g puff pastry  
 5 small eating apples, a mixture of sweet and acidic varieties  
 100 g golden caster sugar  
 100 ml Calvados  
 1 vanilla pod seeds  
 50 g butter



9 eggs  
 400 g sugar  
 250 g cream  
 5 lemons

## Tarte aux pruneaux

I had a prune tart stuffed with marzipan somewhere and I can't track down a recipe. Must be basically this (and I did it most recently with medjool dates and an apple-and-pear custard which might seem like an indulgence but the dates were drying out and needed to be used up). Same principle as Ivan's on the previous page.

1. Dot the stuffed prunes (dates) all round the pastry case in any arrangement.
2. Pour over the custard so that it doesn't quite cover the prunes.
3. Bake on medium for maybe 40 mins until the middle bounces a bit to the touch (can take longer).

## Tarte tatin

Lots of ways of doing this. I think I first did it from a Jamie cooking card that was in the house – he appealed to all three children when they were testing their cooking legs. I find his jaunty, spelling-it-all-out-style annoying so I've shortened some of that. It's nice to do it in a fryingpan that can go in the oven, but perfectly OK in a ceramic quiche dish.

1. Peel, core and halve the apples.
2. Put an ovenproof pan on a medium heat and add the sugar, Calvados, vanilla seeds and pod. Let the sugar dissolve and cook until the mixture forms a caramel.
3. Add the halved apples. Carefully stir everything in the pan and cook for about 5 mins or until the apples start to soften. Arrange them with their round sides down.
4. Add the cubed butter.
5. Roll out the pastry so it is bigger than the pan and lay it over the top, tucking down right into the edges – Jamie says use a wooden spoon so you don't touch the caramel, but why not wait till it has cooled and you can tuck it in with your fingers.
6. Bake the tarte for about 25 to 30 mins, or until golden.
7. Take it out of the oven and let it settle for a bit before turning it upside down onto a serving plate.

Serve with crème fraîche or ice-cream.

## Lemon tarts

I am giving three versions of lemon tarts because they are all good. I think the third is the tartest, but it is also more trouble.

### Sucre lemon pie

sweet pastry (250 g sugar, 250 g butter, 500 g flour, 3 eggs, pinch salt)  
*cf* Anna's SBF 1: 2: 3 ratio. This is 1: 1: 2: 3.

1. Make and bake blind a pastry case.
2. Juice the lemons. (I'd probably zest them first or cut juliennes from the zest to blanch and then caramelize.)
3. Beat eggs with sugar.
4. Add cream and lemon juice.

5. Pour into pastry case and bake on low until the filling stops shaking.
6. Cool before serving.

### *Lemon tart*

This is Mary Berry's and is just so easy that if you had something more complicated in mind and not enough time to do it, it's a tangy fall-back. The same principle would work for orange, tamarind or other fruit that can be baked as a custard.

1. Fluff up the eggs and sugar.
2. Add the cream and lemon.
3. Bake for about 35 mins on medium.

### *Lemon curd for a tart*

This is more trouble and one day I will test the two side-by-side and see whether the extra bother is worth it. From Anna who got it from Tante Marie's Cooking School in San Francisco.

1. Whizz sugar and zest together in a food-processor. This releases all the fragrant lemon oils into the sugar and ensures the zest is finely minced.
2. Put sugar, lemon juice, eggs and salt into a bowl over a pan of barely simmering water and whisk continually while the mixture heats and thickens. Do not over cook as the mix will curdle.
3. Remove bowl from heat and let cool a bit, whisking occasionally. Using a stick w'sz-u-sz-a – as Chess calls it – blend in the butter cube by cube until all has melted in. You should have a smooth, emulsified curd. Taste and blend in a little lemon juice, sugar or salt if needed. Cover with clingfilm against surface of curd. Chill if you are not immediately proceeding with this recipe.
4. Pour curd into tart shells until a couple of mm below rim. Bake for 20-30 mins or until curd has just set. When nudged, the curd should wobble like a soft jelly but not ripple like a wave. Turn off heat and leave to cool inside oven. Serve slightly chilled.
5. It will keep in the fridge wrapped in clingfilm for a couple of days.

### *Apple rose tart*

I found this on an internet bloggers' magazine called 'What Liberty Ate' and 'pinterested' it. I made it once for Stephen's birthday but it took about two hours so unless one were doing it as a social occasion with other people (which could be fun) I wouldn't do it again. Good theatre when it arrives on the table though.

1. Bake the pastry blind.
2. Fill with frangipani (page 187).
3. Peel the fruits with a potato peeler in as long strands as you can, trying to keep a bit of peel on as many as possible as it is easier to get long slithers. Curl into rose shapes and cram as many as possible into the pastry case beginning at the outer rim. This is a slow business and easier if you mostly use the outer layer and make a compote with the rest of the apple.
4. Dot with caster sugar and bake for ½ hour or so.

1 sweet pastry tart case baked blind  
5 eggs  
140 g caster sugar  
150 ml double cream  
juice and zest of 4 lemons (or limes)

200 g sugar  
4 tbsp grated lemon zest  
100 ml freshly squeezed lemon juice  
3 egg yolks  
2 whole eggs  
a pinch of salt  
85 g unsalted butter



sweet pastry (the source used puff)  
frangipani (the source used dulce de leche)  
6-7 apples of different varieties  
2 pears

250 g shortcrust pastry  
 200 g whole chestnuts  
 4 tbsp maple or golden syrup  
 3 tbsp double cream  
 125 g soft light brown sugar  
 2 large eggs, beaten  
 75 g unsalted melted butter

### *Sweet chestnut tart*

1. Heat the oven to medium hot.
2. Lightly knead the pastry then roll it out. Use this to line a 23 cm loose-bottomed tart tin. Trim the edges then chill for 30 mins.
3. Lightly prick the base of the pastry case, and blind bake.
4. Roughly chop the chestnuts and place in the pastry case.
5. Beat the remaining ingredients together, then pour over the chestnuts. Return to the oven to bake for 30-35mins until just set.

Can be eaten warm or cold with cream.

*almond paste*  
 3 oz unsalted butter  
 5 oz sugar, half a vanilla pod  
 tsp ground cinnamon  
 4 oz blanched ground almonds

### *Sophie's apple tart with calvados sabayon*

The easy version is to use bought dessert pastry and rolled-out cake marzipan. Good enough for me. But here's her almond paste, which is different from the uncooked marzipan on page 176.

sweet pastry case  
 4 dessert apples, diced

1. Beat the butter, sugar and vanilla pod (or essence).
2. Add cinnamon and almonds and squidge to a paste.
3. Fill baked pastry case with rolled out circle of almond paste,
4. Arrange the apples on top.
5. Bake for 40 mins quite hot oven.
6. Sabayon – all in a bain marie and whisk.

*sabayon*  
 2 egg yolks  
 1 tbsp caster sugar  
 1 dessert spoon calvados  
 6 tbsp dry white wine

### *Tart de Santiago*

The next few tarts are from *Moro* and if you had asked me beforehand I would have thought all my favourites from this book would have been savoury. Turns out these next five desserts are the ones I go back to the book for.

sweet pastry case  
 130 g membrillo  
 tsp water and tsp lemon juice  
 230 g blanched almonds, chop  
 some finely and some coarse  
 zest of an orange and a lemon  
 ground cinnamon  
 40 ml Oloroso sherry  
 115 g unsalted butter  
 75 g sugar  
 2 eggs

1. Melt the membrillo (recipe on page 235) with the water and lemon over a low heat and cover the bottom of the pastry case (apricot jam would work if quince paste not available).
2. Mix almonds, zests, cinnamon and sherry and leave to infuse.
3. Beat the butter and sugar till pale and add eggs one at a time. Doesn't matter if it looks lumpy.
4. Fold in the almond mixture.
5. Bake for 30-40 mins on medium.

### *Tarta de naranjas Sevillanas*

I like this one so much that I freeze Seville oranges in January specially so I can make the tart later in the year. They freeze very well and sometimes it's quite nice to throw one orange into a lamb stew to give it bite.

sweet pastry case  
 5½ oz sugar  
 6 fl oz Seville orange juice  
 7 oz unsalted butter, in small  
 dice  
 4 egg yolks + 2 whole eggs  
 finely grated zest of ¼ orange

1. Mix all the filling ingredients in a glass bowl over a pan of simmering water (the bowl should not touch the water as too much heat will curdle the mix).
2. Stir constantly for about 20 mins until the mixture thickens – this will happen right at the end. It's ready when it has thickened but is still pourable, not stiff.



3. Pour the curd into the tart base and bake on the top shelf of a quite hot oven for 10 mins until it starts to colour, making sure it doesn't split.
4. Cool.

### *Torta de naranja*

1. Line a spring-form tin with parchment.
2. Beat sugar together with the egg yolks until pale. Now mix in the almonds and zest.
3. Beat the egg whites with 1 tbsp of sugar until stiff and then fold gently into the egg mixture, trying not to knock out the air.
4. Carefully put the mixture into the lined tin, place on the middle shelf of the oven and bake for about 60-70 mins until the torta is golden on top and firm to the touch.
5. For an orange syrup, put the orange and lemon juice in a saucepan with the cinnamon stick and a handful of sugar. Bring gently to the boil and simmer for about 5 mins. Taste – the syrup should be quite tart. Allow to cool.
6. When the torta is ready, remove it from the oven and allow to cool before opening the spring-form tin. Transfer it to a plate and pierce holes in the top (a skewer or carving fork works well). Soak up to half of the syrup into the tart.

6 eggs, separated  
 240 g caster sugar  
 230 g ground almonds  
 finely grated zest of 2½ oranges  
 juice of 8 oranges, preferably Seville  
 juice of 1½ lemons (if not using Seville oranges)  
 1 stick cinnamon  
 caster sugar to taste

Serve the remaining syrup on the side.



### *Chocolate and apricot tart*

1. Put the apricot paste in a saucepan over low heat with the water and the lemon juice, and stir until a smooth paste is formed. If using finely chopped dried apricots, simmer for 5 mins with the same amount of water and lemon until soft, then blend to a purée in a food processor. The mixture should taste slightly tart.
2. Spread the purée over the base of the tart shell and leave to cool for a little while until a slight skin is formed.
3. Meanwhile, melt the butter and the chocolate in a bowl set over simmering water, stirring to blend.
4. When the chocolate has melted, whisk the eggs and sugar for 3-4 mins until pale, light and fluffy.
5. Fold the eggs and chocolate together; pour into the tart shell and even out with a spatula. Bake on the middle shelf for about 25 mins. The filling should be a little wobbly when you take it out and have a very thin crust on top.

sweet pastry case  
 180 g dried apricot paste sheet  
 4 tbsp water  
 1 tbsp lemon juice  
 125 g unsalted butter  
 100 g dark chocolate (70%),  
 broken into pieces  
 2 eggs  
 60 g sugar

Serve with creamy yoghurt or crème fraîche.



## Yoghurt cake with pistachios

This is possibly my favourite from *Moro*. I use more pistachios than they say and I throw them in at the start rather than half-way through. It's not really a cake at all: more soufflesque.

3 large eggs, separated  
70 g caster sugar  
2 vanilla pods seeds, or 1 tsp  
vanilla extract  
350 g yoghurt (mixture of Greek  
and regular yoghurt)  
finely grated zest of 1 lemon and  
½ an orange  
juice of 1 lemon  
20 g flour  
30 g shelled unsalted pistachio  
nuts, roughly chopped

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C and put a bain-marie of water in to warm on the middle shelf.
2. In a large bowl, beat the egg yolks with ¾ of the sugar until thick and pale. Add the vanilla seeds or extract. Add the yoghurt, lemon and orange zest, lemon juice and flour and mix well.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk up the egg whites with the remaining sugar until soft peaks form. Gently and evenly, fold the whites into the yoghurt mixture.
4. Pour the mixture into a baking dish, lined with parchment.
5. Place the dish in the bain-marie, making sure that the water comes halfway up the sides and cook for about 20 mins. Then add the chopped pistachios, sprinkling them gently on top and continue baking for 20 mins or until the top is lightly brown in colour.
6. The consistency of the cake should be a light sponge on top with a wet custard below.  
Serve with yoghurt and/or some fruit on the side.

## Yoghurt torte

*biscuit base (usual method) using:*  
5 oz any sort of sweet biscuit  
2 oz blanched almonds  
2½ oz melted butter

*filling:*  
large tub Greek yoghurt  
medium tub crème fraîche  
120 ml orange blossom honey  
2 tsp orange flower water  
rind and juice of 1 orange  
6 leaves of gelatine, soaked  
before melting  
topping  
generous quantity of chopped  
pistachios

This is from *Crazy Water* and although I am always suspicious of cakes set with gelatine, this one worked and was useful when I didn't have an oven for about 3 months.

1. Put the biscuit base in the fridge uncooked.
2. Mix up the filling, adding the gelatine softened in warm orange juice last.
3. Refrigerate for at least 5 hours.
4. Unmould and scatter with pistachios or some chocolate drizzle to distract from its pallid appearance.

Nice with an orange salad with crushed cardamom and honey.



## Summer indulgence

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oranges or blood oranges  
a few tbsps sugar

## Stephen's caramel oranges

There's often nothing nicer after a rich meal than sliced oranges with glass-like caramel fragmenting on their segmented edges. Slice them thin and pour a thick caramel (page 182) over the top. Simple!

## Crème Anglaise

Crème Anglaise is the basis of lots of fruit desserts, moulded creams and puddings, or just as a custard alternative to serving cream. With additional egg yolks and with heavy cream, it becomes the custard used for ice-creams. With more egg yolks, plus gelatine, whipped cream, and flavouring, it becomes a bavarois. Vanilla is the basic flavouring or can add coffee, liqueurs, or chocolate.

1. Gradually beat the sugar into the egg yolks and continue beating for 2 to 3 mins until the mixture is pale yellow and forms the ribbon.
2. Beat in the optional starch.
3. While beating the yolk mixture, very gradually pour on the boiling milk in a thin stream of droplets so that the yolks are slowly warmed.
4. Pour the mixture into the saucepan and set over moderate heat, stirring slowly and continuously with a wooden spatula or spoon, and reaching all over the bottom and sides of the pan, until the sauce thickens just enough to coat the spoon with a light, creamy layer. Do not let the custard come anywhere near the simmer.
5. Then beat the sauce off heat for a min or two to cool it. Strain it through a fine sieve, and beat in one of the flavourings.
6. *To serve hot:* Keep the sauce over warm but not hot water. Beat in 1 to 2 tbsps of unsalted butter just before serving.
7. *To use cold:* Set the saucepan in a pan of cold water, dot with unsalted butter so it doesn't form a skin, and stir frequently until cool. Then cover and chill.



4 oz granulated sugar  
4 egg yolks  
optional: 1 tsp cornflour  
1 pt boiling milk

## Zag bag

Otherwise known as zabaglione and very 70s somehow. We used to order it in restaurants and then time how long it took to come. You had to order for two people and if it came in under 20 mins we would know it wasn't the real thing. I don't think we ever sent one back though. This one is a Michel Roux version and I rather like the little tip about measuring alcohol with half an egg-shell as a general principle.

1. Put the egg yolks, sugar and Marsala in a bowl and whisk to combine.
2. Place the bowl over a pan of boiling water and whisk continuously until the mixture is creamy and has more than quadrupled in size.

5 free-range eggs, yolks only  
Marsala wine, half an egg shell's worth per egg

## Summer pudding

Just so I don't forget about it. No recipe needed. Bread and mixed red stewed fruit – doesn't matter what, though if I can't get blackcurrants for it then I feel disappointed. Line a bowl with one-day-old bread; fill with fruit; top with more bread. A saucer and weights on top overnight, etc.

Even simpler – forget the bread – is any combination of strawberries, raspberries, red currants and black currants (if you





ever find them) and stoned red cherries. I've gone through phases of pouring brandy over them, or balsamic vinegar on the strawberries. But honestly, they're wonderful just as they are.

### *Ice-cream principles*

The principles for ice-cream are as below, but ice-cream cannot be mentioned without allusion to 'fivers' – the *sine qua non* of holidays with the children. If they were good, they would be allowed one scoop of ice-cream in a sugar cone; next day it would be two; until they reached the dizzy heights of a fiver – which I think we engineered to occur towards the end of the holiday. It had to be co-operative 'goodness' because we weren't going to let one of them suffer with a one while another lashed their tongue around a three-er: maybe we thought it would teach them co-operative behaviour. I can't remember on what holiday this started, but I do have a very clear picture of us all having fivers by one of the fountains on the Piazza Navona in Rome.

As with quiches, tarts, pancake fillings and various other things in this compendium, flavourings can be varied *ad lib*. Research has not revealed an all-purpose formula for the proportions. It may not matter, except that it needs to be very sweet before freezing as it loses sweetness in the process. Here are a few principles.

*ratio* 3 oz sugar : ½ pt fruit : ½ pt cream

1. Allowing for 3 parts sugar to 7 parts cream and fruit purée will mean the mixture need not be churned in an ice-cream maker (break up the crystals while freezing instead).
2. Ivan says use whipping cream for a lighter ice-cream.
3. Make a syrup by stirring 1 kg sugar into 1 litre of boiling water and keep in the fridge to use as required for summer ices.

There is one 'cheat' version that's worth having the ingredients for as a last-minute-guests standby. Very like Sam's instant ice on the next page. Keep any frozen berries (or any combination of pre-frozen peeled fruits) in the freezer for this.

1. Whuzz the lot with the stick w'sz-u-sz-a and serve.

### *Basic vanilla*

1. Pour the cream and milk into a heavy-based saucepan. Split the vanilla pod lengthways and scrape out the seeds; then add the seeds and pod to the pan. Heat the mixture until just below boiling point.
2. Cool to allow the vanilla flavour to infuse, then remove the pod.
3. Whisk the egg yolks and sugar and slowly whisk in ¼ of the cream mixture. Reheat the remaining cream mixture until just boiling, then slowly whisk it into the egg mixture.
4. Pour the egg mixture into a clean saucepan and cook over a gentle heat, stirring continuously until the custard thickens enough to coat the back of a spoon – it must not boil. Cover and chill in the fridge.
5. Churn in an ice-cream machine and freeze until needed.

fruit purée  
sugar (or syrup for a sorbet)  
whipping cream or an egg  
custard

a packet of mixed frozen berries  
3–4 tbsps runny honey  
a tub of natural yoghurt  
a few sprigs of fresh mint

½ pt double cream  
½ pt milk  
1 vanilla pod  
3 egg yolks  
3½ oz sugar

## Cassata

When I'm in an ice-cream-making phase, I'll usually have a cassata on the go, building up layers of contrasting colours preferably in a bowl-shaped plastic container so you get the surprise of seeing the stripes as you slice it into cake wedges. For me it isn't really a cassata unless it has pistachio, nougat and strawberry flavours in it (in Italian flag order) – probably because my first one in Florence when I was 13 was like that. Not all ice-cream – some water-ice for contrast. A Neapolitan made in a bread tin is another alternative.

## Orange ices

I remember as a child in Italy having orange sorbet inside an orange. It was quite tart (probably had lime or lemon added) and there was something magical about it. But for 14 people (Silent Three, 2013) scooping out whole oranges would have been too much work as well as freezer space. So I made halves. I measured what the juice of 7 oranges came to and threw the rest in a bowl accordingly. You need thick-skinned oranges so the pith comes away relatively easily after juicing the orange halves.

1. Halve the oranges. Juice them and add to the sugar.
2. Scoop out the pith and put halves into the fridge while making the ice-cream.
3. Stir to dissolve the sugar and add the cream.
4. Whip everything until it holds soft peaks, and then turn into a shallow airtight container with a lid. Cover and freeze until firm (from 3 to 5 hours).
5. Stir; fill the orange cases and refreeze.



½ orange per person  
measure the juice  
same measurement of double  
cream  
sugar in proportion 3 to 7 of the  
liquid

## Nutmeg ice-cream

1. Warm the milk gently while grating the nutmeg into it and let it simmer and infuse.
2. Whisk eggs, sugar and cornflour.
3. Pour in the hot milk and return to the pan to thicken slightly.
4. Cool.
5. Whisk the 2 cheeses and combine with the egg mixture.
6. Freeze and stir or put in an ice-cream-maker (since getting my stick w'sz-u-sz-a, I find the freeze-and-stir method less bother).

3 fl oz milk  
½ a nutmeg  
2 egg yolks  
tsp cornflour  
3 oz sugar  
1 tub mascarpone  
1 tub fromage frais

## Instant raspberry ice-cream

Part of Sam and Tina's late lunch. They say: 'You will be making this after the cocktail and the main course accompanied by red wine, so don't worry too much about proportions: let intuition lead you at first and then adjust once you have tasted the initial results. This approach makes everything enjoyable'.

1. Empty a packet of frozen raspberries into a blender.
2. Add a good amount of caster sugar, cream and yoghurt in equal measure. Whizz for around a min. Taste, adjust by adding more sugar or yoghurt.
3. Whizz finally and serve in glass bowls pre-cooled in the freezer.

frozen raspberries  
whipping cream and yoghurt

## *Sally W's lemon meringue ice-cream*

Sally is one of the best cooks I know and likes to entertain. Once when we came to their vicarage in the Lake District on our way back from my aunt's funeral in Scotland (two weeks short of her 104th birthday) Sally made four ice-creams for dessert. I was touched at the trouble she had gone to. This was by far the best and is as she sent it to me (a Delia, she said). It makes a good tubful, but there's no point doing half quantities as it's divine. An extra fillip is some limoncello drizzled over.

*for the lemon syrup*

200 ml freshly squeezed lemon juice, (4-5 lemons)  
2 lemons, grated zest  
2 tsp cornflour  
150 g caster sugar

*for the custard base*

425 ml whipping cream  
4 large egg yolks  
1 tsp cornflour  
175 g caster sugar  
200 ml low-fat Greek yoghurt  
4 bought meringue nests, broken into coarse chunks

1. For the *lemon syrup*: mix the cornflour with 2 tbsp lemon juice. Dissolve the sugar with the remaining lemon juice over a low heat, add the zest, and cook for 5 mins. Pour this over the cornflour mixture, return it all to the pan and, still keeping the heat low, cook for 2 more mins, stirring, until thickened. Cool.
2. For the *custard base*: heat cream gently. Whisk the egg yolks, cornflour and sugar together, then, when the cream reaches simmering point, pour it over the other ingredients, still whisking, return the whole lot to the saucepan and bring back to a bare simmer, continuing to whisk. Pour the thickened custard into a bowl, cover with clingfilm placed directly on the surface of the custard, and leave on one side until cold.
3. When the mixture is cold, combine it with the yoghurt, then pour this into a 2 litre cliky box, cover and freeze for 2 hours or until the mixture is starting to freeze. After that use an electric hand whisk to whisk again, while it is still in the box. Re-freeze, then after a couple of hours repeat the whisking, this time adding the lemon syrup. Finally, lightly and evenly, fold in the meringue pieces, put the lid back on and freeze till needed. It will take a further 6-8 hours.

## *Sally W's basil ice-cream*

The recipe makes 1 litre; halve it for a small ice-cream maker.

830 g Greek yoghurt  
170 g mascarpone  
330 g caster sugar  
50 g basil leaves (this is quite a lot, and needs a big plant or 2-3 small ones, approx)

1. Whuzz the basil and sugar in a food-processor.
2. When smooth, add the yoghurt & mascarpone and whuzz again.
3. Put into ice-cream maker and churn.

## *Gaby's semi-freddo*

Via Jamie Oliver's *Naked Chef* (2001) – these are party quantities and it's a favourite of Gaby's as a dessert contribution. Needs a bit of fresh fruit to lift the richness.

1 vanilla pod  
2 oz sugar  
4 eggs, separated  
500 ml double cream  
pinch salt  
praline – or other flavouring (e.g. torn torrone, crushed maltesers, chunked-up marathon bars)

1. Remove the seeds from the vanilla pod.
2. Whisk seeds, sugar and egg yolk till they go pale.
3. In second bowl whip the cream – not too stiffly.
4. In third bowl whisk egg whites with a pinch of salt to firm peaks.
5. Add the praline, the cream and egg whites to the egg yolk mixture. Gently fold in.
6. Immediately scoop the contents into your chosen container. Cover with plastic wrap and freeze.

### *Praline*

1. Roast the hazelnuts lightly in a frying pan.
2. Make a caramel (page 182). When golden brown, gently add the nuts and stir on low heat to coat the nuts.
3. When the caramel is dark golden brown, turn it out on to parchment and allow to cool to a flattish solid sheet.
4. When completely cooled (about 20 mins), smash it up roughly and whuzz until the pieces are still quite chunky.
5. Remove about half the praline, then pulse the rest to a powder (or put it in a tea-towel and bash with a rolling-pin), and add both lots of praline to the semi-freddo mixture.

### *Greenwald's liquid nitrogen ice-cream*

He writes: 'I first came across the idea of using liquid nitrogen on a domestic scale to make ice-cream about 20 years ago, in an article by Nicholas Kurti (1908-1998), an eminent physicist at Oxford with an interest in cooking'. Obviously not everyone can borrow a Dewar flask from their place of work, but he had a spate of doing this and it was good gustatory drama. In his words:

1. Transfer to a large mixing bowl (preferably thin walled stainless steel because that is easier to cool than a heavy porcelain job.)
2. Pour  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup liquid nitrogen from a Dewar flask into the mixture, stirring steadily with a wooden spoon. The nitrogen might splash slightly so it is worth wearing gloves and, perhaps, safety spectacles while doing this. (It is still possible and desirable to do it at the table so that the full drama of the sizzling nitrogen and the copious clouds of water vapour can be shared by all.)
3. After the first lot of nitrogen has boiled off and the sizzling has stopped, the mixture will have cooled slightly. Continue adding  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups of nitrogen stirring as you go and waiting for the sizzling to stop before adding the next batch. The mixture will become thicker as it cools.
4. Continue the process until the mixture reaches the desired consistency. This depends on the temperature. I usually stop when it is a thick paste, at which point it is cold but not tooth-crackingly so. You will probably need about a litre of liquid nitrogen.

The technique works with water ice mixtures as well but you will need half again as much nitrogen.

### *Clarissa's lemon mousse*

She made a 50-egg version of this for our wedding and all Lotte had of it was to lick out the bowl; she had to be recompensed at suppers in Catherington ever afterwards.

1. Separate eggs.
2. Whisk yolks, sugar and lemon zest until pale and thick.
3. Stir in lemon juice and add gelatine.
4. When beginning to set whisk again and fold in egg whites whisked to soft peaks.

11 oz peeled hazelnuts  
7 oz sugar  
4 tbsps water



$\frac{1}{2}$  lb strawberries, raspberries  
or blackberries puréed  
3 oz icing sugar  
squeeze lemon  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  pt whipping cream



*per person:* 1 each of  
lemon  
egg  
tbsp sugar  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  leaf gelatine

## *Ivan's Nesselrode pudding*

The long version is on his website; this is the quick version. I have an old pewter mould of the correct shape for this and make it occasionally for special occasions. The rosette at the top can be coloured to look a bit different. I made it one New Year's Eve and took it round to Bo's flat. When it was time to serve, it had defrosted a little too much and slumped suggestively, to the amusement of all of us round the table.

1½ pt single cream  
40 chestnuts soaked in syrup  
8 oz icing sugar  
2 oz each of currants and raisins  
soaked in Maraschino or white  
rum  
A handful of preserved citrons,  
oranges and lemons

1. Whuzz the first three ingredients.
2. Add the fruits.
3. Churn in an ice-cream-maker.
4. Spoon into the pewter mould and freeze till required.
5. Get Stephen to unmould it so it comes out nice and sharply delineated.

## *Sucre white chocolate ice-cream*

Made at the Sucre workshop after which I did it for almost everyone who came to supper for months. Industrial eggs come in separated cartons, so I can't think what to do with 8 egg whites, I go for 4 egg yolks and 2 whole eggs as a compromise, and it's pretty good. Or see page 5 to use up whites.

12 fl oz milk  
14 fl oz cream  
125 g sugar  
150 g egg yolk (=8 eggs)  
100 g white chocolate  
1 leaf gelatine

1. Heat the milk and cream to blood temperature.
2. Beat egg yolks with sugar till they go pale.
3. Put a little of the milk mix, stir and add the yolk mix to the milk mix and heat gently until it thickens.
4. Add the softened gelatine (put a whole leaf into warm water) and then add the chocolate.
5. Stir and cool completely and churn in an ice-cream maker.

1 leaf of gelatine sets 100 ml /  
3½ fl oz of liquid

for 1 litre / 1¾ pts you need 10  
leaves of gelatine  
for 1 pt you need 6 leaves  
for 1½ pts you need 9 leaves

*sugar syrup:*  
120 g sugar to 4 fl oz sugar

*if making a lot:*  
18 fl oz water + 1lb 2oz caster or  
granulated sugar

## *Jelly proportions*

The book I look at for the pictures is *Jelly with Bompas and Parr* (2010) but all anyone really needs is the universal general principle, which is that liquid+gelling agent = jelly.

1. Bring the water to the boil in a saucepan and take it off the heat.
2. Then stir in the sugar until it has dissolved.

## *Unmoulding jellies*

I have some ceramic moulds from Jojo's collection – our favourite was the one with the lion on top, which I have given to Gabriel. I used to do the lion in orange jelly. Ceramic moulds are hard to unmould and so I prefer the metal ones now as they melt the surface of the jelly quicker. But Ivan has got these tips for unmoulding the pretty ones.

1. Use a pastry brush to apply a thin layer of Trex into the inside of the ceramic mould, continuing right up to the rim.
2. Pour in the cool jelly and refrigerate until set.



3. To unmould, push down around the perimeter of the jelly with your fingers.
4. Turn the jelly on its side and give it a good shake: if you hear slapping noises, you know that it is ready to be turned out. If not, try to get some air into the mould by carefully pulling a bit away from the side.

### *Lemon jelly*

Once when I was ill, Mary Dean – who shared the Old Street workshops with Stephen (and made the silver frame holding the portrait of little Emily playing a lute) – made me a real lemon jelly and it was just exactly what I felt like at the time. I think it was Mrs Beeton's recipe, but I have adapted it. The original is very strict about straining it so the jelly is translucent, but actually I quite like it cloudy with all the lemony bits in it.

1. Peel 3 of the lemons; pour  $\frac{1}{2}$  pt boiling water on the peel and infuse for  $\frac{1}{2}$  an hour.
2. Juice the lemons.
3. Boil the sugar and  $\frac{1}{2}$  pt water for 20 mins; then add the softened gelatine.
4. Pour in the lemon juice, infused rind and sherry.
5. Optionally strain through a jelly bag; pour into a wetted mould (1 $\frac{1}{2}$  pt mould) and leave to set.

6 lemons  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  lb lump sugar  
 1 pt water  
 9 leaves gelatine  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  pt sherry



### *Tangerine jellies*

I did these one Christmas, and very pretty it was. It is from Eliza Acton (who got it from Carême) and I got it from Ivan. Looks jewel-like on a white plate and is not that arduous to do. You do have to take care that each layer is almost, but not quite, set before pouring in the next one as you want them to stick to each other but not run into the previous layer.

1. Cut a shilling-sized hole in the top of each tangerine and scoop out the pulp with an egg or small jam spoon.
2. Make a jelly of the juice and colour  $\frac{1}{3}$  red, leave  $\frac{1}{3}$  orange and to  $\frac{1}{3}$  add cream, or make a blancmange.
3. Pour in stripes into the tangerines.
4. When set, cut the tangerines into quarters.

## *Autumn plenty*

### *Rosewater dried fruits*

The above recipe reminded me of something I used to do a lot – I'm pretty sure it's from Claudia Roden. Basically you soften and sweeten whatever dried fruits and nuts are to hand. Easy and a nice effective extra dessert for the times when it's fun to offer two (or more). Something like this:

1. Soak dried fruits overnight at room temperature in rosewater and/or orange flower water until the liquid goes syrupy.
2. Serve with yoghurt.

dried apricots, pears, apples,  
 raisins, prunes, etc.  
 nuts  
 sugar to taste (not too much)

## *Pommes Normande en belle vue*

A Julia Child favourite. I don't bother with the extra egg white unless I need a yolk for something else. Weights and proportions really aren't critical for this as long as you've got the right number of eggs to set the purée – roughly 1 egg to ½ pt.

4 lbs crisp cooking or eating  
apples  
¼ tsp cinnamon  
grated peel of 1 lemon  
½ cup granulated sugar  
¼ cup Calvados  
4 tbsps butter  
4 eggs  
1 egg white

*for the caramel*

⅔ cup granulated sugar  
(Julia Child adds water, but it is  
not necessary)

1. Cook the peeled apples with the sugar, cinnamon and lemon zest until it goes into a firm purée. Remove apples from heat and stir in rum, then butter.
2. One by one, beat in the eggs, then the egg white.
3. Make the caramel in the usual way (page 182) and line a bowl.
4. Turn apple mixture into caramel-lined mould.
5. Cook in a bain marie in the oven, low enough to maintain water almost at the simmer.
6. It's done in 1 to 1½ hours, when it begins to shrink from the sides and all except for a small area in the very centre is set.
7. Allow to cool for 20 mins. Then reverse it onto the serving dish.
8. Simmer the rum in the mould to dissolve any remaining caramel, and strain over the dessert.

## *Jane Austen's baked apples*

Baked apples are an autumn staple in every household, and they always make me think of the ones Miss Bates serves in *Emma* (a longtime favourite book) but the recipe is how I do them.

The apples themselves are the very finest sort for baking, beyond a doubt; all from Donwell – some of Mr. Knightley's most liberal supply. He sends us a sack every year; and certainly there never was such a keeping apple any where as one of his trees – I believe there is two of them. My mother says the orchard was always famous in her younger days.

1. Core 1 apple per person and incise a waistline all round.
2. Stuff the middle with sultanas, dates, nuts or whatever is around.
3. Put a spoon of golden syrup and a dot of butter on each one.
4. Put into the oven with a drizzle of water in the dish and bake till soft and gooey.

## *Toffee pear galettes*

Dead easy and a huge success every time I remember about them. I got this from a magazine or newspaper. It's quite hard to get pears that are just right these days: they're either hard or have suddenly gone mealy. Sometimes you have to poach them first. Fat dumpy Williams are the best shape – probably from a tin would do.

½ a pear per person  
(peeled and halved)  
puff pastry  
dulce de leche (page 249)

1. Lay puff pastry circles (one-person size) on a baking sheet.
2. Put ½ spoonful of dulce de leche in the centre of each circle and fan a pear out on top, by cutting slits longwise towards the top.
3. Glaze the edges then bake for 20-25 mins (on a hot baking sheet) in a medium oven until puffed and golden.
4. A bit of apricot or honey glaze on top is nice.



## Marzipan pears

1. Bake the pastry blind.
2. Peel and cook (if necessary) the pears.
3. Whuzz the marzipan, cream and eggs.
4. Arrange the pears – fanned out as above – on top (they’ll sink in but it doesn’t matter).
5. Bake for about ½ an hour on medium.

puff pastry  
3 pears (see above)  
½ a block of marzipan  
½ pot of single cream  
2 eggs

## Pear and almond cake

This was from Jen when she was queen of the pear harvest in St John’s Villas, Holloway, and they compiled a local pear recipe book. I think the pears in the street were of a comice type. This was a winner and rather like the marzipan one, but made from store-cupboard ingredients.

1. Butter a springform tin and line with parchment.
2. Fry the pear quarters in a little butter and sugar for 5-10 mins until they start to brown and soften. Let them cool.
3. Cream the rest of the butter and sugar until fluffy.
4. Beat in the eggs, one at a time and add the almonds.
5. Sift in the flour and mix in and transfer to the tin.
6. Arrange the pears on top and bake for 45 mins.

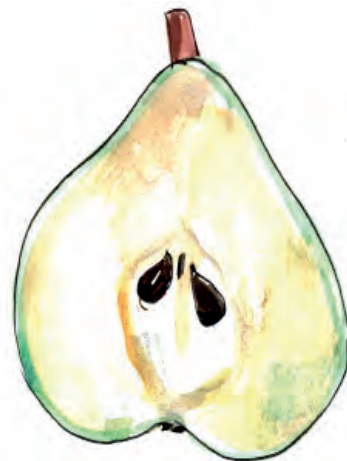
175 g unsalted butter  
125 g sugar  
3 pears, not too hard, peeped, cored and quartered  
2 eggs  
75 g ground almonds  
75 g self-raising flour

## Pears or peaches baked in wine

1. Use different coloured wines, cider, port or Madeira with sugar and spices (cinnamon stick) to get different hues. Quantities by eye.
2. Poach the peeled fruit whole (cutting off a little bit from the bottom of the pears so they stand up). One per person and a couple extra for generosity.
3. When ready, reduce the cooking liquid to a syrup and pour over.
4. Let cool and serve with cream.

### Variation belle Hélène

As above but in a syrup without the wines. And pour a chocolate sauce over the pears – it’s quite tricky to get the consistency right so the chocolate sticks to the pear, but it’s a wonderful combination. Melt ⅔ of a bar of 70% chocolate very carefully on a low heat; then add the other ⅓ off the heat, cool slightly and spoon over the pears.



## Clafoutis

Traditionally, this is made with black cherries, but any stoned fruit would do. What I have found, though, is that it can be rubbery so this is one recipe where it pays to follow the quantities a bit less haphazardly than I usually do.

1. Butter a shallow dish and chuck in the fruit.
2. Make a batter with the rest, warming the milk before adding it.
3. Pour over the fruit.
4. Bake for 25-30 mins so it sets like a baked custard, but take it out while it is still a bit wobbly.

1½ lb cherries (plums, mirabelles, etc)  
3 eggs  
3 level tbsp plain flour  
pinch salt  
5 level tbsp sugar  
¾ pt milk  
good knob of butter  
optional 2-3 tbsp dark rum

## Cardamom-baked figs and plums

This looks attractive, is aromatic and a good finisher for a ladies' lunch (the assumption being they don't want wicked puddings). This is from *CrazyWater – Pickled Lemons*. Allison once did something with fresh and dried baked figs that was syrupy and delicious and completely yum with double cream (bang goes the slimmer idea).

8 figs  
6 plums  
zest of 1 lime  
juice of 2 limes  
crushed seeds of 4 cardamom  
pods  
4 fl oz orange juice  
splash of orange flower water  
2 fl oz water  
3 oz soft brown sugar

1. Halve or quarter the fruit (removing the stones) and put in a shallow buttered oven dish with all the other ingredients making sure the sugar is on top so it caramelises.



2. Bake for 20-25 mins.
3. Serve cold with thick yoghurt.

## Crème caramel

This book was almost at the printers when Georgia said to me, 'I hope crème caramel is in your book'. Why, No!: it wasn't. So out went hazelnut gantois (once a favourite but I haven't made it for years) because this is so much a part of our family that it has to be included. The recipe was learnt by osmosis from Jojo and was always a favourite with Stephen, reminiscent of nursery days perhaps. Whenever we had too much milk, I would make a little batch.

4 oz sugar  
a squeeze of lemon juice  
1 pt milk  
(or cream and milk)  
3 eggs  
nutmeg  
  
serve with cream or yoghurt

1. Make a caramel as on page 182, but adding in some lemon juice at the beginning. Let it get a little bit darker than amber, but not burnt: hold your nerve and let a 6th sense guide you.
2. Quickly pour into 6-8 ramekins, and tip each one to coat the bottom and sides before it sets.
3. Using the same saucepan (no need to wash it up), pour in a pt of milk and warm to blood temperature.
4. Whisk in the eggs one at a time.
5. Pour into the caramelised ramekins.
6. Grate a little nutmeg over each one.
7. Put the ramekins into a bain marie and bake in a slow oven for about 35-40 mins. I find that if the heat is too high or baked too long, they have internal bubbles – what you want is for it to be *just* set and almost still wobbling.

Stephen always turned his out onto a white saucer to reveal the caramel topping.

## *Meringue Mont Blanc*

This is very 70s somehow. I think now I'd just do it as a Pavlova and forget about the piping – it just adds to the washing up and there's a lot of wastage. Another *Cookery Year* confection.

1. Make a meringue mixture and pipe or spread it in two 7 in circles on parchment: one circle complete; the other an outer ring.
2. Pipe 8 rosettes (I don't).
3. Bake on low oven for about an hour.
4. Cream the butter and sugar.
5. Beat in chestnut purée little by little and flavour with lemon and sherry.
6. Assemble shortly before serving by sticking the meringue ring to the circle with cream.
7. Pile the chestnut mix into a mountain shape in the middle.
8. Decorate with the rosettes (optional) and pistachios and a splash of cream on top of the mountain to look like snow.

2 egg whites  
tbsp corn oil  
4 oz caster sugar  
2 oz unsalted butter  
1 oz caster sugar  
8 oz tin sweet chestnut purée  
sherry  
lemon juice  
whipped cream  
chopped pistachios for garnish

## *Susanna's apple caramel pudding*

A winter warmer for a household of hungry children. It's got the quality of a roly-poly pudding without being as much effort. This recipe is actually given to me by Susanna's mother Irene and dates back to the days when they lived in East Horsley and we would have fiercely competitive croquet matches on their immaculate lawn.

1. Line the base of baking tray with a paste of butter and sugar and spread evenly.
2. Put the flour, salt and lard into a bowl, work in the fat and add milk to a pastry consistency.
3. Roll out into an oblong about ¼ in thick.
4. Spread with the apple mixture and roll up like a Swiss roll.
5. Cut in rounds 1" thick, place in sections over the sugar-butter mix and sprinkle with more sugar and cinnamon.
6. Bake in a medium oven for 35-40 mins

Serve hot with custard.

dark sugar  
butter  
apple compote flavoured with cinnamon  
1½ cups self-raising flour  
2 oz lard  
pinch salt  
milk to mix

## *Joachim's orange-almond tuiles*

They're his because he took us to a designed-for-us dessert-making course at Sucre in Amsterdam where we made these. But they are not really his signature dish; on the other hand, what is?

1. Mix the sugar with the orange juice and add the butter, melted.
2. Add flour and almonds and rest in fridge for at least 10 mins.
3. Spread on silicone sheets thinly – leaving plenty of space for them to spread.
4. Bake in a low oven watching all the time so they go a dark golden, but not burnt.
5. Shape (if desired) while they are still warm.
6. Store in an air-tight tin.

If stored too long, they go a bit gooey, but work well with other biscuits in a cheesecake base.



250 g sugar  
75 g flour  
125 g butter  
100 g orange juice  
25 g sliced almonds

# 15

## Parties

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### *Socialising*

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All the stews, salads, picnic and pastry dishes in this book are suitable for party fare. Dishes in this section are given in party quantities with ease of preparation in mind.

We've had some pretty daft excuses for parties and dinner occasions over the years. The longest-running are the Silent Three Dinners, the Wittgenstein's Poker Parties, and the Art Workers' Guild Suppers – respectively fourteenth, tenth and eighth years upcoming at the time of writing. There's no need for an excuse to break bread with people, but we do it a lot; and are invited a lot – at the last count (and Yes, I'm nerdy that way) we had given 58 dinner parties and been invited to exactly the same number and the figures every year are much the same.

The stamps (opposite) were painted with party intent, but some years ago now and I have forgotten why: they became a fore-runner to this book in some recipe cards I made for my aunt Käte when she had not long been widowed.

Silent Three is far from silent and 15 of us when there's a full house. The 'club', if you can call it that, was founded by the novelist Robert Irwin and its name comes from the comic strip in *School Friend*; not sure why. A group of writers would meet in an upstairs room in a pub in Fitzrovia (latterly The Blue Posts) to talk about agents and publishers (complain, more like). Some of us would meet for a Thai or Indian curry around Charlotte Street beforehand and one day, walking from there to the pub, I had said 'I bet I could do better than that for £10 a head'. Someone challenged me and because Steven and Clarissa had their Fitzrovia flat and were not then there during the week, I asked to borrow it. The first dinner took place on the second Tuesday of the year, which coincided with the eclipse of the moon, 9 January 2001, and we all trooped out onto the top balcony from where you could see it very clearly. The first guests were people who had been in the curry house at the time of the bet, probably plus a few whom I particularly liked, and it has been the same group ever since (predominantly novelists and many of them very successful). It's still £10 a head, though at a certain point we had to add in a bring-a-bottle as well. I cover my costs (Congestion Charge, parking or taxis included) and sometimes make a teeny profit which goes into my art-buying fund. On the tenth occasion,

which had to be the last at the flat because S&C had come to live permanently in London, I invited everyone – thinking it would be the last, but we now continue in Louise Doughty’s house in Kentish Town. In year four, I initiated the idea of going round the table and everyone saying what the year had brought them: this met with slight resistance at first, but it is now what everyone looks forward to. I have recorded some of what was said (when I can remember) in my Dinner Party Record and it gives a little snapshot of changing aspirations.

The Wittgenstein’s Poker Parties have become what I now do instead of having a birthday party because the inciting incident occurred the day before my birthday. On 25 October 1946, Popper was invited to present a paper entitled ‘Are There Philosophical Problems?’ at a meeting of the Moral Sciences Club, which was chaired by Wittgenstein. The two started arguing over whether there existed substantial problems in philosophy, or merely linguistic puzzles – the position taken by Wittgenstein. In Popper’s account, Wittgenstein brandished a poker to emphasise his points, gesturing with it as the argument grew more heated. When challenged by Wittgenstein to state an example of a moral rule, Popper (later) claimed to have replied ‘Not to threaten visiting lecturers with pokers’, upon which Wittgenstein is said to have thrown down the poker and stormed out – he is also said to have got up and quietly closed the door behind him. The book *Wittgenstein’s Poker* by David Edmonds & John Eidinow (2005) follows through 13 accounts of what happened and it intrigued me that one 10-min incident could be interpreted in so many ways. Dan and Peter always come (she being a Wittgensteinian philosopher) but the other guests are always carefully chosen. I don’t like having more than 10 people, though it has happened that we do. The ‘rules’ have always been to bring something that can be ‘read’ in a number of different ways – say, some text, a bit of broken pot, an art object, case study, something growing, piece of curious machinery, a song, but it has to be capable of ambiguity and varying interpretation. We start at 7 p.m. and readings are in between courses. It’s always quite interesting what people bring to the table – quite often things they are personally grappling with. Again, some of these are recorded in my Dinner Party Record, along with the menu on each occasion.

The Art Workers’ Guild Suppers began in Stephen’s year as Master, 2006, when he had a very good year with a hugely successful set of lectures and a couple of sun-kissed outings. Candle-lit suppers in the Master’s Room after lectures were a long-established tradition, but Stephen had rashly promised all his lecturers a supper at which they would be guest of honour. After all, they were giving their time without payment and it seemed the least we could do to wine them and dine them. So I cooked 17 suppers that year – all transported to the Guild





in slow cookpots and other clever devices (as they have no cooking facilities there) – and we would regularly be 18, and sometimes up to 22, round the table. On his first evening, Master’s Night, we invited everyone to a buffet (about 85) and I made a lute-shaped pie. We presented the Guild with a Supper Party Book at the end, with all the menus, some of the slides and summaries of each lecture.

The autumn term of that year was quite challenging for me as I had just started my MA in Glass at Farnham, so it really was an action-packed year. We charge £15 a head including wine (still do) though in Stephen’s year there’d be about six people who wouldn’t be paying. I now do two or three a year and everybody is paid for, so my art-buying fund is sometimes bumped up quite nicely, especially if there are 20 people dining. They are always lovely occasions with a long table in a fine room and interesting craftsmen to talk to. The menu is always themed towards the subject of the lecture, so, for example, for a talk on Proportion, I made a golden-section tempietto del formaggio drawing from the evening’s speaker the observation that ‘the angle between the brie pediment and the goats’ cheese capital exhibited differentiation’. A lot of wine is drunk and there is a toast to the Guild. Even though serving food is something I hate doing – normally I cook and someone else dishes out – I do it there without resentment, and that’s partly because I am thinking of my little art fund and what I could commission other Guildsmen to make for us.

Surprise parties are risky. The children organised one for me when I was 60 and I gave one for Stephen’s 35th. Our plot to get him out of the house while the guests came was to ask for a last-minute baby-sit at No. 2 for 15 minutes. He thought I was getting together a special birthday supper so he agreed – in fact I had been cooking all week and the food was all at the back of the fridge (he never noticed) and, in that time, I got it all out and all the guests assembled. His face when he came back in (having been a teeny bit grumpy as I think it was more like half an hour) was a picture. Great occasion.



One of our party themes is playing around with numbers. On 5 December 1991 we had a Mozart's Death Day Party to which lots of people came. My mother came dressed up ambiguously, either as Salieri or as the mysterious Death itself. Stephen and Gaby wore wigs that Stephen had made out of a piano part of a Mozart violin sonata nicely printed on good paper (torn up because the solo part was missing; one of them is still in the Christmas wrapping drawer). We had candle-only lighting in the whole of the downstairs area and it took dozens and dozens of candles to get enough light. I made a tall croquembouche under the misguided apprehension that it was appropriate to the 18th century – in fact Carême (who invented it) would only have been six when Mozart died. We hadn't met Ivan then.

More recently, we've had palindrome parties – one on 10 02 2001, and then 11 people came on 11. 11. 11. Gabriel and Georgia came to it and sang Mozart's palindrome duet. Bill Thomas outdid us on his 72nd birthday on 11022011 which he held for 72 people. And we had a modest lunchtime event on 21 02 2012.

Fun with menus includes: evil olive; tuna nut & gnu dung; wet stew / reed deer; potato idiot atop; salad, alas; lion oil; bel paese à pleb; Emily's sassy lime; stressed desserts to tug at a gut; gorge grog; don't nod. And suggested by Helen and Julian, but not on the menu, were: a nut for a jar of tuna, Delia failed, smart rams, bird rib, drat such custard, not a banana baton, no melon, no lemon (although you could say we did have the last two).

Then there've been 9. 10. 11. and 10. 11. 12. as well as 12. 12. 12. occasions for which I have adapted the same card design. And 2013 had its little moments for this, including Clarissa's birthday which was 31. 1. 13. and 11. 12. 13.

One of our dafter ideas was the Professor Party at which we allegedly had the Professor's Pie from the *The Best of Eliza Acton* (1968 and pinched from Longman's shortly before I left), but adapted. This must be a mis-memory because there is no such pie in it – though a very rich Publisher's Pudding and a more lean Author's Pudding are in the book and maybe I did one of those (variants on bread-and-butter pudding). The occasion was not a success, the people we had invited being embarrassed that what drew the company together was that one of each pairing (and in one case both of them) were professors.



The Stephens Party, on the other hand, was a riot and with superlative social connections. Five Stephens and their (not Stephen) wives came and every time anyone said, Could you pass this to Stephen, everyone laughed and equally everyone knew exactly which Stephen was meant. There were lots of conversations going that I wanted to eavesdrop on. Ten is quite a crowd and the trouble is you don't get general conversation round the table so easily. But, hey, they left at 1.30 a.m. and not all at once in the way people often do and which we try to avoid when we are guests.

The Everything Edible party hasn't happened yet. All our ideas are recorded for when we do (pages 215-9) – and are not to be stolen by an outside-the-family reader!

We aren't the only people to do themed ideas: Sonja once had a bring-a-dish pumpkin party at which everyone brought a pumpkin-based course. And none of this is as mad as Marinetti and the Futurists who had a Tactile Dinner, described thus:

Pyjamas are prepared for the dinner, each one covered with a different material such as sponge, cork, sandpaper, or felt. As the guests arrive, each puts on a pair of the pyjamas. Once all have arrived and are dressed in pyjamas, they are taken to an unlit, empty room. Without being able to see, each guest chooses a dinner partner according to their tactile impression. The guests then enter the dining room, which consists of tables for two, and discover who the partner they have selected is.

If that is crazy, how about this story from my own family, when my uncle Werner as a young man was allowed to transform his bedroom at one of many Berlin parties. Every piece of furniture was screwed to the ceiling, cushions lodged in armchairs, Persian rugs nailed over the central ceiling rose, light-fittings cannily wired up from the floor, bookshelves screwed to the top halves of the walls with the books all turned upside-down, the curtain pelmets transposed to the bottom of the window-ledges. The idea was that inebriated guests would be brought into the room one by one and left on the floor to look up and wonder just how much they'd had to drink.

Colour themes can be interesting. There was an all-red dinner with a red pepper stew, tomato bread and blood orange sorbet. I also contributed to a black and white buffet for Edmund Fairfax-Lucy when he was Master and had a Day of the Dead honouring past members of the Guild. It was all on a black table cloth with 20 Mexican Day of the Dead skulls that Andrew and Roz had brought us in Mexico dotted about the room. I made: sandwiches of black bread with cream cheese and white bread with tapenade; black olives, black tortilla crisps, black eggs; black carrot canapés with goats' cheese topping; black lentil tartlets; red pepper and red cabbage garnishes; oreo biscuits, and our own black grapes. It actually looked quite colourful.

We call this 'eatsthetics'.

## Quantities

It's curious, but you can't factor up when you are cooking for a crowd. Ten times a salad for eight will be too much for 80. On the other hand, if you do 10 *different* salads then it won't be enough because people will want to try everything and some will get left on plates. It's less effort in the long run to limit the menu. I know this in one part of my head, but the emotional hemisphere wants to produce a groaning board. Most people I know don't have catering-sized pots and pans anyway, so cooking in bulk isn't feasible.

Our wedding breakfast was constructed on the theory that 'if everyone has on their plate ½ a serving of 3 meat dishes, a hard-boiled egg and various biscuits and cheeses they will be quite happy'. The cooking agenda still exists (see right), on the orange-yellow paper I was so keen on at the time, and some original recipes are in this book. There was too much pâté and not enough lemon mousse. There's no record of what or how much wine we bought.

For my Art Workers' Guild suppers I always do a slow cookpot of a casserole of some sort; packed full that will feed about 25 people (people don't eat as much in large social groups). For a party of 50, I'd do two and that would probably be about 16-18 lb of beef. I'd do baked potatoes or couscous with that, for ease, and a handful of salads. Three large tarts and a fruit salad for dessert, perhaps. If doing a barbecue, you need a lot more meat.

Most of my parties, however, are cold collations because everything can be prepared in advance and doesn't need looking after. I haven't found a formula for how much to make and always do too much.

There's plenty of advice on how to cook for 100 on the internet, but it isn't helpful – unless TexMex is one's style.

Recipes elsewhere in this book given in 10-12 quantities include: Tuscan bean soup (page 39), Chinese roast pork (page 94), four salmon dishes (pages 71-2), Spanish tortilla (page 145), vegetarian lasagne (page 120), frittata (page 147), leek flan de poireaux (page 101), Provençal omelette (page 147), tiramisu (page 183), semi-freddo (page 196) and lots of others will factor up. The focaccia (page 57) looks good in a version from Puglia with a thin layer of sliced potato on top – an effective party contribution dish.

As for paper plates and plastic cutlery – absolutely *not*. During one party I spent a lot of time washing up forks, having totally forgotten that there were 48 assorted silver forks in my Bauhaus canteen.

## Sally F and the freezer

Obviously cooking in the run-up to a party and keeping it fresh in the freezer is a tactic everybody uses, but to buy a freezer just for a party is a bit adventurous. That's what Sally did when she had 18 for Christmas in 2012 and bought one just to put everything in (bar the turkey) for a series of Christmas dinners so she could sit upstairs and enjoy the conversation. Even the roast potatoes were done in advance, the gravy, everything. What a relaxing concept!

### Our wedding breakfast

for 100 guests

#### Jane

4 loaf-sized patés (page 139)  
terrine de lapin  
kipper pâté  
ratatouille (page 156)  
lentil salad (page 159)  
salade Niçoise (page 57)  
ham & chicken mousse

#### Stephen

vegetable aspic  
miseria (page 166)  
cheese buying

#### Susanna & Jen

tuna & avocado pâté  
aubergine yoghurt  
potato salad for 50 (page 160)

#### Joan & Angela

2 salmon mousses  
50 stuffed eggs  
2 chocolate cakes (page 174)  
rice salad for 50

#### Lotte to buy

8 lb ham  
6 lb cold beef  
1 medium turkey

#### Clarissa

lemon mousse for 80

#### Heino & Britta (distant cousin)

3 cakes each

#### Mitzi (a helper)

50 hard-boiled eggs  
salads for 20:  
green & tomato  
pineapple & celery  
apple, avocado, almond &  
cress  
peach, cauliflower &  
wheatgerm

## *Lotte's open sandwiches*

My mother's idea of parties was to make sandwiches: leberwurst and bratwurst squeezed out of sausage-shaped ballotines that you had to slice at one end, like taking the top off a boiled egg. They would be padded onto rye bread with caraway seeds and a slice of gherkin on top. Sometimes there'd be bridge rolls. She'd make them hours in advance to be prepared, but this was before the days of clingfilm and I don't recall a fridge, and by the time guests came, they'd be curling up at the corners and the wurst would be outlined in brown, like a fried egg burning at the edges.

## *Heino's Kaffee und Kuchen*

My father made plum or apple tarts whenever anyone came to kaffee und kuchen in the evening (never wine and almost never dinner). They had some shallow black flat baking tins and he would line them with thin pastry (I suppose bought, but could you buy it in those days?). Then he would slice the apples or plums and arrange them in overlapping layers, dust with brown sugar and pop into the oven. He'd cut them into squares when cold and serve with little forks on glass plates. No cream.

## *Tortilla roll-ups*

These aren't the fat loo-roll sort as in sandwich shops, but thin and colourful and sliced into one-inch spirals and prettily arranged on a large platter. I often do it for bring-a-dish occasions. Generous quantities.

6 white and 6 brown wraps  
a binding spread all over of  
(variously) cream cheese,  
houmus, guacamole or  
mayonnaise  
fillings of cucumber strips,  
avocado slices, thin chorizo,  
chicken pieces, lettuce, spinach,  
red and yellow roasted peppers

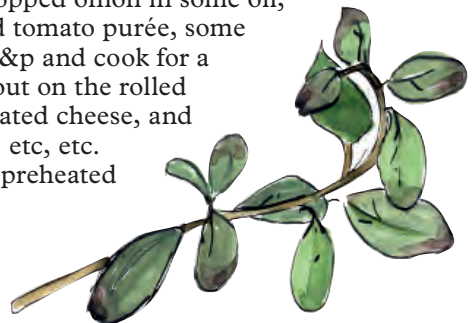
Sliced hard-boiled egg is nice, but pungent before the party (though see hints on page 136). Tomatoes are good for colour but make it all a bit soggy. I tend to go for colour and texture varieties that look attractive sliced across the roll.

## *Shirley's pizza for carols*

Shirley always made these, with the thinnest of pizza dough bases, for the party after the annual carol singing. Different tomato, cheese and chorizo or ham toppings and sliced into squares. They were just like a savoury version of my father's plum tarts.

8 oz self-raising flour  
1 tsp baking powder  
½ tbsp salt  
1 oz butter (or oil)  
2 oz grated cheddar  
¼ pt milk

1. *For the base:* rub together dry ingredients and then blend to a dough with the milk; roll out.
2. *For the topping:* fry a chopped onion in some oil, add 2 tbsp concentrated tomato purée, some marjoram or oregano, s&p and cook for a moment. Then spread out on the rolled dough, sprinkle with grated cheese, and add olives or anchovies, etc, etc.
3. Bake for 20-25 mins in preheated hot oven.



## Stilton and cranberry parcels

Any other filling too. Peter and Mariolina Freeth served these one Christmas party.

1. Crumble some stilton with a few dried cranberries onto some filo pastry squares.
2. Bunch up and seal with egg or milk.
3. Bake hot for 10 mins.

filo pastry  
dried cranberries  
stilton



for  
the  
filling:

12 oz red lentils  
1 onion, finely chopped  
4 tbsp tomato ketchup  
2 tbsp creamed horseradish  
4 oz butter  
s&p

for the spinach layer:

2 lb spinach, cleaned and  
trimmed  
3½ oz flour  
4 oz butter  
1 pt milk  
4 eggs, separated

## EFO spinach and lentil roulade

Made by a fellow glass-maker at an East Finchley Open (EFO) Christmas bring-a-dish party. She said it was from *The Dairy Book of Family Cookery* (1983). It is in the party section because it uses quite a number of bowls and implements, so might as well make a lot. This version doubles the original quantities and will slice into 40 sections. Impressively, pretty and inexpensive.

1. Butter and line 2 large Swiss roll tins.
2. Cook the lentils and onion in water until tender.
3. Drain, and return pan to the heat to evaporate off excess moisture.
4. Add ketchup, horseradish and butter and whuzz.
5. Cook spinach without water. Season and purée.
6. Make a thick béchamel sauce from the flour, butter and milk.
7. Cool slightly, add spinach and egg yolks, then the whisked egg whites.
8. Spread this sauce in the Swiss roll trays.
9. Cook for around 20 mins until well risen and golden.
10. Turn out onto greaseproof paper and peel off lining paper (easier when it has cooled a bit).
11. Spread lentil filling over spinach base, and use the greaseproof paper to help roll up. It usually looks a bit of a mess at this stage, so I keep the rolling paper on, wrap the whole thing in clingfilm and chill it. Then trim off the ends and cut in slices.

## Nouvelle terrine

There was a ‘nouvelle cuisine’ fad in the 80s and I got sucked into it. This one is fiddly, but good for parties as it goes a long way.

Use the remaining egg yolks, the orange juice, a bit of vinegar, milk and parsley (dill if it’s there) to make a sauce – whisked in a bowl and heated slowly in a saucepan of water to thicken.

1. Blanch the broccoli florets.
2. Mince the chicken in the blender adding the cream, curd cheese and eggs plus seasoning.
3. Spread ⅓ of the mix in an oiled terrine.
4. Put a layer of broccoli on top, then prawns.
5. Next ⅓ and repeat the layering and last ⅓ on top.
6. Bake in a bain marie covered with foil for about 40 mins on medium heat.

4 oz broccoli  
12 oz chicken fillets  
8 oz curd cheese  
2 egg whites  
4 oz peeled prawns  
bit of double cream, cayenne,  
rind of orange

hard boiled egg at the centre  
 round that: a stuffing of  
 chicken liver, sausage-meat,  
 breadcrumbs, orange and  
 apricots bound with an egg  
 put inside a pigeon, pheasant  
 or partridge (the idea is to  
 alternate light meats with dark)  
 inside a chicken  
 inside a duck  
 inside a capon  
 inside a turkey (for a really big  
 occasion)

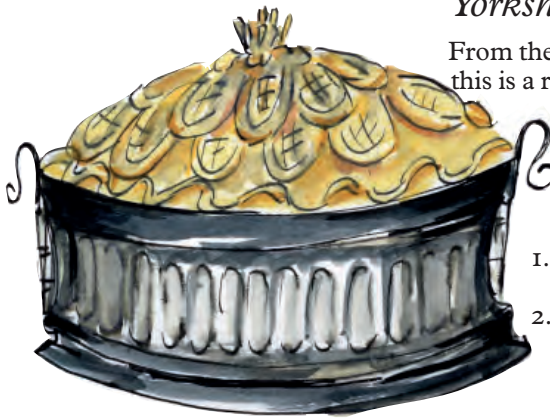
## *Bird within a bird*

Hot favourite for a few years for posh occasions. I did a particularly spectacular version for Nada's 70th birthday party. The original recipe is so scrappy, it's hardly even there; barely more than a phone number. I got it from someone called Sandy (we met her at Julia's) and I must have phoned her and scribbled vague notes. The recipe is based on hearsay. The butcher skinned and boned all the birds for me and put the stuffing in the middle (which he isn't allowed to do now).

1. The last bird has its skin on and then roast the whole thing according to the weight of the whole.
2. Cool overnight.
3. Slice across like loaf of bread so each slice is a striped cross-section.

## *Yorkshire goose pie*

From the Ivan Day Christmas Course we did in December 2009 – this is a raised pie and he did it (notwithstanding its name) with duck breasts. It's to be had cold, but I don't think this goes into the picnic section as this is a party special – and not a cheap choice. I bought an old hinged tinned mould specially for this – I don't think you could do it in an ordinary tin.



*for the pie pastry:*

4 lb flour  
 1 lb butter  
 pinch salt  
 4 eggs  
 iced water

*for the filling:*

forcemeat stuffing made from  
 veal (about 2 lb or more) with  
 lots of seasoning, chervil, basil,  
 thyme, salt, lots of different  
 peppers & 1 egg  
 turkey breast  
 a duck breast  
 2 pheasant breasts  
 2 partridge breasts  
 a duck breast

1. Breadcrumb the flour and fat and then drop in the eggs and mix with a knife until it is blended and elastic.
2. Add the water gradually and poke with the fingers as you go.
3. Put dough on a wooden board and stretch knead to blend all the butter.
4. Then 'saddle' knead, form into a lump and put into a pancheon bowl with a damp cloth on top in a cold place (not the fridge) to rest.
5. Grease the mould with lard – not butter because it has water in it.
6. Cut off about 1/3 pastry for the lid and form the rest into a lozenge; cut a slit half-way through the thick part, put lots of flour inside and roll out so the flour keeps the two bits apart.
7. Drop into the pie mould and start pressing down so the slitted bits go up the side like a slipper. Press in all round with an overlap at the top.
8. Line the pie dish all round the inside and up the sides with the forcemeat.
9. Place the bird breasts on top in the order listed.
10. Finish with forcemeat doming it on top and sealing in all the birds. There should be a little ditch around the perimeter so the liquid that leaks out has somewhere to go.
11. Roll out the reserved bit of pastry thinner than the rest to fit the top and seal it on with water (not egg because that'll make it go brown).
12. Then decorate the entire top with 'roof tiles' of leaf shapes – Ivan's were cut out with jagers and press-moulded with crinkum-cranks, but I had to make do.
13. Put grease-proof paper round the side and on the top and bake for 4 hours on low (around 120°C).

14. Remove from tin and bake for another 2 hours without (but this needs careful judgement).
15. Cool overnight before slicing across.

### *Grand salette for winter*

From Ivan's Christmas course and derived from a 16th-century insalate royale from Italy, arranged rather beautifully on an old charger as a tableau and then tossed by hand when ready to serve – supposedly by the youngest virgin present but we don't seem to have many of those in our family. I did get Elias to do it, aged about seven, when I did this as a centre-piece to a family Christmas buffet.

*tip:* Break up the pomegranate in a bowl of water and the pips will float to the top. Or Emily halves them and bashes the back with a potato masher so the pips fall into her hand.

1. Arrange in the order listed to the right in concentric circles starting in the centre.
2. When assembled on the charger, dress the rosemary twig with beaten egg white to frost it so it looks like snow.
3. Display on the table without mixing.
4. Before eating, toss by hand adding a lemon and oil dressing.

an upside down lemon half with a sprig of rosemary stuck in a round of quartered figs  
 currants  
 almonds  
 gherkins, capers and watercress layer that gets covered  
 preserved orange slices  
 cucumber  
 pomegranate (middle English: 'garnet apple')  
 lemon slices with fluted edges alternating with  
 halved black olives with almond slices as ears to make rabbits

### *Takashi's hiyashi somen*

This translates as 'cold noodle for a hot summer day' and he made it for a gathering in London where it was served on a large, beautiful charger. It was marvellously impressive. Here it is in Takashi's own inimitable English.

1. Put the noodles in a lot of boiled water. When it boil again and blow up bubbles, put a cap of water in the pot. Notice please boil them for just only 3 mins because they are so thin.
2. Pour them into the strainer and wash them with cold water, and then cool them in ice water.
3. Off the water and dish them onto the big plate with ice cube.
4. Onto the white noodles, please decorate with many kind of julienne vegetables.
5. Pour cold men-tsuyu (Japanese soya-base sause) into each cup.
6. Put some noodles and decorations in the cup and taste them together.
7. Don't forget ground ginger into men-tsuyu.
8. Enjoy the colours! Have a beautiful and cool Japanese lunch!

somen, very thin white noodles  
 spring onions  
 shiso (Japanese basil)  
 Italian parsley  
 red radishes  
 shiny baked eggs like crêpes (I think this is sliced omelette)  
 dried seaweeds  
 sliced lemon and cherries

### *Rice salad*

Oh so 60s this one (the original is in *Summer Cooking*)! Cold rice (cooked with a slice of ginger), with shallots, currants, raisins and apricots (and I've sometimes added peas, mint and pineapple cubes, tomatoes & black olives). Nutmeg and lemon juice in the dressing; toasted almonds or pine nuts on top. Good for parties because it is cheap and goes a long way.

3 lb basmati rice for 50 people  
*Rough rule of thumb:* 2 oz rice to ½ pt water

1 Chinese cabbage – shredded  
 2 tbsp olive oil  
 ½ cup sliced almonds  
 ½ a cup sesame seeds – both  
 lightly toasted  
 6-8 shallots – sliced  
 2 pkts Chinese soup noodles  
 that look like a perm (broken  
 into little pieces but not cooked)

*dressing*  
 4 tbsp sugar  
 ½ cup olive oil  
 2 tbsp soy sauce  
 2 tbsp sesame oil  
 ½ cup rice vinegar  
 s&p

large cauliflower  
 jar of anchovies  
 capers  
 oil and lemon  
 4 eggs  
 16ish stoned olives

a cauliflower cut into thin slices  
 on a mandolin  
 2 handfuls of dried apricots,  
 chopped  
 cress  
 salted almonds  
*dressing*  
 1 tbsp rapeseed oil  
 ½ tsp lemon juice  
 ½ tsp lemon peel

## Cousin Vera's noodlings

This is a really good standby for occasions when you need to bring a dish to a party. It looks generous because it bulks out and is easily assembled with store-cupboard ingredients – the cabbage aside. I have done it for years, only discovering recently that her source was the *New York Times*.

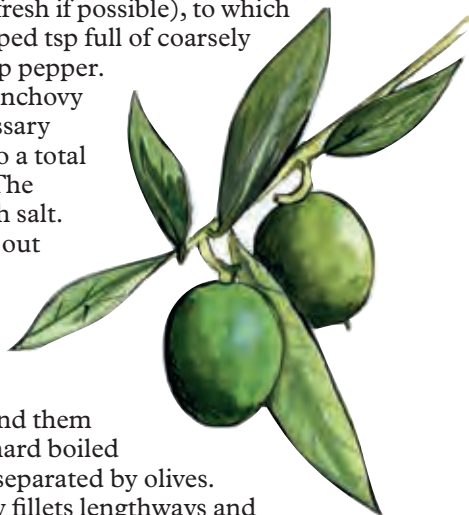
1. Discard the bouillon packet that comes with the noodles.
2. Mix everything in a large bowl.
3. Shake the dressing in a jam jar.
4. Pour over the dressing.

Serve in a big, beautiful bowl.

## Greenwald's cauliflower and anchovy salad

It's his because he has served it to us several times, but it's from *The Mediterranean Cookbook* by Anna Macmiadhacháin, Mary Reynolds, Claudia Roden and Helga Rubinstein (1976).

1. Cut a cauliflower into mouth-sized florets and boil until it is not quite soft (about 6 mins). Strain, allow to cool for 3 or 4 mins and dress (stirring carefully) with a mixture of 3 parts olive oil to one part lemon juice (fresh if possible), to which should be added two heaped tsp full of coarsely chopped capers and ½ tsp pepper. Use the oil from a tin of anchovy fillets and top up as necessary with additional olive oil to a total volume of about ½ cup. The anchovies provide enough salt.
2. When cool lay the florets out on a flat dish big enough to take them without needing to heap them up too much and leaving enough space round the edge to surround them with a ring of quartered hard boiled eggs laid end to end and separated by olives.
3. Carefully cut the anchovy fillets lengthways and lay them end to end over the cauliflower in a mesh like pattern. One tin of anchovies should be enough to give a mesh spacing of about 4 to 5 cm.
4. Before serving, sprinkle with chopped parsley and add some shine with an additional light sprinkle of olive oil.



## Cauliflower salad with dried apricots and cress

1. Mix the dressing with the sliced cauliflower and chopped apricots.
2. Sprinkle cress and toasted almonds on top.
3. Serve immediately.



## Easy coleslaw

See page 159 for my recipe. For a party, however, it's easier to take a shortcut. Buying in coleslaw and adding fresh ingredients dilutes the excess of mayonnaise they all supply (M&S is better than Sainsbury's; Costco's even better). Ingredients given for about 50 people.

## WIZO salad

This is scribbled inside a book Margaret gave me and I remember it being made by one of her Jewish women at a bring-a-dish fundraiser. This was a Women's International Zionist Organisation event (WIZO) and I had been asked along to give a talk about how I got into glass-making. The scribble is suitably scrappy, and I recall the dish was really refreshing – though the same could not be said for the Zionist company (sorry Margaret!).

1. Make the day before.
2. Mix the chopped vegetables into the jelly mixture and leave to set in a shallow baking tin.

7 large cartons of coleslaw (or 6 and a bit of extra carrot and white cabbage shredded: 1 carton if from Costco)  
2 heads of celery sliced across  
2 red apples chopped into bits  
2 green peppers cut in strips  
½ lb sultanas

lemon jelly (maybe 10 packets for a party)  
grated carrot  
chopped celery  
chopped apples  
sultanas  
salt  
a little vinegar

## Everything edible

This is an idea that Vita and I (in particular – or so I thought, but Emily says not) have been kicking around for years. The idea is to hold a dinner party that needs no washing up at all because all the implements and containers will be edible. It would be in the summer so we could have ice utensils. Ivan said he would make us a sugar *pièce montée* if we do it, but now that he has been to dinner with us, and made Vita's alternative wedding-cake (iced with sugar flowers), I am not sure if I would hold him to that promise. The ideas we had so far are.

*Tablecloth:* best not have one, or we could do tablemats of woven leek strands.

*Table decoration:* icing roses on origami-folded nori.

*Menu:* rolled out cake icing with food colouring writing (can get this transfer printed).

*Napkins:* rice paper with cannelloni napkin rings.

*Canapé holders:* French bread cut on the slant, biscuit spoons (as bought in the Barcelona market).

*Soup bowls:* scooped out halves of round bread loaves, or squash halves; probably a chilled soup.

*Dessert bowls:* coconut halves, orange halves, piped chocolate.

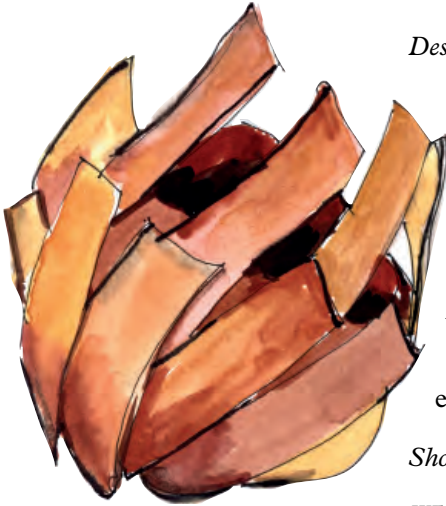


*Serving bowls:* ice bowls.

*Main course plates:* Moroccan flatbreads.

*Side plates:* iceberg or cabbage leaf.

*Dessert plates:* apricot paste or fruit wraps; oblaten wafers.



*Dessert bowls:* orange almond tuiles formed into bowl shapes; rice crispies; waffles; ice-cream cones.

*Après dessert:* chocolate cups.

*Canapé plate:* giant popadom.

*Platters:* ice plates.

*Cheeseboard:* matzos or pumpernickel (though neither firm enough).

*Shot glasses:* scooped out cucumbers.

*White wine glasses:* ice tumblers (I have some plastic blanks for these). Or Ivan might agree to teach me to make gum-paste tazza-style goblets.

*Red wine glasses:* isomalt (sugar substitute) poured into a 2-part mould made of liquid silicone. Expensive kits are available from the US, but I am sure we could improvise.

*Fruit juice glasses:* a New York company (<http://loliware.com>) is manufacturing cups made of flavoured pectin; expensive. Perhaps we could make something using agar gelatine, but I wouldn't want to put wine in it.

*Starter dishes:* filo pastry cups; baby pumpkins; portobello mushrooms; beef tomatoes.

*Cutlery:* celery spoons; crisp chicory; lemon grass chopsticks; carved carrot or parsnip forks; chocolate pudding spoons (page 218); Poilâne forks and spoons (made from rye flour); play dough – hardened flour and water for serving implements; jerky for a knife.

*Salad servers:* carved mouli radishes.

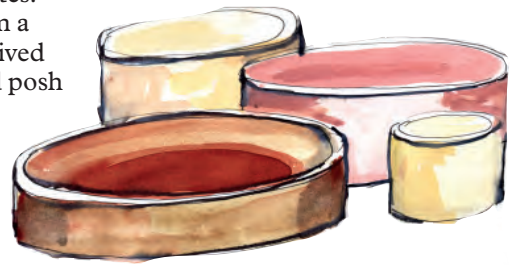
*Other suggestions:* pasta curtains; pastry cases; blown or pulled sugar; aubergine or potato skin containers; fruit rolls shaped and hardened.

### *Jelly-like plates*

I am following experimental food designer Diane Bisson (University of Montreal) who is developing a range of edible tableware to eliminate wasteful disposable plates and cutlery. She wants to be

able to produce moulds for people to cook their own picnic plates. I've seen pictures, but no prototypes as yet. They are made from a jelly-like substance using a transparent, tasteless substance derived from algae. Agar agar flakes are available in Japanese shops and posh supermarkets.

Roll on the day for our party – and as I said, Dear Reader, please don't pinch our ideas until we've had it!



### *Nest-shaped noodle bowls*

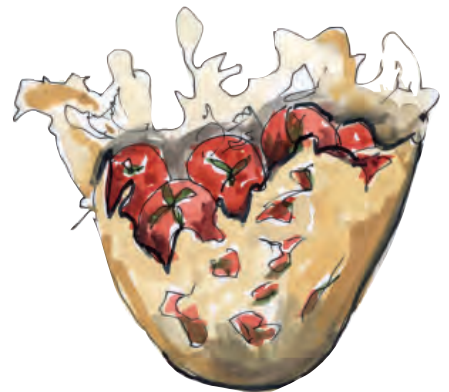
1. Boil some noodles in water without oil till they are done. Drain and dry.
2. Using a steel tea strainer, lay the noodles in the strainer, covering it completely in a thin layer.
3. Heat oil on a high flame. Once the oil is hot (check with some scrap boiled noodles), immerse the tea strainer or ladle in the hot oil. Fry till golden brown putting pressure down on the noodles with the back of the spoon, so that they do not float out from the strainer.
4. Lay on paper towels and let cool.

round noodles

### *Parmesan or pecorino salad bowls*

1. Grate a quantity of cheese.
2. Cover a round piece of greaseproof or release paper that's bigger than the bowl.
3. Cook in a medium oven for about 3-5 mins.
4. Remove paper with cooked cheese and immediately flip it cheese side down, centred on top of an inverted bowl.
5. Place 2nd bowl on top and press down, forming hot cheese into bowl shape.
6. Remove top bowl and peel off paper.
7. Carefully remove hardened cheese bowl and set aside to cool completely.
8. Prepared cheese bowls may be stacked and stored in airtight container at room temp for up to 5 days.

cheese (about ½ cup per 6" bowl)  
2 tightly nesting bowls



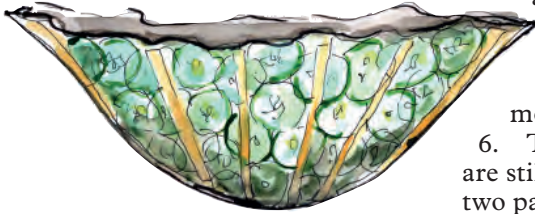
### *Rice bowls*

1. Fork up the egg and seasoning and mix in the rice making sure it is not too soupy. It should push up the side of the bowl easily – if it slips down let it stand for a bit for the rice to absorb the liquid.
2. Fold a square of non-stick foil in half, then half again, open out and carry on folding as for a paper hat. Flatten the bottom and crunch into a bowl shape.
3. Pack the rice mixture evenly all the way up the sides and over the bottom.
4. Bake in a medium to hot oven for 25 mins until the edges go brown.
5. Let stand a bit and then peel off the foil.

per bowl:  
2 handfuls cooked sushi rice  
½ egg white  
½ tsp salt and sugar  
splash of soy sauce

Can serve a curry in this as long as it is not too wet.

carrots  
cucumbers



## Carrot and cucumber bowls

1. Slice the vegetables with a mandolin or sharp knife.
2. Cook in boiling water briefly.
3. Place a paper towel on a plate and line the vegetable pieces on the plate, overlapping them slightly. Place another paper towel and on top place another plate.
  4. Put a weight on top.
  5. Microwave for 3 mins, 1 min at a time, replacing the paper towels each time as they get wet from the moisture.
  6. The end result should be like handmade paper. If they are still a little wet, then place the vegetable paper between two paper towels and put a clean cotton sheet on top and iron it out.
7. Then twist and turn to get a bowl shape, or place in a bowl and put another bowl on top, remove paper towels and let sit for a while.

## Christina's ice bowls

I think it was at Tina's 50th that she froze some bowls made of ice with grasses and rose petals frozen in. It looked very pretty. I once made ice plates by lifting the ice from a bucket of water left outside in the depths of winter and popping them into the freezer intending to use in the summer. But they broke. Need a bigger freezer for that sort of thing.



1. Find two pudding bowls that can be nested with about an inch gap.
2. Fill the gap with attractive food and herbs related to the menu suspended in water and then freeze.
3. Unmould from the bowls and fill with food at the last moment. Lasts about an hour on a summer's day.

## Chocolate spoons

Melt some chocolate and pour into Lakeland spoon moulds. A tempering tip I learned somewhere is to melt  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the chocolate in a bain marie and then add the last  $\frac{1}{3}$  when you've switched off so it melts and cools a bit at the same time.

## Chocolate cups and bowls

### Cups

to make 6 cups  
8 oz 70% chocolate

The *ne plus ultra* for cups and saucers is in Raymond Blanc's *Kitchen Secrets* with step-by-step picture instructions. I've not (at the time of writing) tried it, but this is an easier version.

1. Melt  $\frac{2}{3}$  chocolate very gently and then add the other  $\frac{1}{3}$  cold to the warm mix, bit-by-bit, to temper it. Cool so it is lukewarm and a thick consistency.
2. Lightly spray some small blown-up balloons with cooking oil.

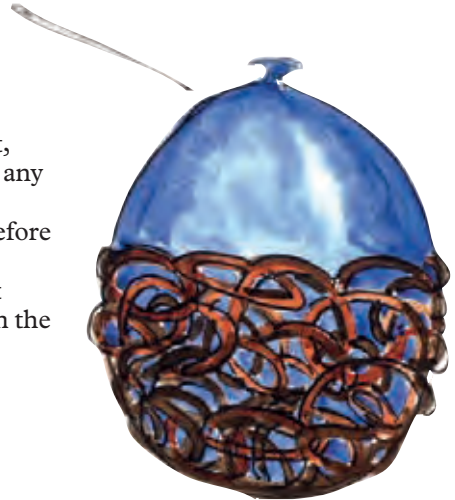
3. Coat with a layer of chocolate.
4. Place the chocolate-covered balloons on silver foil, with the knot in the balloon at the top.
5. You can either let the balloons sit for 30 mins or put them into the fridge to set faster.
6. Carefully take the balloons off the paper, let them down very slowly and remove them.
7. Trim the tops.
8. Pipe the handles and glue to the cups with warm chocolate.

### *Bowls and baskets*

1. As above but with a lot more chocolate, use larger balloons and rest the knotted end in a small bowl to hold it steady.
2. Drizzle the chocolate in a star formation over the top of the balloon, optionally using white chocolate for a colour contrast, and shake around to drip the chocolate round the balloon in any shape.
3. Dab a circle of melted chocolate on the silver foil as a base before inverting the balloon to stick on it.
4. When set, cut a little hole near the knot and very carefully let down the balloon while loosening the drips of chocolate from the balloon.

Another technique is to pipe random circles or a design all over the balloon to create an open-textured structure (though woven sufficiently to create stability).

Or pipe in woven effect over ice shapes for little baskets.



# 16

## Pick your own

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Whenever we are driving somewhere in the country I am on the lookout for farm shops, but they've become a bit twee in recent years, selling expensive jams with chintz-covered lids and imported frippery. A pick-your-own farm is more real and it's a joy to be able to pluck funny-shaped carrots out of the earth and eat the raspberries as you go along the canes. Inevitably, you get to the check-out and can't believe how much you are spending because the temptation to over-pick can't be overcome. It still feels cheaper, even though you know you will have to go home and get preserving before you lose all that wonderful freshness.

Even better is completely free fare picked from hedgerows, friends' gardens, along the sea shore, in the woods, in London street orchards, road kill, or keeping your own hens (as we have). I haven't yet braved the Mendip wall-fish – or escargots in English parlance – and I probably won't. The seminal book here is *Food for Free* by Richard Mabey (1972), which influenced us in the 70s. I can remember frying giant puff balls in bacon fat and trying to enjoy them. My rule in this compendium is to recount food stuffs that have particular meaning for me so my selection here, as in all the other sections, is to put down the recipes that relate to my life.

Probably my first-ever foraging experience was a collection of hazelnuts gathered in the woods behind the house in Oakwood Road that we moved in to when I was nine. There were lots of nut trees in the woods and I had a box I kept my harvest collection in, all counted and sorted by shapes and sizes. I was allowed to roam in the woods as much as I liked, unthinkable now: the people who bought the house after us fenced off the back of the garden with security gates; we just had a loose wired boundary with a gap that gave straight on to Big Wood.

I am not green fingered and so this is not about grow-your-own, but finding it elsewhere.

### *The technology years*

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Foraging segues into my technology years. These days you can find anything on the internet, with how-to videos to boot – maybe it's going to replace the need for recipe books, but I

don't think so because a lot of it is unreliable. Still, my iPad fits neatly on the book rest in the kitchen and I do use it for quick 'give-me-an-idea' inspiration. Actually, we invented the tablet computer a long time ago, in the mid 1980s – or more accurately Bobby Magid did and I was his accomplice, and technical writer. We called it *Genie* and it was to have been a home machine pitched at women, with cooking and shopping featuring on it. We even got a prototype made by a programmer in Israel, but the market wasn't ready and small screens were then far too expensive. The internet had not hit the streets, but you could communicate remotely if you had a great deal of patience. I remember, once, Bobby and I setting up our computers at home to the same Kermit and Winsock protocols by talking it through over the phone and then sending some data across on a modem at 300 baud. That's glacial by today's standards: we thought it magic that it worked at all. A good idea has its time and ours was too soon. Just think, I'd be rich now if it *had* come to fruition.



However, these little toys (and there will be new ones all the time) are very helpful and mine is holding this compendium in electronically-searchable form for use in the kitchen so that I can test out recipes as I go along. When I find a mistake, I email myself from the toy to my main machine with the correction. Finding items is much easier with a keyword search than the compromises a book index forces on you.

I got into computers and technology by accident. A neighbour who edited a magazine called *PC World* knew that I was a freelance journalist and that I had connections with music. He asked me if I would review three computer music programs and came round, set up a Sinclair z88, a Commodore 64 and a Spectrum in our front room and said, Here you go. This must have been around 1982. I'd never touched a computer before and it wasn't music as I knew it, but somehow I managed to write a comparative review. Typed on a golf-ball typewriter. When he (Jerry) came to fetch the machines and wind up the spaghetti of wires, he told me that he was impressed that I hadn't made a fuss, had just got on with the job, and if I didn't mind he'd like to teach me about computing and word-processing, and would I then write for his magazine. With his help I acquired a BBC microcomputer Model B with all of 32 kb of RAM. The one on which I write now has 8 Gg which, rounded down to the nearest thousand, is 300,000 times as much. It is (unbelievably) 30 years ago to the year. Vita might just remember playing the iconic game Chuckie Egg on the BBC B – little green glyphs munching each other up – I was surprised to see it in the British Design exhibition at the V&A in 2011. I fell for the BBC B and for word-processing in particular.

Three years later the Amstrad computers hit the market and then word-processing really took over from pens and

typewriters, but at that time I was still ahead of other people and looked up to as a guru. I also had a feeling for computers, even learned BASIC (and later HTML), and quite enjoyed the cross-word-puzzle challenge of beating the ruddy things at their own game – half the time they didn't work and you had to figure out why. So I became a technical writer, reviewing programs for *PC World* and others and even for a brief period working as an in-house news writer – which I hated: too pressurised. Jerry and I had a spark going that mercifully never got ignited, but it had an influence on the next few years.

I got my first email account in 1994; it was abo6 at Cityscape (now part of Vodaphone) and they'd obviously been through all the aa numerals up to aa99 and had then started again at abo1, so clearly I had an early account and, to be frank, the learning curve was steep. I only knew four other people online. Email worked in that quaint environment called DOS and you could only explore further if you were au fait with Veronica, Archie, gopher, telnet and WAIS – curiosities that are no longer part of our language.

It was in this capacity that I joined the Society of Authors Technical and Scientific Group and got involved with the new challenges of protecting copyright that the new technological age was now so rapidly spawning. I started up *The Electronic Author* for the Society of Authors and had some fun editing that for about three years, until the Society absorbed its concerns into the mainstream.

I think I have learned to be a thoughtful editor – nursing along my contributors with a mixture of flattery and constructive suggestion. I get some creative satisfaction out of bringing out one interesting, balanced and well-illustrated magazine issue after another. My first stint as an editor was for *News & Views* for the European String Teachers' Association and currently I edit *Glass Circle News*. As a little aside, my successor at *News & Views* (Anne who had been Editor of *The Strad* when I wrote for that) married a Michelin-starred chef. We went to dinner with them once and he had made the dessert. I have never seen such perfection made in a private home – I want to say it looked shop-bought, but that sounds denigrating. One cannot, without training, reach such heights.

I wrote articles on word-processing for various newspapers and magazines and for over ten years kept the authors' and technology sections of *The Writers' and Artists' Yearbook* going. The freelance job I enjoyed the most during this period was when I was the British English advisor to Houghton-Mifflin whose product CorrectGrammar was bought by Microsoft and is still the backbone of the Word grammar checker. This was enormous fun because it lasted a whole year, was well paid and sent me back to read grammar





books and to think hard about what ‘correctness’ means in this context. Honourably – and with hindsight, foolishly – I destroyed all my files and notes from that time as it was requested that I would keep nothing. I’d like to refresh my memory now, as the differences between English English and American English turned out to be deeply absorbing, but no notes remain. The chances are that the software I was using then was incompatible with what I have now (certainly the 5¼" back-up disks were) so even if I had kept records, they’d be lost to me now.

It occurs to me as I write this that there has not yet been a generation of people who have got to my age who have lived through an entire lifetime of retrievable data. What I mean by this is a complete progression of digital baby photos in online albums, through to videos of childhood milestones, teenage Facebook pages, adolescent tweets, LinkedIn discussions, Skyped conferences, special-interest blogs, music albums, a lifetime of emails, plus word-processed professional and personal writings. Presumably there is so much invested in compatibility now that all these things will be searchable in a variety of clever ways – keywords, dates, names, picture and sound recognition. Memoires – and I don’t really like this word, but can think of no other – may be triggered by the kind of searches writers run through the white noise of their past, rather than moments that lodge in the amygdala of the brain.

Some of us were exercised, as writers, that reading books serially from start to finish would become a thing of the past. Novels, we predicted (wrongly, thank goodness), would morph into hypertexts and readers would pick their own path through interactive fictions. The act of reading a novel would be a collaboration between author and reader in which different endings and beginnings would emerge from the paths through the narrative that were taken. For a few years I was on conference committees for confluences of creative cranks sharing both daft and dynamic ideas on interactive new media. This culminated in a one-day event at the Institute of Contemporary Arts that I organised and chaired: it had its little moment of fugitive media attention. My ambition, then, was to produce a piece of digital art titled, ‘I list to exist’. The intention was to get away from the vertical concept of self, striving for upwards achievement, and looking at other ways of defining who one is by viewing cross-sections of various activities over time.

You could say that is what I am doing in this book and that ‘pick your own’ is how any reader would approach a book of this kind, except the four or five who care most devotedly about me and who just might be prepared to read it serially.

### *Nettle soup*

I have to start with nettle soup because one of my earliest memories is of summers in East Grinstead with a family called the Eichners. There was a children's table and a grown-ups' table, and Steven had graduated to the grown-ups leaving me feeling very isolated. Perhaps I was 6 and he 12. Is this a true memory or was there a stick in the corner threatened to be used on children who were bad? The daughter of the house and her friend were bad, at least as far as I was concerned, because they tricked me into sitting on a bed of nettles by pretending to do so themselves and ohing and aching about how lovely it felt. I must have come back crying; and maybe the stick was employed and the memory of self-pity is mixed with guilt.

Nettle soup is not as good as sorrel soup (which can also be foraged), but here goes. Pick in May before they flower.

chopped onion, carrot and leek  
a diced floury potato  
vegetable stock  
a big plastic bag of young  
stinging nettles  
butter and cream

1. As for any soup, sweat the vegetables in butter and oil, add the stock, cook and whuzz.
2. Garnish with a swirl of cream.
3. The only problem is washing the nettles (picking them too). Use washing-up gloves.



### *Wild mushrooms*

My father would have gathered mushrooms from the woods in his childhood. They were sliced, put outside to dry and in winter made into mushroom soups. Several of our friends now are mushroomers and we were very keen ourselves one year – it's safe if you avoid any fungus that has gills – but I got put off after reading about a family who are all on dialysis because the husband and wife, experienced mushroomers, had both thought the other had checked the book for a mushroom that had a similar-looking poisonous counterpart. In France, you can go into an pharmacy and have your forage checked.

1. Just fried in butter and served on grilled-and-garlic bread as bruschetta.

### *Ellie's mousseron tart*

When Stephen had shingles, Ellie invited us to her woods-gathered St. George's Day mushroom tart. He wasn't feeling well enough to go, so she very sweetly brought us one round next day and we had it with salad and a beautiful blush-pink Zinfandel.

puff pastry  
mousseron mushrooms  
spinach  
shallots and garlic  
sour cream

1. Bake the pastry (rolled thin) blind.
2. Fry shallots and garlic to soft in a big saucepan.
3. Add cleaned mushrooms, lightly chopped; then a bit of flour and



some milk to thicken.

4. Tip in the spinach leaves, put on lid and let them ‘flop’.
5. Spoon in some cream and a bit of nutmeg.
6. Pour on top of the pastry and return to the oven for 10 mins.

### *Steven’s tomatoes*

All the years he lived in Hampshire, Steven would grow tomatoes: red ones, green striped, black, yellow, orange; raisin-sized or beef-sized. All varieties he could get. He dried them, cooked them, froze and bottled them. He was passionate about them and we were frequent beneficiaries. Most years they would appear, wittily photographed, on his Christmas cards as ironic comments on the state of our society. He has a small collection of tomato art as well and I always hoped he would have an exhibition of tomato paintings and artifacts, but some of it was dispersed when he downsized to the Fitzrovia flat. He grew other fruits and vegetables too and in someone else’s compendium home-grown garden produce would feature more than it does here.

### *Blackberry and apple crumble*

I’ve made any number of pies, tarts and crumbles over the years. As a child, we’d go blackberrying to Aspley Guise (where I was conceived) and every year since has brought a favourite place. One year it was along the driveway to Durnsford Sports Centre where I took Gaby to judo every week. He, like me, is an ambitious gatherer and doesn’t like to stop because he can always see a new patch that’s plumper than the ones before. We have our own brambles in the wilderness at the end of the garden, but they aren’t big and black and juicy.



1. Stew the fruit and sweeten.
2. Cover with crumble made from flour, butter, sugar and a few chopped hazelnuts or walnuts or a shake of granola on top for extra crunch, or mix with crushed amaretti biscuits.
3. Or make a covered or latticed pie and have a hot tin or baker’s stone underneath so the bottom doesn’t go soggy.
4. Bake for about ½ hr and serve with cream or custard or ice-cream.

freshly-picked blackberries  
sugar or agave syrup  
flour, butter, sugar [1: 1: ¾]  
nuts or granola or amaretti

### *Tarte aux myrtilles*

Any fruit tart follows a general principle but this particular one goes down in history. When Emily was six months old, we went with Jojo & Nada to the Auvergne (the back of the estate car being entirely, but entirely packed with baby stuff). We stayed on Lac Chambon at one of those French hotels that probably doesn’t exist any more – full board and fabulous cuisine (he a butcher, she the cook). One day we went out and gathered quantities of blueberries and she made them into a memorable tart. Nada was so enchanted he kissed the cook; not that he needed excuses to kiss women. I don’t know how that one was made, but I would do it as on page 187.

## Damson & apple tansy

John and Allison used to come back to Muswell Hill from Pen-y-Fedw on a Sunday evening, often quite late, and next morning I would find bags of apples on the doorstep. Never any accompanying note, but I always knew who the apple fairy was.

When I do this off by heart (which I do maybe once every September because it is such a bore pushing the damsons through a sieve), I often forget about the eggs and breadcrumbs and leave it as a sharp fruit purée. I like to marble it with some or all of the cream so the top looks pretty. The marbling started after Stephen and I had been on a paper marbling course in Presteigne (we've done two others since as well as trying it at home).

½ lb damsons  
½ lb cooking apples  
2 oz unsalted butter  
4 oz caster sugar  
2 egg yolks  
4 tbsp fresh white breadcrumbs  
¼ pt double cream  
bit of lemon juice

1. Cook the fruit and then purée through a sieve.
2. Stir in the sugar and melted butter.
3. If it is thin, return to the heat and boil down until it is a dropping consistency.
4. Blend in the egg yolk and breadcrumbs.
5. Whisk and fold in the cream and chill.



## Hedgerow jellies

To be made with single fruits or any combination of crab-apple, bramble, rowan, wild plums, sloes, elderberries, damsons, wild quince, japonica, whitecurrant, rose-hip and rose petals. You are allowed to forage along public bridleways, though when we were with Janie and Charlie in Oxford once, the farmer froze us off a perfectly legitimate bridleway bordering his land with a yapping hound just about at heel. I prefer to use preserving sugar because the crystals are bigger and I fancy they give a more jewel-like look to the jelly. They're all nice with cold meat, in a sauce for venison or pork or on breakfast toast.

1 lb strained fruit juice  
per 1 pt sugar



1. Wash and pick over the fruit, discarding any that are damaged.
2. Wash and cut up the apples, cutting out any bruises. Don't peel or core them.
3. Put all into a preserving pan with about 1 pt water to 2 lb fruit and simmer until soft and it's mostly juice.
4. If doing whitecurrant or japonica solo, crush the fruit with a potato masher.
5. Put into a jelly bag and strain overnight.
6. Optional: boil up what's in the bag with a little more water and strain again.
7. Measure the juice (don't squeeze the jelly bag or the result will be cloudy).
8. Return to the pan and add the sugar (warmed in the oven) and allow to dissolve over a low heat.
9. Boil rapidly until setting point is reached (a knob of butter helps get rid of any scum).
10. Pot in warmed jars, turning the hot jelly upside-down for 5 mins to sterilise the lids.

# 17

## Preserves

**M**y favourite preserving book is a no-fuss booklet published by the Ministry of Ag & Fish in 1929 (my edition is 1971) and although I've got fancier books with pretty pictures, that's the one I go to when I've got a glut of some fruit or other and want to know what to do with it. I'm not actually a great fan of jams and chutneys from an eating point of view, but I do get a huge kick out of seeing a little row of them freshly potted up, in beautiful translucent colours and nicely labelled. I think I like designing the labels more than eating the preserves. One year, I made my own blown glass marmalade jars – and I've still got one left.

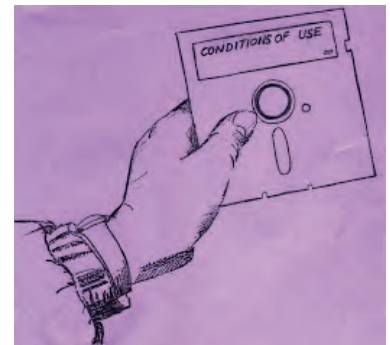
In recent years, I've done a little deal with Anna and Riverford to make labels for their joint preserving classes. A tip I learned is not to bother with waxed disks, but always use new(ish) lids and tip the hot jars upsidedown for a few mins to sterilise the inside of the lid. The jars need to be sterilised for 15 mins in an oven heated to 140°C (and I'm giving the temperature because it is important that it is over 100°C: which is why boiling water won't do). Fill jars while all is hot.



### *The copyright years*

Preservation leads me to my copyright years when I became very involved in the preservation of authors' rights. I rose from being a Board member of the Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS) to Chairman of the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA). At that time, we alternated on a two-year term between authors and publishers and there was no democracy in the way people were appointed. Some sort of whispering in corners went on and a 'Buggins's turn' system operated. I think I was appointed because of my Cassandra-like predictions about the electronic age putting authors' and artists' work even more at risk from piracy than they had been before.

A work of art belongs to its creator, who may or may not choose to relinquish it. The question of value (as in, 'but is it art?') doesn't bother me any more. I have become pragmatic over the years. If society wants a piece of work (written, drawn, performed or photographed) then it has a value that should be appropriately recognised. Specifically, it should be paid for.





I am not sure I ever managed to persuade family and friends of the simple justice of this and I probably bored them rigid with all that I knew about copyright – and I did know a lot. I still have an idea for an opera on copyright lingering in a bottom drawer (or shall we say electronic folder). I also wrote much of a book on plagiarism during a blissful February when I was awarded a Hawthornden

Fellowship, where authors are given time to write in an isolated Scottish castle. It finally got reduced to a lengthy scholarly article when I realised the subject was simply too large to encompass, as I was trying to look at all the arts in all the ages and to draw some common threads in all of them together.

We are exercised about the difference between ‘borrowing’ and ‘stealing’ because the first is normal, natural, and inevitable, whereas the second raises indignation amongst those whose livelihoods are under threat. Both involve the act of copying. Lifting copyrighted material is an infringement of a property right and protected by law. Copying public domain material isn’t illegal; if you own up to it, that’s borrowing; if you don’t, your colleagues might accuse you of theft, or even fraud.

On the whole, the greater the writer or artist, the more dismissive they are of any distinction. Copying, with variations, is an important form of creativity. Take a handful of artistic scions from the last century: Picasso’s assertion that, ‘Minor artists borrow, great artists steal’; Stravinsky saying, ‘A good composer does not imitate, he steals’; or again, T. S. Eliot elaborating on his declaration that ‘immature poets imitate; mature poets steal’. When I later began to think of myself as an artist, I stole too, but in the process of appropriation – if you really *are* an artist – some metamorphosis occurs that makes it truly your own. It’s not unlike cooking.

For the record, recipes are exempt from copyright law, so sharing lists of ingredients and directions is perfectly acceptable and has been done for hundreds of years. However, to express it in *exactly* the same words can be a culinary faux pas, if not an infringement. Certainly, to take over a recognisable chunk of someone else’s collection is frowned upon. But those here that are verbally altered, but substantially taken from a (usually) acknowledged source, are fair game.

My involvement with copyright lasted 13 years (1991-2004) and it was a fascinating learning experience and a glimpse into the corporate world. I joined the Institute of Directors and boned up on corporate governance, employment law and the like. I had to learn how to negotiate a severance deal with both

our chief executive and legal director, whom we had ‘let go’. I also attended a fortnight-long tribunal hearing and had to deal with someone who wanted to sue the company for constructive dismissal. I share with my father a sense of having been a lawyer manqué. This role got me to two garden parties at Buckingham Palace and to an evening cocktail party for people in the book world at which I got to ask the Queen what she read for leisure: ‘One has so little time for that sort of reading’, was her response.

Doors that had been closed before opened, and I rather enjoyed a small sense of power – it was the Head Girl moment that The Beak had once dangled before me. I was determined to get (and succeeded in getting) the Design and Artists’ Copyright Society to be on the Board of CLA. The thank-you party they gave me was themed around a gambling den: my portrait was on the mock £1-notes distributed for the gaming



activities. The only other time I had my head on a banknote was the invitation to our 40th wedding anniversary which had me as the Queen on one side and Stephen as Sir John Houblon (first governor of the Bank of England) on the other.

One nice thing about being a chairman is that the others let you indulge the odd little foible. So for CLA’s 20th anniversary party, held at Somerset House in 2003, I was allowed to create an installation to transmute a piece of writing into water and light by programming the fountains in the courtyard with a timed choreography of water jets with interplays of coloured light. It started with a four-minute display lit by CLA’s corporate red followed by an 11-minute ballet of water-jets in 11 lines running from north to south to represent the key areas of licensing in a frisson of coloured light. This, I said, expressed the need to give users what they want while balancing the concerns and needs of creators and innovators. The fountains then achieved a resolution and finally come to rest. Creativity was yet again knocking at the door of intellectual endeavour.

From preserving copyright to making preserves: a short collection because it relies on finding or being given windfalls and garden glut and each year some new recipe needs looking out. Here, though, are some regulars and general principles.



### *Moroccan preserved lemons*

This comes to me from Anna who acknowledges Paula Wolfert for it. She says to rinse when using the lemons, but I never have. Delicious slid under the skin of a roast chicken or leg of lamb, dotted about in rice, or in salads.

5 or 6 unwaxed lemons  
salt  
lemon juice  
1 cinnamon stick  
3 cloves  
6 coriander seeds  
4 black peppercorns  
1 bay leaf

1. Sterilise a Kilner jar.
2. Cut off stem end of lemon and then cut the lemon into 4 vertical wedges stopping ½" from the bottom without separating the pieces.
3. Over a small bowl, prise open a lemon and sprinkle salt liberally inside coating all the cut surfaces – about 1 tbsp per lemon. Do them all and pack as tightly as possible into the jar squishing them down and putting a bit more salt on top. Put the spices in the jar as you go.
4. Fill the jar with extra lemon juice so lemons are *completely* covered. Wedge the half rind from the juiced lemon on top to push the others into the brine mix when you shut the lid.
5. Leave in a warm room for a month while the lemons ferment – and shake the jar every so often to dissolve the salt.
6. Put in a cool place for another month or longer. Eventually the liquid turns syrupy and then they are at their best. Will keep for a year and you can reuse the juice when making the next batch.

### *Miranda's oven-dried tomatoes*

2½ kg long toms  
3 tsp coarse sea salt  
1 pt olive oil

1. Slice tomatoes in half, squeeze out seeds (but I don't bother).
2. Sprinkle with salt and lay on oven trays cut side down, not touching.
3. Bake on low oven (door slightly open) for 6 to 8 hours.
4. Cool. Put in sterilised jars with olive oil, bay leaf, basil, garlic cloves, capers, etc. and decant to serve in little bowls with a toothpick.

### *Miranda's mustard*

She sent me this in 1978 and her letter says: 'I found it while looking for Christmas pudding recipes'. I might have wanted it for Christmas presents as I had – still do have – a penchant for making foodie presents with pretty labels and attractive fabric-covered lids.

1 lb mustard seeds (small oval brown ones rather than the yellow round ones)  
1-2 tbsp honey  
2 tsp salt  
2 tsp cinnamon  
wine vinegar  
tarragon

1. Wash the seeds and cover with vinegar to soak overnight.
2. Next day liquidise half the seeds, adding more vinegar if it has all soaked up.
3. Combine with the remaining seeds and stir in the honey, salt, cinnamon and tarragon varying the proportions according to taste. Add vinegar if it is too stiff and a little flour if it gets too runny.
4. Seal in sterilised pots.



## *Barnsbury Estates' chutney d'hiver*

One Christmas the Greenwalds totally trounced us with their Christmas 'card' – edition of three. It was a 4-faceted jar of chutney with labels all round. One side gave the ingredients which allegedly were:

Dawn-picked Gloucester, old-spot apples, woodland cranberries, finger-stirred, extra-slapper Kentish molasses, triple-distilled acorn vinegar, Thornhill Wells aqueous diluant, ground mustard powder, knee-crushed Artois garlic lobes, Thames Estuary salt, knuckle-pounded Balines peppercorns, horseradish peroxidase (E-1234), odour enhancers (ethyl mercaptan, sodium cacodylate), tooth-whiteneing agent (gumtption trichloride), carminatives (activated charcoal, kohlrabi extract, sodium benzoyl crapulate (E-bygum), stabilising agent (granulated concrete), bulking agent (powdered gusset bark) approved colourants.



## *Mrs Beeton's apple pickle*

This is from Mrs Beeton's *All About Cookery* (1923). I didn't believe in step 3 so I stirred for a couple of days and then heated it up again before bottling. It's excellent.

1. Simmer vinegar, sugar and apples until reduced to a thick pulp.
2. Add remaining ingredients and turn into a basin.
3. Cover, stir 2 or 3 times daily for a week.
4. Bottle.

2¼ lb thickly-sliced apples  
1 lb brown sugar  
¾ lb sultanas  
½ oz each of salt, mustard seeds, ground ginger  
¼ oz bruised garlic  
pinch cayenne  
1 pt good vinegar

## *Quince & otherberry vinegar*

This principle can be used for various other fruit vinegars: raspberry, blackberry, mulberries or elderberries or japonica. Use it in vinaigrettes, sauces, as a drizzled condiment for meats and vegetables as you would aged balsamic vinegar. Very special as part of a Christmas hamper. I save pretty bottles to put it in. Quantities are a guide only – it depends on how strong you want the flavour or how sweet you want it.

1. Put fruit and vinegar into a plastic container and grate (or for berries mash with a fork). Cover and leave to infuse for several days and up to a week. Give it the occasional stir.
2. Sterilise some clean glass bottles in the oven. Leave them there until needed. (Make sure you have caps that fit.)
3. Strain the mixture through a jelly bag into a saucepan. Add the sugar and heat gently to dissolve it. Boil for 10 mins.
4. Using a jug and funnel, carefully pour hot vinegar into hot bottles, leaving a 1 cm gap at the top. Cap and turn bottles over to sterilise the insides of the lids.
5. Store in a cool, dark place and use within a year.



1-2 grated quinces  
or 1 lb to 2 lb berries  
600 ml cider vinegar (or other)  
¾ to 1 lb sugar

## *Ivan's preserved citrons*

He sent me this in an email and here it is verbatim. I got my citrons in Sicily and they lasted for years.

2-3 citrons  
1 kg sugar  
1 litre water



1. Cut your citrons in half. Remove the rather dry flesh in the middle and discard it. Gently simmer the thick citron skins in plenty of water until they are soft enough to push a blunt knife through. This can take about 40 mins to sometimes more than an hour.
2. While the half citrons are poaching, in another saucepan heat 1 litre of water until it comes to the boil. Remove from the heat and put 1 kg of granulated sugar into this water. Stir continuously until all of the sugar has dissolved into a clear syrup. When the citrons are soft, remove them from the water, which you throw away, and put them into the syrup and simmer them gently for 10 mins. After you have boiled the citrons, put them and the syrup in to the container with a lid (a large Tupperware box is perfect). When they are cold, put them in to the fridge.
3. After 24 hours, strain off all of the syrup and gently boil it for 6 mins. Do not cook the citrons again in the syrup as they will become tough – leave them in the container. After 6 mins pour the boiling syrup over the citrons. Put the lid on and let them cool before you put them back in the fridge.
4. 4-12. Repeat Stage 3 another 9 times every 24 hours. Every day the syrup will become more dense and will be gradually absorbed by the citrons. It seems like a long-winded procedure, but the sugar has to be absorbed by the fruit very gradually, otherwise they will become tough.
5. After 10 syrup boilings keep them in the fridge with the lid well sealed.

If at any time they start to ferment or taste winey, boil the syrup again and pour it over the fruit while still boiling. This will kill any yeasts that have caused the fermentation. Do not bother to take the fruit out of the syrup and attempt to make dried peel: it will just go tough and is a waste of time. You can preserve any citrus peels in this way.

## *Preserved pomelo*

One pomelo yields a lot of candied rind and, put in pretty boxes, makes a nice present.

1 pomelo  
1pt water  
8 oz sugar

1. Cut the rind into strips.
2. Blanch it 3 times, then cook slowly in a sugar syrup until the sugar has penetrated fully (an hour or two).
3. Drain and toss with sugar (and dip in chocolate).
4. Orange rind can be candied in this way, but better to cut away the white pith. Pomelo stays remarkably tender.

Sugar syrup – roughly twice as much water as sugar and boil for 5 mins before simmering the fruit rind. Use any left-over syrup to make a fruit ice-cream (page 194).

## *Marrons glacés*

This takes four days and is a lot of faff. I've tried a few times because I love them, but would only do it again if I had free access to a glorious French chestnut tree. Buy them!

## *Cumberland sauce*

This and the next three recipes are from the from the Riverford preserving classes taught by Anna Colquhoun.

1. Pare zest getting off all the white pith and julienne the zest – blanch these matchsticks 3 times.
2. Squeeze juice and put in saucepan with jelly, zest, salt, spices and port. Simmer for 20 mins.
3. Optional – to thicken a bit, bung in the cornflour (blended with water first – or more port). Cook a bit.
4. Let it all cool slightly so the zest is suspended throughout.
5. Pour into hot jars and seal with new screw-top lids immediately. Turn upside down to sterilise the lids for 5 mins (good tip this one – don't bother with waxed paper or anything).

Use within 3 months (lasts longer actually).

6-7 ½ lb jars  
8 blood oranges – ordinary probably OK too, but not the thick Jaffa kind  
4 lemons  
900 g redcurrant, crab-apple or rowan jelly  
300 ml ruby port  
pinch of salt  
mustard powder, to taste  
ground ginger, to taste  
pinch of cayenne, to taste  
sterilise jars in oven

## *Zibibbo port & blood orange conserve*

Zibibbo is a restaurant in Florence and this dish comes from there (via Anna) – serve with liver parfait on brioche. This quantity only makes about three little pots so it is rather special and only given away to people I like very much indeed.

1. Pare strips of the zest off the oranges all round, and cut away any pith. Cut into juliennes and blanch.
2. Halve and squeeze the oranges discarding the pips. Add juice to zest and weigh. You should have 750 g; if not alter the other ingredients accordingly.
3. Mix all ingredients in a saucepan over a low heat and stir gently until the sugar has dissolved. Simmer very slowly until zest has softened and the liquid is syrupy. Might want to throw in another slug of port at this point.
4. Heat the jars and then pot them turning them upside down for a bit to sterilise the lids.

3 kg blood oranges  
450 g sugar  
280 ml port  
200 ml water



## *Candied blood oranges*

The blood orange season is so short that I do as much as I can with them while they are around. It's annoying because I believe they are available in Sicily all year, but the marketing people think we only want to see them in January/February. Blood orange sorbet, for example, is delicious, but it's got to be served freshly made.

1. Cut the oranges into thin rounds, discarding the pips and end bits.
2. Dissolve the sugar in the water in a wide pan over a low heat. Add spices. Add the orange slices and top up with more water if they

3 blood oranges (or clementines off season)  
1 mug of sugar  
2 mugs of water  
cinnamon stick, some cloves, a crushed cardamom pod  
3 tbs orange liqueur



10 thin-skinned oranges  
 salt  
 750 ml white wine vinegar  
 625 g white granulated sugar  
 625 g brown sugar  
 cinnamon stick, several cloves,  
 crushed cardamom pods, few  
 blades of mace  
 peppercorns, allspice berries  
 slice of root ginger

- are not covered. Simmer gently until the peel looks translucent – about 2 hours.
3. Lift oranges and spices out of the water and boil the liquid till it reduces to a syrup. Pour this back over the oranges and cool. Then add the liqueur.

Will keep in the fridge for a week (and I've kept them longer in small Kilner jars with extra orange brandy).

### *Spiced pickled oranges*

1. Cut oranges into 5 mm slices discarding pips and ends. Put in a pan with a good pinch of salt and cover with cold water. Simmer partially covered for about an hour and drain carefully.
2. Meanwhile, heat the vinegar with the two sugars and the spices in a large pan until it has all dissolved. Bring to the boil and simmer for a few mins.
3. Add drained oranges to the vinegar mix and simmer uncovered for another hour or so, until the rinds are translucent.
4. Sterilise the jars and lift the oranges out of the pan into the warm jars with a slotted spoon, packing them down and putting the spices on top.
5. Boil the rest of the liquid until syrupy and pour over the oranges making sure they are fully covered. Seal immediately.
6. Store somewhere cool and dark for about a month before eating: they'll keep for a year.

### *Marmalade*

I do this every year and the best one I know of is from Delia's *Winter Collection*, shortened here.

Stage 1:

3 lb Seville oranges  
 2 lemons  
 5 pts water  
 6 lb granulated sugar

1. Put washed fruit in a preserving pan, add the water and bring it all up to a gentle simmer. Seal the top with double foil so it can very gently poach without any of the liquid evaporating. Go away for 3 hours.
2. Take off the top and cool and, using a draining spoon, lift the fruit out of the liquid and into colander.
3. Cut the oranges in half and scoop out all the inside flesh and pips as well, straight into a medium-sized saucepan. Ditto the lemons but discard the peel.
4. Add 1 pt of poaching liquid to the fruit pulp and simmer for 10 mins.
5. Pour into a jelly bag over a bowl and leave it to drip through and cool.
6. Cut the halves of peel into quarters then cut them into chunky strips à choix. Add these back into the preserving pan.
7. When the pulp is cool, squeeze the jelly bag to get all the pectin-rich juices into the preserving pan. This takes a lot of squeezing.
8. Leave all of this overnight, loosely covered with a clean cloth.



## Stage 2:

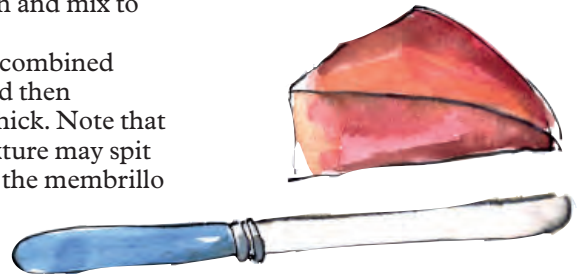
1. The following day, warm the sugar in its bags for 10 mins in the oven while putting the preserving pan and its contents over a gentle heat. Tip in the warmed sugar.
2. Stir the marmalade, keeping the heat gentle, until all the sugar crystals have fully dissolved. Don't let the marmalade boil until all the sugar is completely dissolved. Turn up the heat and let the marmalade bubble gently – it can take 3-4 hours to darken.
3. After about 2½ hours start set-testing on a series of chilled plates. When a crinkly skin forms, it has reached setting point. When it has set, leave the marmalade to cool for 30 mins before ladling through a funnel into oven-sterilised jars.
4. Seal the jars while they are still hot, then label the next day when cold.



## Membrillo

1. Scrub quinces clean and chop in pieces. Put in preserving pan with enough water to just cover and several squeezes of lemon juice. Add bay/zest/vanilla/cinnamon if using. Cover and bring to a simmer. Cook until quinces are very soft and pink, up to 2 hours. Let cool. Drain quinces, reserving the liquid and discarding the flavourings. Sieve the liquid and set aside.
2. Cut cores out of quinces and push rest through a sieve. Weigh the resulting pulp and add an equal weight of the reserved cooking liquid plus water if necessary. Put in preserving pan and mix to combine.
3. When simmering add sugar equal in weight to the combined weight of quince pulp and juice. Stir to dissolve and then continue cooking, stirring frequently, until really thick. Note that this can be quite hazardous – the hot bubbling mixture may spit at you. This will take about an hour. Take care that the membrillo does not burn at the bottom. Towards the end taste and add more lemon juice if it needs more acidity.
4. Line a rimmed baking tray with parchment, and pour in the thick purée. Let it dry overnight, then flip over to dry the other side.
5. Cut membrillo into sections, wrap in greaseproof paper and store in the fridge.

2 kg quinces (or japonica)  
a couple of bay leaves  
strips of lemon zest  
split vanilla pods  
small cinnamon sticks  
(optional)  
white granulated sugar  
2 large lemons



## Medlar paste

Same principle as membrillo but this one came via Ivan Day in its original version. You have to blett the medlars first (i.e. leave outside in a box until they turn a dark reddish brown and become soft and juicy) and he puts his paste into pretty moulds. He also has a delicious tarte made with medlars, adding cinnamon and egg yolks to the pre-reduced version of this (there is a shop in Muswell Hill that does have medlars when in season) and I've made it several times.

4 lb medlar pulp (approx.)  
3 lb sugar  
allspice

Put some Medlars into an earthenware jar, stand it in a saucepan with boiling water nearly to the top and keep it boiling



2 lb apples or 1 lb Bramley  
apples and 1 lb conference pears  
juice of 2 lemons  
1 tsp cinnamon  
½ tsp allspice and ½ tsp cloves  
sugar  
½ pt water

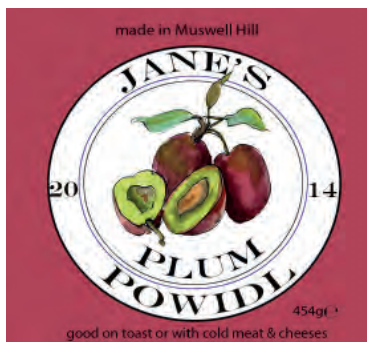
gently over a slow fire. When the Medlars are quite soft, pass them through a fine hair sieve, and weigh the pulp, and for every pound allow one and a half breakfast cups of coarsely crushed loaf sugar and ½ tsp allspice. Put all the ingredients together in the preserving pan, and stir them over the fire with a wooden spoon until thickly reduced, skimming occasionally. Turn the cheese into moulds, and keep them in a cold place. When ready to serve, turn the cheeses out of the moulds on to a dish.

From Theodore Garrett *The Encyclopaedia of Practical Cookery* (London 188?)

### *Apple cheese & perada*

1. Chop the apples (or pears for perada) – there's no need to peel them or remove the core. Add the lemon juice, water and spices (optional if doing it with pears) and bring to the boil. Cook until the fruit is very soft, then strain through a sieve.
2. Return the resulting pulp to the pot, adding an equal part by weight of sugar (so 1 pt of purée will require 1 lb of sugar).
3. Bring to the boil, stirring, then boil until a firm setting point is reached (about 1 hour).
4. Pour into a grease-proof-paper lined tray and leave to set. Cut into squares to serve on a cheese platter, or into small slices to serve with pork.

*To store:* cut into squares and wrap in a double thickness of baking paper. The same method works with damsons.



4 lb zwetschken plums  
¾ lb sugar to each pint of sieved  
plums (maybe less)  
cinnamon, cloves

### *Powidl*

Heino loved this and I think his mother used to make it. It's a plum butter that reduces plums to a paste infusing its own sugar. It takes time and someone to stir it often so that it doesn't burn. I remember Sarka making it in Prague when I stayed once on my way back from a conference in Budapest. She says they never liked it and making it reminds them of the communist era, but her recipe has 200 ml of vinegar in it, which I don't think makes sense, and no wonder they didn't like it, so I left it out. The plums are also known as Italian prune plums. I have only done it with English plums which certainly need the added sugar.

1. Wash the plums and throw into the preserving pan with a little water in the bottom, about one glass.
2. This is where Sarka adds sugar and vinegar and leaves it to steep for 24 hours. Don't.
3. Bring to the boil. Add a cinnamon stick and cloves.
4. Simmer for 3 or more hours, keeping it bubbling and stirring often.
5. Sieve to remove the skins, stones and spices.
6. Now add sugar to taste (this may not be necessary if the plums are very sweet.) Bring back to a bubble until it has reduced to a thick purée.
7. Bottle in sterilised jars.

## Kürbis

Lotte used to make a very nice candied pumpkin relish that I have tried to reconstruct. Hers was always sticky and chunky; delicious with cheeses and cold meats. These two versions are close – one with vinegar and one without. To make a slightly larger yield, add a quantity of apples at stage 3.

### *Candied pumpkin*

1. Make a syrup by boiling the water and sugar for around 20-30 mins or until it has thickened to the consistency of thin oil. Do not stir.
2. Blanch the cubed pumpkin for 2 mins in boiling water. Drain, refresh in cold water and drain again.
3. Add pumpkin to syrup and simmer for 1½ to 2 hours until it looks candied. After an hour of cooking, add juice of one big lemon per 1 kg of pumpkin.
4. Bottle in the normal way.

### *Pumpkin relish*

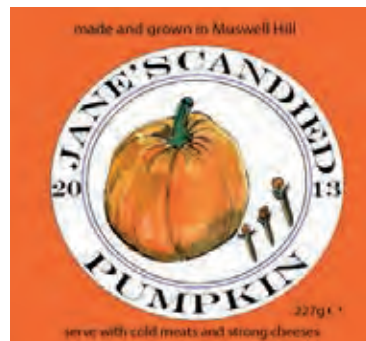
1. Put sugar into a very large, wide, saucepan with the water. Very gently heat the water and sugar until sugar is completely dissolved.
2. Add cubed pumpkin and leave overnight.
3. Next day, simmer for 1½ to 2 hours, or until the pumpkin looks candied (transparent). After an hour of cooking, add juice of one big lemon per 2 lb of pumpkin.
4. The syrup should be nicely thickened, but not so cooked that when it cools it will solidify into candy. Test on a chilled saucer.
5. Bottle and seal.

## *Zizzie's Armagnac clementines*

I used to give jars of this away at Christmas quite a lot. And I'd hoard my own for that occasion when people were coming to dinner and I hadn't had time to make anything and there, suddenly, was an instant dessert. Cream is a must have. Zizzie's water measurements are odd – I don't think it matters. I've done this with kumquats as well.

1. Prick each fruit 4 times with a darning needle (who has such things now?).
2. Boil sugar, water and vanilla pod for 4 mins.
3. Put in the clementines and bring back to simmer; cover and leave on lowest possible heat for 1 hour, removing any fruit that cracks.
4. Put hot, drained clementines into hot, dry jars and put in Armagnac to cover ¾ of the fruit.
5. Boil the rest of the liquid down to a syrup and top up the jars.

Leave for at least 2 months (longer) and serve with thick cream. If there is any liquid left over, make another jar with prunes (preferably soak these in a herb tea first). The prune version makes a particularly yummy ice-cream. Reserve one soaked prune per serving for decoration.



*ratio:* 1 lb pumpkin: 1½ lb sugar:  
1½ pt water

3 lb pumpkin  
4½ lb sugar  
4½ pt water  
lemon  
cloves

*ratio:* 1 lb pumpkin: ½ lb sugar:  
½ pt water: ½ pt vinegar

6 lb pumpkin peeled and cubed  
1 pt vinegar  
1 pt water  
3 lb sugar  
lemon  
cloves, peppercorns, cinnamon  
sticks, root ginger slices

2 lb tiny clementines  
1¼ lb sugar  
2 pts + 5 cups water  
Armagnac

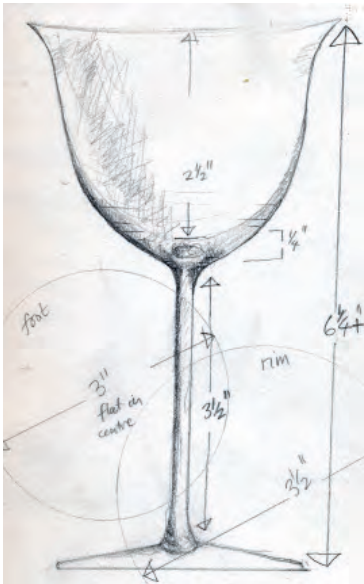
*optionally:* kumquats or prunes

# 18

## Drinks

What you drink out of is just as important as what goes into the glass. There are a handful of recipes in this chapter, but I have to own up to being more interested in the glass than its contents when it comes to home-made drinks. Vintage wines – now that’s another matter.

### *Falling for glass*



I have already described the glassware I grew up with and said a little about my own collection of 18th-century twists and balusters, and rummers from a mixture of dates and sources. Without my being completely aware of it, I have always loved glass – from the time I won a cut-glass bowl at a fairground aged about nine. I hadn’t expected to have a belated love affair with glass in my twilight years.

It was the summer before my 60th birthday and I’d just crushed the vertebra at bra-catch level into a wedged cake slice. Parallel bones triangulated the angle of my spine at an unhealthy 47-degree bend. A wrong-footed lunge into the dark and I was suddenly officially ‘deformed’: a hunchback. ‘Kyphosis’, they called it, and ‘anterior wedging’ at T6 – the sixth thoracic vertebra.

Of course, those signpost birthdays – the ones with noughts in them – carve neatly-spaced ravines into a lifetime’s landscape, and perhaps I was already looking into the next valley of bus-pass changes. What I did not think was that with my mangled spine the decades would slip back. Falling in love can do that: can make you youthful from the sheer joy of living for a new passion.

For months before the fall, I had beside my computer – at which I spent all my working hours – an advertisement clipped from, of all things, *The Big Issue*, for a free qualification in Glass at Dudley College in the West Midlands. *Free?* Had I read this right? I don’t normally buy *The Big Issue* and I don’t normally read advertisements. I think the dæmon on my shoulder read it for me and guided my hand to a pair of scissors to cut it out. And there the clipping sat, surfacing occasionally to the top of my ‘that’s-quite-interesting, look-at-someday’ pile. I’ve always been drawn to glass as a modest collector, but I don’t think I ever wanted to make glass. Yet it looked intriguing. A web address said we would learn glass blowing, bead-making, kiln forming, stained glass making, enamelling, electroplating,



sandblasting, cutting and engraving, the chemistry of glass and much else. We would learn about the composition of glass, what oxides yield which colour, how furnaces are built and how to work out compatibility between different glass types. At the time, these were just words for techniques that I had no knowledge of.

‘Making things’ has always been a part of life, even though for long years all I did was an annual Christmas card, a blown painted egg for Easter, the odd jam label and one or two hand-painted envelopes for very special thank-you occasions (some appearing in this book). While the children were young, of course I made things for and with them. But before the accident, I’d been in a long artistic drought. I can’t say it was uncreative, but I had become a bit of a techie, and my creativity was going into grappling with the problems that computers were bringing to intellectual property, and sitting on boards of directors of companies responsible for solving them. Such design skills as I retained went into website design and I think the word ‘design’ in this context is a contradiction in terms.

So I completely changed my life. I took a flat in Brierley Hill, West Midlands, above a pink-frilled nail parlour, next door to an Indian take-away and bang opposite a Mecca bingo hall whose neon lights cast a blue haze into my sitting room. The one-time briar rose wood now crested a hill of grey and dismal buildings, with a promise of domino-stepped locks on as yet undiscovered canals and new not-so-far-off countryside. My journey home at weekends involved an exhausting five changes of transport, but an exhilarating door was opening into creativity, with exciting introductions to glass-making techniques and a heavy-handed battery of health and safety training.

I determined to complete the one-year full-time course, for an Open College Networks Access Module Certificate at Level 3. I didn’t care about the qualification; what attracted me was the opportunity to experience glass making in so many different forms. The kiln-forming workshops alone offered mouth-watering tasters of a whole series of hors d’oeuvres. In the first term, we raced through painting with stains, enamels and lustres, fusing and laminating, casting, pâte de verre, experimenting with inclusions, using silver and copper leaf, making moulds, slumping into them, using coloured frits and shards, programming different types of kiln. All this at a whirlwind pace that left me hungry for more.

It wasn’t love at first sight. It was the slow burn



*Below is our drinking game for Christmas 2000. Line up 4 empty glasses and 4 full ones. Pick up 2 adjacent glasses at a time. Move them side-by-side to a new position. In 4 moves, change the row so that each alternate glass is empty. Then empty the rest in a more traditional manner.*

*The solution:  
Move 2 & 3 to the extreme end  
(right); then fill the gap with 5 & 6.  
I'll fill the gap with 8 & 2; then finish by  
shifting 1 & 5*





kind. I was throwing aside a working life in publishing, the old-slippers comfort of knowing what I was doing, the reassurance of a pleasant Edwardian house with all my things about me in a sought-after neighbourhood, and I was relegating husband, friends and pussy cat to weekends and holidays. Our three children were already busy becoming successful in their various callings.

I was still very much involved in the impact of technology on writing and had been thinking a lot about interactivity and creativity. Much of our experience of words and pictures is intermediated by glass: viewed through the medium of ‘glass pages’ on computer screens. My last two books had been about the internet as an opportunity for a new kind of writing; an as yet insufficiently-exploited medium for interactive fiction and multimedia. At the back of my mind were some connections between writing, glass and computer technology that I wanted time to think about. I thought I wanted to find out where glass and publishing meet. If I needed a rationale, it was that this wasn’t a leap in the dark, but a side-step to enrich career choices I had already made. That’s what I told myself and my friends.

My first major piece was entitled ‘Comma Separated Values’ and showed an outsize punctuation mark made of layers of optical lenses. Was it a comma, an apostrophe or a quotation mark? My accompanying blurb showed all the pretension of a would-be conceptual artist. I wrote:

This ambiguity is reflective of the way in which language, meaning and vision alter according to perspective. The title is a metaphor: technically it denotes a computer file format used to exchange data between disparate applications, but viewers are invited to create their own meanings according to values of their own. The piece affirms the place of rules in shaping meaning – applicable both to glass making and writing. The addition or omission of a comma can radically change the meaning of a sentence, occasionally with fatal consequences. Glass, if rules are ignored, shatters. Punctuation marks show up poorly on screens and are in danger of disappearing from usage. I want – I hope amusingly – to focus attention back on them.



Later, when I became Honorary Editor to the Art Workers’ Guild (2010), I got its omitted apostrophe put back in place, so perhaps the connection between my editorial and glass concerns were à propos. I also continued with a focus on ambiguity in the pieces I have been making in the last few years which play with optical illusions and pieces within pieces. Maybe this is something in my own character; Stephen often says I am elliptical.

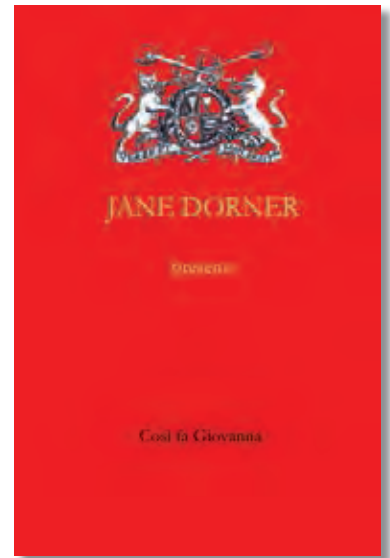
I went on to do a BTEC at Westminster and then an MA in Glass at Farnham. I *did* care about that qualification – it had to be a Distinction (to pay off the Eleven Plus failure

and the middle-of-the-road BA) and it turned out to be the highest mark in the entire year. I allowed myself to ‘play’ with academia, producing a set of soup tins for one assignment, and a board game for another. My final ‘dissertation’ was in the form of a lookalike Royal Opera House programme: a high-risk strategy that as a younger person I would not have dared, but at the ripe age I was, I cared more about making a creative leap into something witty and unexpected than playing safe with a dull piece of writing that I knew I could do.

After four years of play and study I thought I could call myself a glass maker. I had ‘invented’ a technique that no one I studied with had seen done elsewhere and made it into my own special brand. The installation I am most proud of is called ‘Spinal Accord’ and is in the reception area of the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital in Bolsover Street. It is on our way to Steven and Clarissa when we go to supper and we slow down as we pass it and I get a glow when it is lit up (as it often is). There’s also a wall in the Rainbow Room of the Birmingham Children’s Hospital that worked really well. ‘Ampersand River’ is in the reception area at the CLA offices and there are various pieces in private houses.

I go to expert glass-blowers in Cornwall now, as the trouble with finding what you really want to do late in life is that there isn’t time to acquire the skills needed to realise the ideas you have. My 10,000 hours of practice has gone into other things. Because I was passionate about glass blowing for four years, I know what can be done and I am always on-the-spot directing the gaffer who blows for me. In Farnham, I spent every hour I could in the hotshop, often starting the day making a marble (most of which I have regrettably sold). I made dozens of ‘wobblers’: my word for the off-centre wine glasses I loved to make because I love wine glasses of all sorts. I was so proud of them once, but too embarrassed to use them now (though there *is* a box of doll’s wineglasses as well as a box of marbles that I am looking forward to giving to a little descendant one day). My collection of antique glasses is very important to me and I like to choose which one I feel like drinking out of on a daily basis. Many of the 19th-century rummers come in ‘uncle-and-aunt’ pairs and there’s an occasional set of four. On extra special occasions, for a very good wine, we get out the two heavy balusters from the early 1700s.

Glass is a very special substance whose many forms and uses have led to the development of the modern kitchen. There are bottles that hold oils, vinegars and cooking wines, jam-jars for preserves, screw-top jars for dry goods, glass mixing bowls, Pyrex oven-proof dishes, vacuum flasks, ceramic hobs, toughened glass cutting-boards, glazed splash-backs, see-through oven doors, thermostats, fridge lights, glass fibre oven mitts, decorative cupboard handles, flap-down TV screens, computerised weighing devices and other gadgets, access



to internet recipe collections, a kitchen clock, windows to the garden, fibreglass roof insulation, concrete foundations, spotlights – down to the kitchen sink all have glass in their composition.

And what glass does above all is hold drinks.

## Drinks recipes

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100 large fresh bay leaves  
1 litre good vodka  
pared zest two unwaxed lemons  
2 cinnamon sticks  
4 fat cloves

### Sam's cocktail

Part of Sam and Tina's late lunch: original source Simon Hopkinson *Second Helpings* (2006).

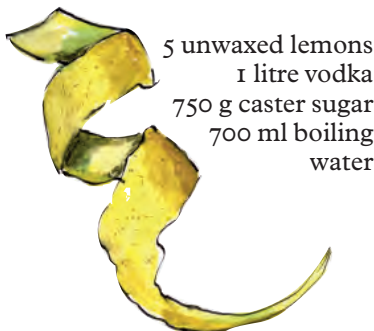
1. Place a sugar-cube in the bottom of a large red-wine glass.
2. Douse with several drops of Angostura Bitters.
3. Pour 20-30 ml each of brandy and orange liqueur into a tall glass, depending on your taste / strength requirements.
4. Add three or four ice cubes.
5. Fill almost to the brim with good, cold sparkling wine, stir once
6. Then slide a thin slice of unpeeled orange to rest on the surface.

### Anna's bay leaf liqueur

1. Put all the ingredients in a jar, seal and leave for one to two months.
2. Strain.
3. Make a simple syrup by dissolving one part sugar in one part water. Let cool. Dilute the bay infusion with the simple syrup to taste (can use any left-over syrup for ice-cream). Keep it quite strong and quite bitter. Bottle and leave for another 1-2 months.
4. Strain or decant again if needed. Best served slightly chilled at the end of a big meal.

I used limes instead of lemons and Sainsbury's basic vodka.

### Joan K's limoncello



5 unwaxed lemons  
1 litre vodka  
750 g caster sugar  
700 ml boiling water

4 lb sugar  
2 oz citric acid  
1 oz tartaric acid  
zest and juice of 8 lemons  
3 pts water

1. Pare the zest from all the lemons, taking care not to include any white pith. Put the zest in a large clean jar and pour over the vodka. Cover with a tightly fitting lid and leave for a week, shaking the jar each day.
2. Put the sugar in a heatproof bowl and pour over the boiling water, stirring until the sugar has dissolved. Add the vodka and peel and leave for a further week, shaking the jar regularly.
3. Strain into decorative bottles, adding a few strips of lemon zest.

### Steven's lemon cordial

1. Boil the water and pour it over all the ingredients except the lemon juice.
2. Stir till dissolved.
3. When cool, add the lemon juice and bottle.
4. Dilute to drink.

## *Elderflower cordial*

1. Put in a bucket and infuse overnight.
  2. Strain and bottle into sterilised bottles.
  3. Nice diluted with fizzy water.
- Doesn't last very long. And once opened, keep in the fridge.

## *Ginger beer*

I served this for East Finchley Open House when people came to view a band of artists exhibiting in our house (a lot of upheaval). Choosing the right bottles is tricky as I've had them explode. I think old olive oil bottles with the metal top adjuster and ceramic stopper with a rubber rim are best. When I got bored of the ginger beer I kept the yeast going for a bit and made flatbreads with it.

1. Mix, cover and leave for 24 hours.
2. Feed daily with 1 tsp each of sugar and ground ginger.
3. After 7 days, strain the plant through a cloth.
4. Dissolve 1½ pts cold water and the juice of 2 lemons and mix with the strained liquid from the plant.
5. Put in secure (sterilised) glass bottles and leave to mature for 2 weeks.
6. To keep the plant going, add ¾ pt water to the remaining solid and repeat the process.
7. The plant should be halved every 2 weeks.

## *Allison's sloe gin*

We used to pick sloes with Allison and John in Pen-y-Fedw. Once, Stephen and I were out picking and Allison heroically held the fort with all the children, Gaby being quite young with his pudding-basin blond haircut and an angelic look as if butter wouldn't melt in his mouth. He'd helped Allison make a pile of sandwiches and was so disappointed that we were not back in time to see them that he had Allison take a photograph of them. That photo is in a file somewhere.

1. Half fill a Kilner jar with pricked sloes.
2. Add sugar.
3. Fill to the top with gin.
4. Shake often.
5. Leave for 2 months.

Some people add a tsp almond essence but I don't care for the idea.

## *Vita's pomegranis*

On Joachim's 50th birthday, held at Sucre in Amsterdam, she bought him a surprise Nebuchadnezzar of champagne (20-bottles-worth) which was drunk all evening and required two or three people to manipulate the bottle to pour it. A girl of style, she likes anything to do with champagne.

1. Squeeze a whole pomegranate into a small bowl, pips, juice and

20 heads of elderflower  
without stalks  
1 lemon  
gallon of boiling water  
1 tbsp wine vinegar  
1 lb sugar



*starter plant:*  
½ oz yeast  
2 tsp ground ginger  
2 tsp sugar  
¼ pt lukewarm pre-boiled water



sloes  
4 oz sugar  
bottle of gin

1 pomegranate  
pomegranate molasses  
bottle of champagne

- all – add a dash (a tiny dash, mind) of pomegranate molasses and divide between four champagne flutes.
2. Fill up with champagne, stir and drink with a dose of sunshine.

### *Singer's lemon and ginger tisane*

My singing teacher, Michael, made this and we sipped it during one winter singing lesson – very soothing for an incipient sore throat.

ginger  
lemon  
honey

1. Simply add boiling water to a good few cubes of chopped ginger, the juice of a lemon or two and three or four tsps of honey.
2. Stir together in a thermos, seal and leave to infuse for at least two hours.
3. Shake or stir and serve.

### *Gogle mogle*

As described by Stephen, this is a Polish Jewish remedy for sore throats which he says he remembers as hot milk and honey with a raw egg in it. Research suggests it can be more palatable than that and a bit like eggnog. Try:

2 egg yolks  
3 tsp sugar

1. Whuzz egg yolks and sugar till completely emulsified.
2. Add chocolate, vodka, honey, lemon juice, raisins, whipped cream, or orange juice or anything else.

### *Humphrey's revisionist Manhattan*

He says: 'Can successfully be used in wooing'. Netted him Shirley, I believe.

bourbon:  
Jim Beam, Jack Daniels  
or Four Roses  
(the only reason for ever buying  
bourbon)  
red Martini

*ratios*

Normal – one part bourbon to two parts vermouth

A tough day – equal amounts

In the US – 2½ parts bourbon to 1 part vermouth (not sure if that's safe).

1. Either mix or pour the bourbon first (otherwise the lighter spirit floats on top, though that does enhance the immediate lift).
2. Add dash angostura bitters (the only ingredient of which one bottle can last decades).
3. Avoid the maraschino cherry.
4. Doesn't need ice.

### *Richard's flight of wines*

The most amazing evening ever was in December 2006 when Richard served three flights of superb wine (22 bottles in toto) and Sally B cooked a fabulous dinner to match. There were: white aperitifs; red Burgundies; champagne and white dessert wines and they grew in quality with each flight, culminating in the Yquem 1937 – which was delicious, but would have been better in nice glasses and probably before we had all drunk quite as much as we had – even though it was often just a sip of each as we chucked half of each glass into a bucket (I took a bottle of this mix home for marinades). Two



of the other guests were great wine experts, as were our hosts, and – well, we did learn a lot and paid attention. I didn't feel I'd overdone it either. They were:

1. Vin de Voile de Robert Plageoles 1996
2. Ondenc, vin de table Plageoles
3. Picpoul de Pinet, Languedoc Guillaume de Guerse 2001
4. Chablis Vieilles Vignes 2002
5. Chablis, J-P&B Droin 2005
6. Viognier, Georges Vernay 2005
7. Condrieu, Georges Vernay 2005
  
8. Domaine des Vignes Grandes, vin de pays de l'Averyon 2004
9. Syrah, Robert Plageoles Pierre Tournier 2004
10. Bourgogne Passetoutgrain, Collinot 2002
11. Irancy les Mazelots 2003
12. Haut Catule, Nuits Gros 2003
13. Nuits les Fleuriers, Couperon 1999
14. Chambolle Musigny, Confuron 1999
15. Nuits aux Boudots, Confuron 1999
16. Champagne, Bernard Pitous 2000
  
17. Gewürtztraminer, Dirlir 2004
18. Loin de l'Oeil Plageoles 2005
19. Grand Cru Spiegel Muscat, Dirlir 2004
20. Caprice d'Autun, Plageoles 2004
21. Gewürtztraminer, Spiegel SGN 1998
22. Château d'Yquem 1937



## Cooking with wine

Years before I'd even heard of the names in the list above, I used an *exceptional* burgundy as a cooking wine bought for £1 because there was no cork; just the foil sealing it. Having slugged much of the bottle into my casserole, I then thought there'd be no harm in a cook's glass. Wow! I knew very little about wine then, but this was plainly outstanding. So was the coq-au-vin: it really did make a difference. All the same, I find it very difficult to use expensive wines in cooking. I'll own up to a *Cannery Row* transgression: I funnel left-over glasses after parties into a cooking-wine bottle: red, white, pink – they all help along a sauce, stock or the deglazing of a roasting pan.

## Hunter's home-brew

I don't think he is ever going to give me his beer-making recipe; not out of secretiveness, but because he seems to think everything in this book has to be original. Hunter gets inspiration for his writing in pubs. We have downed many a happy glass together, not beer in my case, though I try to get designer beers in whenever he comes to stay. One, the 'Caern o' Mohr', is a feature of my wine-label-lined loo. I suspect the recipe is simply this:

1. Buy a Boots kit and follow the instructions.
2. Wait the required time, and drink it.



# 19

## Playful food

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Stephen and I have periodical kitchen-alteration discussions. I would like to knock down some walls, remove the outside loo and have a bigger kitchen. He can't face upheaval, cement and mud. I sympathise with that as I don't like it either, but I would like to have a serious playroom of a kitchen in which I can spend hours trying out seriously fiddly bits of cheffing. With Radio 4 to entertain me, and several sit-down interludes, I enjoy the creativity and play of trying out new dishes.

### *All that I am*

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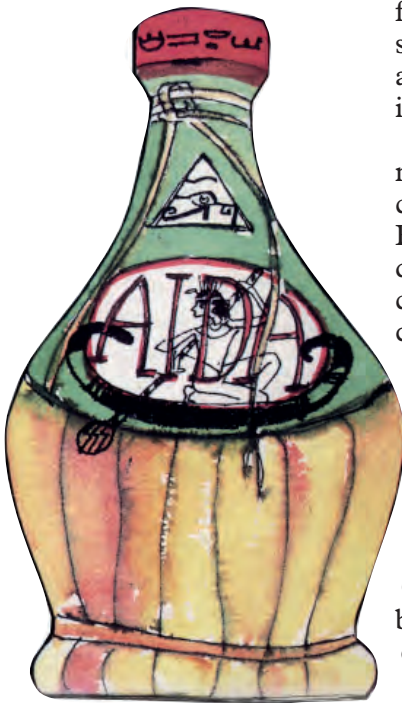
Because this is an egocentric collection, I somehow want it to contain all that I am. It can't, of course. Fifty years of cooking as a friend, wife, and mother have sustained a lot of preoccupations, passions and interests. There isn't a predominant essence that flavours all that I do. But I want to feel certain themes appear amongst the recipes. So:

Has it got opera in it – Yes in picnics, but not expressing my feeling that this is the highest form of art. Nor that Emily has spent 12 years as a stage manager at the Royal Opera House and is now moving into administration there; nor that Gaby is in the extra chorus.

Has it got playing second fiddle – Not really, just a brief mention of learning the violin at the age of 36. I did join quartet groups: one unlikely group was the Customs & Excise Strings Club whose amateur group has been going for decades, if not centuries. For several years I went to a week's quartet course in Rye and Stephen would come with the children on the last weekend to frolic on the beach and buy Rye pottery.

Has it got making things – Yes, of course.

What about architecture? – Not really and this is an omission, not just because Stephen was studying architecture when I met him, but because it is something we are both sensitive to and always agree on. If one of us deploras an ugly structure, the other will feel the same. Conversely, we will go out of our way to view a famous building. Only on one type of building do we not see completely eye-to-eye: cathedrals. I love a good cathedral. Once, as we drove along the motorway by-passing Ulm





Cathedral, I practically wept with frustration: he turned the car at the next roundabout and back we went to climb its vertiginous heights.

Holidays? Some foreign countries get a mention, but I don't go recipe hunting when abroad. I am also ambivalent about travel and tend to get jumpy when too long away from home. Family photographs tell a different story and depict holidays and sunshine in abundance, with my smiling face as content as everyone else's. Yet it is the case that all the great sights of the world are now so over-run with tourists that the pleasure of seeing them is destroyed. I fell in love with Florence when I was 13, but in 2013 I vowed I would never go there again. Holidays feature photographs of lots of convivial meals in different places – both eating out and cooking our own. Markets abroad are a particular pleasure as the food is so much fresher and more desirable than at boring old Sainsbury's. Even supermarkets away from home are more exciting: Carrefour, SuperU, Intermarché are spotted from hired cars and welcomed with exaggerated French accents.

Playing comes into the narrative with playful food, Scrabble as a cake (page 250), children's birthday cakes and valentine frou-fou; its importance runs through the family like a seam of glitter in grey rock. We don't go in for practical jokes, as did my mother's family, but we collude in family rituals: striking silly poses; re-offering an already-eaten soft-boiled egg (upside-down); and setting up wonderful surprises for one another.

We have some favourite games, like Pit that we rowdily enjoy most Christmases, sharpening up our lying faces to coax those we love most to accept the trick cards of the bull or the bear that tend to plummet the last holder's score. I didn't know till I looked it up just now that the name comes from the Chicago Board of Trade which was known as 'The Pit'. 'Corner on rye' we yell at vocal-chord-ruining pelt – it tends to separate the inner core of the family from the second skin of the in-laws and out-laws. And then there are all the things I (we) collect. At formative times of life you seek fashion statements (clothes, books, record covers, Chinese porcelain), like punctuation marks, to display to others. I would even hazard that the popularity of Facebook or Pinterest and other social networking sites is to gather together friendships and 'likes' within the comfort of an inverted-comma-contained cloud – your own 'very like' a camel, or a weasel, or a whale. I too collect things I like in series on Pinterest: spirals, ampersands, typography, science and art, clock faces, and luscious food. Almost everyone on Pinterest pins culinary art.

My first collection was of sugar-lump packets, which were not as ubiquitous as they are now. In 1961 Steven was in Kiev when Yuri Gagarin was launched into space. He brought me back a balalaika, two Russian dolls and seven sugars from Ukraine for my collection (which then numbered 562



including doubles). I still have two of the Russian originals because they were so unusual – also very Soviet in design and now pinned in my online typography collection.

Being the collectors we are, we also photograph pictures in series: the children eating watermelon slices; the children in hollow trees; climbing trees; the family as shadows on roads and walls; Gaby and Stephen pulling silly faces; portraits through a wineglass lens; and the whole Dorner-Gottlieb clan painting the same white chair that Otto Simon painted in about 1920 with everyone mimicking his stance and expression. [*Note to self*: must have a chair-painting party in 2020 when Ossie is 6½ {and I hope there are some more} .]

We collect mudlarked marbles and bits of broken pot; ancient nails that are pulled out of the Thames mud at Queenhithe. Stephen collects books (I try to get rid of them).

We collect blue-and-white porcelain and modern pottery. We have boxes of green, cranberry, amethyst and blue Victorian glasses hiding their translucence from the light. We have Indian and Persian rugs, some of which are badly mothed and should be kept in a freezer off-season. I can't walk past a stall selling baskets without stopping and trying not to buy one as I have enough for any picnic. Our cellar collects wine, which it doesn't let us have because it might not be ready yet. We collect £2-coins which we save for visits to expensive restaurants. We have too many jugs – one has the name 'I'm a jug' because it is so perky and has such a look-at-me spout and handle. Pass me 'I'm a jug' we say when the blackberry and apple pie appears, and our guests pause in their admiration of the design on the pastry to wonder what we mean.

What is this book, if not a collection? It collects my recipes and my memories and people I am fond of. It also collects food ideas that are not fully tried and tested but which have a personal meaning. In selecting my 490, I had to relegate another 100 to an 'out-takes' folder – among them two regretfully removed from this chapter: Heston's meat fruit and Ivan's ballettes de foie gras à l'impériale. Playful food, Yes (and both recorded) – but after one attempt, I doubted I would go to that much trouble again.

My litmus tests were:

1. is it, or was it, a particular favourite?;
2. does it tell a story?;
3. does it have sentimental value?



### *Afke's ten*

My brother and I sometimes had midnight feasts when we were sharing a bedroom in Meadway Court (it was divided down the middle with a bookcase so we had the illusion of having our own spaces). We had a book called *Afke's Ten (Afke's Tiental)* by Nynke van Hichtum (1903) set in the Frisian countryside at the end of the 19th century. The ten children in this book were poor and a treat they had was mashed potatoes on bread and dripping. Our version went something like this, cooked on a 1940s New World Cooker with its blue mottled oven door and the top that came apart to be washed up and had to be put back together again like a jigsaw puzzle (is it romanticism that I secretly wish I could have that gas cooker back again now?).

1. Toast the bread on one side, and put dripping and salt on the other side while still hot.
2. Mash the potatoes with a fork and spread on top of the dripping side.
3. Put under the grill to toast the potato side till hot and bubbling.
4. Consume as a midnight feast.

bread  
salted dripping  
cooked potatoes

### *Juicy lechy*

This is a corruption of *jugo de leche* also known as *dulce de leche*. My friend Mary Tara (who hailed from Argentina) called it *juicy lechy* and we would eat it by the spoonful or thickly spread on buttered bread. I could walk through the woods behind our house to their house on North Square in Hampstead Garden Suburb and it was like a second home to me because at the age of nine my mother had a nervous breakdown and I was parcelled out to stay with Mary Tara and her four siblings: we slept head-to-toe in her bed. Her mother, April, was what I thought of then as a 'real' mother; she cooked, baked and sewed. Once, overnight, she had run up a little dress for me and I was both enchanted and touched.

This is how you make *juicy lechy*, but oh, do note, you must not let the saucepan run dry – keep it topped up with boiling water at least half way up the tin. If you don't, it will explode all over the ceiling and all the walls. I *know!*

1. Simmer the unopened tin in the water for about 3 hours.

1 tin condensed milk  
1 saucepan of hot water

### *Liptauer*

My mother would make this from milk that had gone so sour that it separated in the milk bottle and began to look eggshell blue. Hers was a waste-not-want-not culture so she'd drip the curd through a cheese-cloth. I don't think we had a fridge then.

1. Mix all together to taste.

a quantity of curd cheese  
lots of garlic  
paprika  
chives  
a few caraway seeds

## Butter rose

Something I learned from my mother. The butter should be soft, but not as soft as a spreading consistency. Ideally use an old-fashioned silver rounded-topped butter knife.

a pat of butter

1. Smooth the butter into a round container.
2. Pull little scoops of butter from the edges, in a stop-start movement, to the centre to form rose petals.
3. When you have a little rose bud at the centre, inscribe leaf shapes at four points.

## Fudge

This has to be here in honour of Fudge Day on the first day of school term. It's quite hard to get it exactly right and half the time it was either too sloppy (and had to be boiled up again) or it went too far and turned into toffee. There was a kind you could buy at Lollies in Market Place (where gobstoppers were a farthing each) that was much more reliable.

### Fudge 1

4 oz marg or butter  
3-4 oz sugar  
1 tin sweetened condensed milk

1. Melt the butter and sugar. Then add milk (very low flame at the beginning).
2. About 30 mins.
3. Pour into tin and mark squares.

### Fudge 2

1 lb granulated sugar  
2 oz butter  
¼ pt evaporated milk & ¼ pt milk  
drops vanilla essence or orange juice

1. Put all in a saucepan except the vanilla and heat gently till sugar dissolves.
2. Boil to 240°F stirring occasionally.
3. Add vanilla and beat until thick and creamy and minute crystals form.
4. Pour immediately into a greased tin.
5. Mark into squares when nearly cold and cut through when cold.

## Radiator valves

Buy at Martin's. What are they? Posh crystallised apricots. Why the name? Because Susanna gave them to us one Christmas in a radiator valve box, and that's what they've been known as ever since.

## 100-year Scrabble cake

Emily made this for Käte's 100th birthday – a square sponge cake perfectly iced like a Scrabble board with marzipan tiles and chocolate-scripted letters. It had a birthday message of course, but also a significance not just for Käte, but for the whole family. I think I was 11 when someone in America (the Kaskells probably) sent us our first set – with wooden tiles: I still have it and I still recognise the 'z' from the wood grain on the back. Now I get rid of zeds as fast as I can, but then I was lured by its score of 10. All three children and two of their partners regularly beat me now, but it wasn't always thus. I had to let them win when they were little, though that didn't last very long and we were all fiercely competitive. On Sunday evenings, Gaby



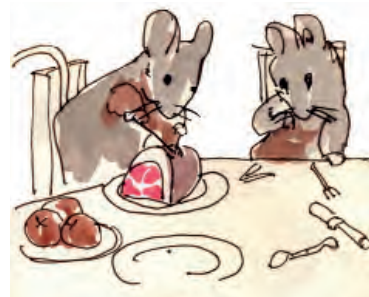
and I would often settle down for a game. The loser had to draw the winner a cup – usually mad concoctions of ice-cream coupes with cocktail umbrellas. It's not quite the same now that we can play in real time, but each of us ensconced in our own living room, on our internet toys.

Käte was always up for a game of Scrabble which was useful as she got more and more hard of hearing. In her latter years I developed a new rule (offspring please note for my own dotage) which was not to get my own best score per move, but to put my tiles down so that she would always be presented with a tempting double- or a triple-word score. Added a splash of challenge.

### *Hunka Munka's brie*

Somewhere in an attic box are all the plaster-of-Paris plates of food I made for Vita's and my dollshouse. I used Beatrice Potter's Hunka Munka as my inspiration and I probably made a ham like hers, but the favourite was a brie – forever at its best and weeping off the plate. Like Keats's:

Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,  
 Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;  
 She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,  
 For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!



### *Joachim and Vita's wedding cake*

I haven't got a cheese course in this book but Joachim and Vita's wedding cake has to be mentioned as something really special. It was built up from the bottom in a tower thus:



Chabichou (approx. 2" in diameter)  
 Cendre de Niort  
 Banon Feuille  
 Camembert Fermier  
 Coulommiers  
 Reblochon

Picos d'Europa

Cornish Yarg

Tomme de Cleon

½ Keen's cheddar

Boeren Gouda (approx. 14" in diameter)

Accoutrements –

Brie de Melun, block of membrillo, walnuts, Vita's spiced plum and apple chutney, fig jam, white and black grapes, assortment of cheese biscuits, fresh bread.

## Floral vegetables

I quite often buy vegetables instead of flowers: there's a double use, first as an attractive table display and then (before they get manky) as a supper dish. Autumn gourds last longest and then can become soups or be stuffed. A perfect Fibonacci romanesco looks splendid – but not for more than a few days – and I once bought a white, a purple, a green and an orange cauliflower in my favourite farmer's market (in Stroud). Mixing all four colours for this dish makes a pretty winter warmer.

florets of cauliflower and  
broccoli  
2 tbs olive oil  
tsp crushed coriander seeds  
2 cloves crushed garlic  
sea salt



same ingredients  
butter instead of oil  
seeds and garlic not in  
his version (nutmeg as an  
alternative)

1. Mix all with your hand to coat evenly and spread on a baking tray.
2. Bake for 25-35 mins.

### Tom's brassica 'cake' variation

1. Cut veg into florets giving them as long a stem as reasonably possible. Cut up the central stem into smallish pieces and use them to fill in any gaps in the middle.
2. Par-boil a bit (so still crunchy) and drain well.
3. Press florets into rounded pudding basin alternating colours and pile up to a half dome shape, salting, peppering and nutmegging as you go. Tom did his in layers for a striped effect and suggests a spiral. He also buttered the bowl first (which I didn't find necessary).
4. Pour in some melted butter, press down with a weighted saucer and steam for about half an hour. Turn out after letting stand for a bit. Makes a pretty effect.

## Zim's fish

No cuisine involved, but I've had a pussy cat to feed for maybe two-thirds of my life so tins, dried foods, packets of squish, raw fish, chicken and chicken livers are in with the recipe mélange. Our Abyssinian Zim is a real character and very much part of the family. There have been references to him in many of the last 13 years-worth of Christmas cards (just visible running round a franking mark in this one from 2002, which was an envelope).



# 20

## Cooking for one

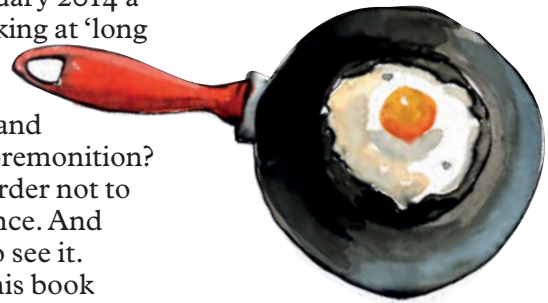
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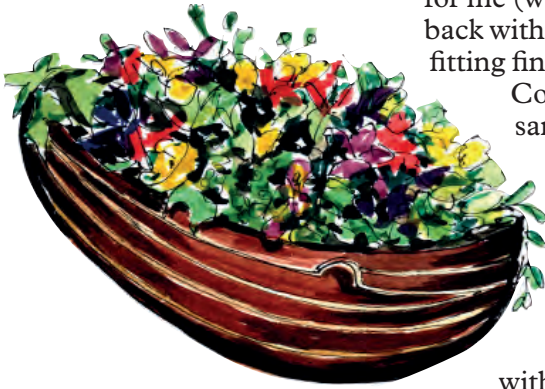
I have rewritten this chapter four times. It was always in the book, but my first version – written before Stephen’s final illness – had a feminist twist: waving the flag for independence seemed what solo cooking stood for. I felt I’d lived through a time of astonishing change in the growth-demise-resurgence of feminism. It was a huge, and hugely important part of my life and we all fought for things our daughters take for granted. In a way that’s good, because it shows we succeeded, at least in part – though only in part.

My second version was written in the consciousness that I might be faced with the reality of cooking for one much sooner than I would like. Stephen’s cancer was advancing over the year in which I was finishing writing this book. In February 2014 a doctor had warned me (not him) that we were looking at ‘long months; maybe a year’. In the event it was only two little months. The night before he died, I had done the illustrations and layout up to chapter 14 and put the PDF on an iPad to show him. Did I have a premonition? Certainly I was occupying myself on the book in order not to think about his illness and its inevitable consequence. And I was rushing to the finish because I wanted him to see it. He and I were going to bind the family copies of this book ourselves and were talking about how, and scribbling designs on the backs of envelopes. Because of him, I did not go for the economy solution of a glued binding but proper signatures, though whether I can bind them without him is uncertain.

So Stephen and Vita looked through the electronic version together while I made the last supper I ever cooked for him, bringing it up on trays for the three of us – he in bed, and Vita and I finding space for our plates beside the make-up and perfume on my dressing table. He had read the typescript and seen most of the watercolours, but I am glad he at least saw something of the final design. He died when this book was virtually complete: he is very present in it and it would not be right to go back and put anything into the past tense. It is his story too.

Even as I write now, some two months after his death, he is still present. Once a month my Christmas present from him arrives of, alternately, a pot plant and a cut-flower bouquet – so one month in four it is freesias, his favourite flower. In a strange machination of serendipity, in the very same delivery as the freesias Emily had ordered for his coffin came two bunches





for me (with a devoted message from him). We filled a theorbo back with them – 100 fragrant stems beautifully arranged – a fitting final decoration for a fine craftsman.

Cooking for one? – simple: cook for two and eat the same thing twice. Or that’s what I originally thought.

But it is too soon for me to have experience of what it means when there is one of you *all the time*. In version 1 of this chapter, I had said I was not interested in cooking for one; now I must learn this skill, as I must learn to walk again with an amputated limb. For that is what it feels like when you have spent three-quarters of your life

with someone who is, unbelievably, not there any more: almost all my adult life.

Everyone I have asked says cooking for one should not take long. Obvious instant favourites include: pasta with sauce from a jar; a cheese omelette; a thick soup; something on toast; salad medleys; a shove-in-the-oven ready-made. The point seems to be to stoke up quickly and not waste time that could be better spent on doing something else. My own view has always been that you can do all the something elses *and* enjoy time in the kitchen. I had a little cooking ritual which involves descending from my attic eyrie (where I write) in time to catch all or some of a trio of Radio 4 programmes, which entertain me as I chop vegetables and push them about in a pan. With a cook’s glass imminent, it is a pleasant division between the working day and the evening.

Nevertheless, some of that pleasure must derive from the anticipation of sharing a meal, and the events of one’s day, with another person. The elaboration of the food is designed to keep pace with the flow of conversation. If there is no exchange of ideas, then need the fork be long occupied, or the sink piled dispiritingly high? Cooking for one can be an enjoyable release from the tyranny of sweeping slices of onion off the floor, but only in the context of there being more moments of togetherness across the table than of solitude.

## *Solitude*

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I have always needed solitude; if I am not able to be alone in the house for several hours of the day then I feel edgy: too much social interaction without the white space of silence makes me bad-tempered. The quietness of an empty house restores the spirit and allows me to concentrate on whatever it is I am doing: writing; glass-making; designing or playing with Photoshop. No stairs creak; nor doors slam. I can lose myself in making something that wasn’t there before. I don’t like people looking over my shoulder to see what I am doing. The solitude of an empty house with no one coming home to it is another matter. Solitude that is chosen is not the same as



unwonted loneliness; the latter is not restorative.

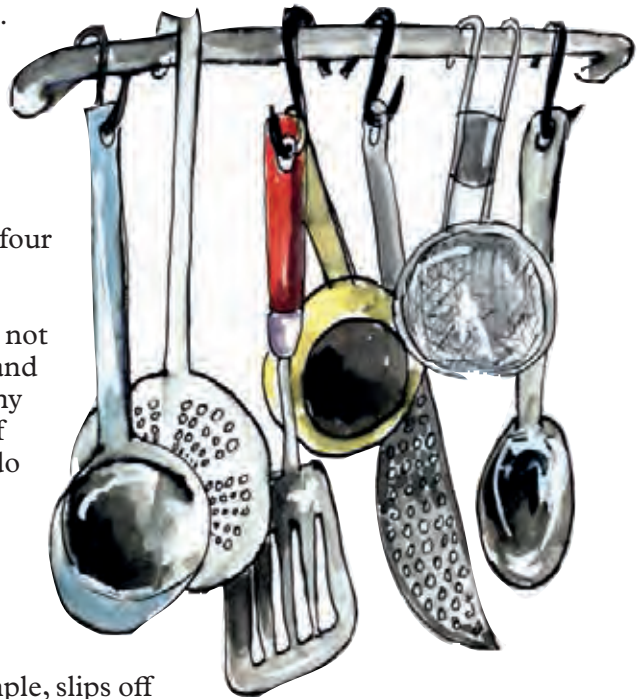
In this year – the year in which I am going to be 70 – I have been cooking more than usual, partly because I am testing some of the seven times 70 recipes that make up this book, and partly because my son and his family were with us for seven months while their house was being reconstructed. It is more rewarding cooking for four than for one.

The contrast, therefore, is painfully acute. Cooking for one is now going to be my life. I am not looking forward to it. I have friends, to be sure, and this book bears witness to their importance in my life. But as one journalist puts it ‘I have plenty of people to do things with – I just have no one to do nothing with’.

I don’t like to eat alone, so the television has become my supper companion: we talk to each other. And I learn things; it changes my mental picture. I learn, too, that there are some foodstuffs it is hard to eat from a tray on your lap on a comfy sofa – slippery linguine, for example, slips off the fork. That limits menu choices – or augments the napkin laundry.

Ever since my spinal injury I find it increasingly hard to stand for the long periods that good cooking demands. So I both anticipate, and fear, the possibility that a meal might one day become something you grab out of the fridge. I once accompanied my mother to the flat of a friend of hers who had committed suicide (as had her husband, the cartoonist Vicky, before her). It was the next day and my mother was helping to clear up. The image of a bitten piece of cheddar cheese put back onto a near-empty shelf in the fridge, with its crescent of teeth marks as if carved in yellowed denture wax, haunted me for years – and returns to me now.

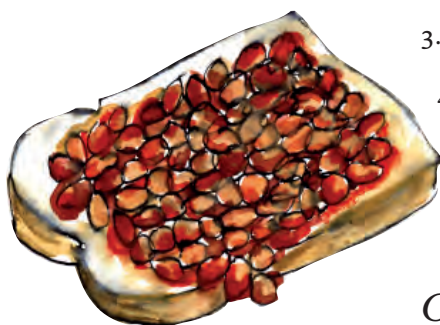
Cooking for oneself is, in some sense, a marker of self-respect – like putting on make-up and brushing your hair on days when no one will see you. Or making your bed when no one is coming. Setting a jam-jar of daffodils on the kitchen window-sill for your own simple enjoyment of that burst of sunlight springing from the tight, green stems. It is in such rituals that we celebrate being part of a civilised world. Cooking for yourself alone is a social act where you are both the cook and the guest. It is like reading a book in isolated companionship – a good repast, but not the banquet of having someone to discuss it with. Cooking for one is a caring act, as shown by the word ‘artistically’ in step 5 of the first of this section’s contributed recipes on the next page.



### *Lute-makers' lunches*

Michael Lowe (fellow lute-maker) does this bizarre assembly, and it came to me by email via his lady friend in Alabama.

tin of Heinz baked beans  
sultanas  
curry powder  
toast and butter



1. First, ensure that all glue pots and varnish-making equipment, etc., have been cleared away from their usual home in the food preparation area.
2. Take a tin of baked beans, preferably with reduced salt and sugar, open and pour contents into a pan.
3. Add an appropriate quantity of sultanas and curry powder to taste.
4. Heat on the stove and, meanwhile, take two slices of brown, wholemeal bread and proceed to toast. Butter the toast, and place one complete slice in the centre of a dinner plate.
5. Pour over the heated beans and, having divided the remaining slice of toast into two halves, arrange artistically on either side of the beans.

### *Cheese on toast*

Stephen's unit master, when he was a student at the Architectural Association, lived in the mansion flats directly opposite the British Museum and would hold his tutorials there accompanied by an unvarying lunch of cheese on toast, done the way Stephen does his now. It's his favourite quick lunch. Served, when the children come to the workshop, on a pink tablecloth of opened-out pages of *The Financial Times*, with houmous and a tomato on the side, and a cup of tea.

toast and butter  
cheddar cheese  
marmite  
currants  
tomato

1. Toast bread on one side.
2. Turn it over and spread, in order, with: marmite, currants, slices of cheddar, slices of tomato.
3. Grill that side to a bubbling melt.

### *Angelos's houmous*

Stephen buys his houmous from Tony's in East Finchley, but Angelos never does because shop-bought skimps on the tahini, which is the more expensive ingredient. The ratio in his is 2 : 1 so following that principle, you could make smaller quantities than this with a fistful of dried chickpeas, soaked and cooked. More bother, obviously. Houmous keeps quite a long time in the fridge. 'Καλή όρεξη or bon appetit – 'tuck in' is the closest the British get', says Angelos.

small tin cooked chick peas  
100 g tahini (or to taste)  
1 large clove garlic  
squeeze of lemon  
2 tsp olive oil  
pitta bread

1. Blend the chick peas to a fine paste. Add water if too thick.
2. Add the tahini, olive oil, the garlic, finely chopped, and squeeze in the lemon. Salt to taste.
3. Blend until fully mixed and smooth. Add water if necessary.
4. Serve in a bowl with a drizzle of olive oil and a sprig of parsley as decoration.
5. Warm pitta bread is traditional and ideal for dipping.

## *Boil-in-a-bag*

A lightning standby of Stephen's is boil-in-a-bag kippers plonked in with the potato water and something green steamed on top of that. This owes something to Bertek's one-pot method of steaming everything over a single saucepan when he lived alone. Butter and parsley liberally sprinkled and you've got a tasty dinner in 15 mins and no bother. Better than farmed salmon, which has to be dressed in a tangy sauce to disguise its blandness.

pkt boil-in-a-bag kippers

## *Calves liver*

Stephen didn't like calves liver so an evening treat when he was out might be this.

1. Dry fry a few leaves of sage first and set aside.
2. Fry onion rings, then the liver quite briefly.
3. Pour over a little Calvados and set alight.
4. Top with the sage.

2 slices calves liver  
onions  
butter  
Calvados  
sage

Even this alerted me to the difficulties of shopping for one. How do you ask for one slice of liver? Or one slice of ham? I seem to buy four and hope Dave the Butcher will think I have guests for lunch.

## *Vivienne's pot-au-feu*

Vivienne's French husband (whom I never met) died some 30 years ago, and she recalls being very irritated by the not-very-helpful remark of the wife of one of her cousins, saying that she would just eat sandwiches if she were on her own. I wouldn't; and nor would Vivienne. She tells me:

When I was on my own and working from home my basic policy was to cook a dish that would last for several days. In the winter that would often be a pot-au-feu, which also provides delicious broth for a quick meal, and the meat is wonderful sliced up and made into a salad with some of the cooked vegetables (carrots, parsnips, leeks, etc.) with a mustardy vinaigrette. That would last most of the week. It could cook away for hours on a low heat while I was working upstairs.

low-cost cuts of beef that need long cooking (silverside or brisket)  
some kind of cartilaginous meat, such as oxtail or marrowbone  
vegetables: carrots, turnips, leeks, celery, and onions  
spices: bouquet garni, s&p, cloves

I would always throw in some ale or wine.

## *Bo's stratagem*

From my friend and neighbour who looks after her figure [*Note to self: should I not emulate her?*].

When I cook for myself, I often make double the amount. I never, ever, buy any food I don't really enjoy eating because it's on offer or 'good for me'. I try not to have anything fattening around. This can mean that there needs to be a quick rethink when anyone else is coming to eat (e.g. there is probably no bread/potato/milk in the flat. There is a wonderful variety of things to eat on one or two pieces of crispbread (just a scrape of marmite on the toast can make the mundane delicious). I often don't bother much for a day or two, but then really enjoy taking the time to prepare something I find interesting.



## *Madeline's menu*

There is no preparation and hardly any washing up in this favourite solo supper of Madeline's.

1 lamb chop  
1 large tomato  
1 potato  
broccoli

1. Put a baking potato into the oven (timing according to size).
2. A little later, put the chop and tomato in a dish in the oven with a drizzle of oil. Bake the chop until crispy and the tomato till soft and sweet.
3. Steam the broccoli.

And voilà, low on calories, nothing grand, yet healthy and delicious.

## *Hazel's staples*

After cooking for a family of five for a couple of decades, Hazel now feels she has better things to do to make up for all that lost kitchen time. Lost, it may have been, but I recall some fancy concoctions. In her prime, her signature dish was a pudding called merveilleux.

Two large rounds of meringue sandwiched together and covered with buttercream flavoured with coffee powder (a very old recipe!). Decorate with lightly crushed chocolate flake bars.

She adds 'Those were the days!' confessing that her widowhood suppers now comprise: Tesco ready-mades, sandwiches and salads.

## *Judith's risotto for one*

Judith cooks for herself quite often as Mike is frequently out in the evening conducting or playing and she doesn't want to eat at 5.30. I think he microwaves a pre-prepared packet and rushes out; this is her more leisurely stand-by.

125 g easy-cook Tilda steamed  
brown basmati rice  
veg/fish/meat as available

1. Cook rice for 2 mins in the microwave.
2. Stir fry any vegetables with any herbs you have/like, in a decent amount of olive oil. Fennel with fish or mushrooms with meat. Onion, courgettes, carrots, leeks, asparagus, green beans, and frozen broad beans or peas, are all good – it's whatever you like (and the joy of cooking for oneself is that you are the only person you have to consider).
3. Cooked meat (sausages are nice) can be added last; frozen fish pieces once the veg have started to produce enough juice.
4. When these are cooked, stir in the cooked rice, and that's it. You might add a bit of soya or teriyaki sauce, or a little wine, or anything else you like.
5. Serve with a glass of wine.

## *Slow cook-pot*

When I lived in Brierley Hill on my own, I had a small slow cook-pot and I would fill it with any vegetables, herbs, possibly a cheap cut of meat, a slash of stock or passata and leave it on low for the whole day while I was working at the International Glass Centre. It took five minutes to fill the pot. When I came home, there would be a welcoming aroma and a meal ready, a quick soak of some couscous in boiling water, and it would last for two or three days.



## *Peyton at lunch*

Peyton likes cooking, but (like other widowed friends) reserves the serious stuff for when he is entertaining: usually Sunday lunches. He finds clearing up on his own late in the evening very depressing, hence a preference for luncheon parties.

I often have lunch out and then just have soup in the evening (usually bought I am afraid). However, yesterday I stopped at Café Rouge for morning coffee and a perusal of *The Times*. On impulse, and tempted by the display in the fishmonger's window, I bought a large crab, then some new potatoes and asparagus from the greengrocer, plus some tangerines, and for both lunch and dinner I had the crab (with mayonnaise) and the vegetables. I often just have soup and an omelette and fruit or yoghurt.



## *Isabel's jewel fingers*

Isabel wrote a book about chocolate, *La Dolce Vita* (2005), and this was what she sent me when I asked for something indulgent to make for one person. I've halved her quantities.



1. Line a shallow baking tray.
2. Melt the chocolate, add all the ingredients, mix well and spread over the tin. Smooth the top and refrigerate overnight.
3. Cut into strips or bite sized chunks.

90 g dark chocolate chopped  
50 g pistachio nuts chopped  
50 g golden berries or sultanas  
50 g crystallised ginger chopped  
½ tsp cinnamon  
½ tsp vanilla essence  
2 tsp honey  
slash of rum or cognac

## *Sylvia's apricots tomorrow*

'Apricots tomorrow' is an Arab proverb quoted at people who yearn for what could be... Apricots have a defined season – you need to eat them at the peak of perfection or not at all. Apricots tomorrow means something may never happen.

But you can take a tub of creamy tangy Greek yoghurt and place the contents in a glass dish. Add some swirls of deepest flavoured pine and thyme honey. Skin and then cut up some apricots and blend these pieces into the yoghurt. Then sprinkle the top with walnuts.

Where ever you may be sitting as a spoonful of this reaches your mouth you will immediately be making Cafavy's fabled journey to Ithaca which is where Sylvia first encountered this dish. Never mind apricots tomorrow; you have had them today.

apricots  
Greek yoghurt  
Greek honey  
nuts



## *Banana flambé for one*

This is taken from some recipe cards I made for Susanna during our two years at 22 Richmond Terrace in Bristol (see page 54).

1. Cook as for two.
2. Make a syrup of butter and sugar, lemon and orange juice.
3. Add 3 bananas sliced long ways.
4. Turn occasionally.
5. Add a spoon of brandy and ignite.

3 bananas  
butter  
sugar  
orange and lemon juice  
brandy

## *Peter H: his Tydeman's Late Orange apples*

When asked what he would make for himself in an evening on his own, Peter said he had just prepared this with his own spring apples, so it seemed appropriate. But, he admitted, as with all food it's even better shared. Just as delicious cold the following day.

garden apples  
dark brown sugar  
granulated sugar  
lemon zest

1. Make a syrup with 50% dark brown soft sugar and 50% granulated.
2. Cut the apples into quarters, peel and remove the cores, then cook in the syrup with some small slivers of lemon and peel.
3. The skill is in not cooking them too much, and not too little; they need to be soft, but still in individual pieces. They are brown on the outside, but the flesh is paler inside.
4. Serve lukewarm with some double cream poured over, and a couple of almond thins. A small glass of Moscatel usually goes well with them.

## *Calorie counting*

This definitely doesn't fit in this book – cream is mentioned over 400 times, butter 379 times, and eggs – oh, I lost count. In the early days of computing I reviewed (and kept) a program called the Oxford Concordance which you could run through an entire book and it would count up every instance of every word in seconds. Very useful and informative it was too. I remember finding I started sentences with 'However' too many times. I would go back and remove them without altering the meaning or flow of the sentences.

Back to our moutons. I can't have a book about food and eating without mentioning my perennial struggle with being overweight. I've tried this diet and that diet and they work for a bit. And then I feel better. And then it all goes on again. And I try again. I don't find calorie counting a helpful way of dieting and I've even thrown away a little book I had that gave common values – but it's good to be aware, say, of the relative values of a wedge of cheese to a quarterling of apple to make informed choices rather than tally up daily intake numbers. True, in this year of trying to fatten up an ailing husband, it wasn't the time for one's personal battle with being overweight.

Now there are no excuses; cooking for one must become calories for one. It's early days but I find I hardly buy bread, potatoes, butter or sugar any more. Does it make a difference? Not so far.

If we are counting, who is it who said 1 plus 1 equals 2, but if you move 1 closer to 1 then you get 11? True of this sort of counting; truer of couples such as we were. And in like fashion 2 minus 1 is not 1, but less than half.

## *A bottle of wine*

But best not drink all of it alone. I have a bit of a reputation for going too far with my wine; I know it and hang my head. I don't get abusive, but I get silly and repetitive. My family doesn't like me in those moments. I've formed various theories over the years as to why I do it. A lot of people want to escape from being themselves.

There may be some choice bottles in our cellar when the children inherit as, oddly, my own consumption appears to be reducing. In 2000 we started buying wines en primeur and, in 2012, we re-lined our cellar, put together eight wine-rack kits, and arranged all the wines in a very rough order by drinking date in descending dozens. Some are modest, even adding in the duty and VAT. Some (like the 2001 Lafite held at the Wine Society) seemed mad at the time; rather canny now that it is valued per bottle at more than I paid for the whole dozen.

There are other rather nice vintages: Carruades de Lafite, Comtesse Pichon Longueville, Haut Batailley, Château Talbot, La Fleur Pétrus, Doisy Daëne and Rieussec waiting for their moments. Some have drinking dates of 2020-30 on them which puts me in my 80s or 90s when I might not enjoy them. The idea of our children savouring them after we are gone gives me some pleasure though; it would be nice to think they will raise a toast to us and praise our foresight.

I hope they will make a fuss of our wines with appropriate cuisine and good company; served in special glasses. Maybe I will have acquired another early 18th-century baluster so they can inherit one a-piece for the reds; share out my mid-18th-century twists for the dessert whites; and enjoy a choice of hand-blown stems and 19th-century rummurs for everyday drinking.

### *Print your own*

Let's close with a vision of the future from *New Scientist* May 2013 (I used to review books for *New Scientist* until the Reed Corporation demanded that its freelance journalists sign away their copyright and I refused to do so). In an article on genetically modified crops, the writer outlines a NASA-funded project to develop a 3D printer for hot food. Food powders are UV-sterilised, fortified with nutrients and have a shelf life of 15 years. They have already printed noodles, turkey loaf, basil paste, bread and cake. Is this the future of cooking for one? And what would a recipe for colouring and shaping flavoured granules look like? I suspect there will be programs that you download straight to your own domestic 3D food printer.

Will that make a book like this redundant? I don't think so. There's a danger though that it may fall into the trap upon which its own premise is based – that the Law of Recipe Books states that few people cook more than six dishes from any one book.



# 21

## Dramatis personae

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The people who appear here are not the sum total of our friendships – every year our Christmas card list grows and I send out about 200 real cards and maybe 100 more by email, and the postal list cannot be reduced because every time I pause over a stamp costing 12/6 (in old money) I think, ‘Well surely that person is worth that to me!’ Those who appear here are foodie friends who have all contributed recipes, either on request or because I’ve deconstructed something they cooked, kept a faded cutting, or because a dish has made me think of someone. People who fleetingly appear in the text are not listed here.

If you are one of the people in this Who’s Who, dear Reader, forgive me if these brief paragraphs don’t sum up your very essence. You are all so much more to me than the meagre words I have put down.

### *Adrie & Jo*

Young friends and architects of Gabriel & Georgia’s kitchen and loft extensions. Jo is Allison & John’s daughter and was at Primary School with Emily. She sweetly continued the tradition of being an apple fairy for a while, but we don’t live near enough any more.

### *Alice*

My cousin Alice Masters and mother of Anne, Kim and Tim. Kim is a contributor too. See Joszi.

### *Alison & Henry*

The Meyrick Hughes: fellow Asilahians. Not contributors though we have had some terrific dinners in their house – an oyster occasion and an introduction to ceviche, which I hadn’t had before.

### *Allison & John*

Allison Douglas and John Edwards, whom we first knew

through our daughters and then became very attached to. We went most summers to stay with them in Pen-y-Fedw in Wales and have shared experiences in legion. John could be gruff and curmudgeonly, but had a soft centre that one didn’t always see. I know he was as fond of us as we of him. He was committed to local architectural causes and had a very fine eye and sense of design. Stephen made the box for their wedding ring when they finally wed some 30 years after meeting. They died together in a car accident driving back to Wales, the cause of which has never been established: perhaps a stroke of some kind at the wheel. We had had them to dinner the night before in London and it felt somehow deeply close and deeply shocking.

### *Andrea*

Andrea Livingstone was a colleague when I was a Trustee



of the Kraszna-Krausz Book Awards and we have remained in contact ever since.

*Andrew B*  
See Esther.

### *Andrew W*

Andrew Wygard, Stephen’s god-brother (if there is such a thing), married to Roz. Their parents were very close friends and Vita is (sort of) named after Wita, Andrew’s mother. They live in Mexico and we stayed there on our long honeymoon. Andrew would often stay at Stephen’s house in school holidays, rather than go back to his parents in Mexico, and when we cleared out 43 Etchingham Park Road we found his old school trunk, which we delivered to him at their Pimlico flat. I’m not sure the trip down memory lane altogether thrilled him. Stephen wrote not long ago: ‘I have been feeling just a bit more mortal recently, in an oddly benign way, so am concerned



for my nearest-thing-to-a-brother, and his helpmeet in life. We really have known each other for a long time, and I really do regret biffing you with a rolled-up newspaper when we were less certain of our relationship’.

### *Andy & Beth*

Andy McKillop was an editor at Granada when I was a fiction reader and we remained friends thereafter. He went on to be a top brass at Random House. Beth has now become Deputy Director of the v&a and is very grand and busy now – but not too busy for us and we still enjoy a warm friendship even though they live the other side of London. Random House didn’t treat Andy all that well when he had a stroke that made reading difficult for him and he went on to do a course in landscape gardening, which seems to suit him very well.

### *Angela*

Angela Dingwell, née Gottlieb, Stephen’s sister. Lives in Canada and has two daughters: Jennifer and Laura, with whom she is very close. Her husband John died suddenly in 2011 but she seems to have a lot of supportive friendships where she lives and is quite settled there. After school she did a catering course and still enjoys a managerial role in a club.

### *Angelos*

Angelos and Catherine Wideson, Stephen’s friend from Architectural Association days: one of his closest friends. He qualified as an architect and always has some scheme on the go, though slowed down by having a stroke and by losing

his middle son in a motorbike crash. He yearns for Cyprus and she for France, and they live in South London.

### *Anna*

Anna Colquhoun is a culinary anthropologist, recipe writer and supperclub host who runs cooking classes in Finsbury Park which I go to about once a year and always learn something. The bread and pastry section of this book owes a lot to Anna. About a dozen recipes come to me via her (some collected from her culinary travels). She changes them a bit; I change them a bit – whose are they? In the last few years I have been making preserves labels for her Riverford jam and chutney classes.

### *Annie*

Annemarie – one of the Devonians with whom we rented a huge house in Devon in the summer of 1996. We meet for a re-union once a year (ten of us) and she is a fabulous cook, Hungarian style. Husband Johnny had parents who came from Žilina, which is where my father would have changed trains to the main line from his village, Trstenà, about 60 miles away.

### *Art Workers’ Guild (AWG)*

Brethren, Masters and officers of the Guild at 6 Queen Square who have been like an extra family to Stephen and myself. Represented here by two recipes from the Masters of 2013 and 2014 (George Hardie on page 47 and Prue Cooper on page 159). Also contributions from Matt, Vicki, Peyton and Frances via Stefan, as well as Phil, Brian & Sarah (in the

Acknowledgements). The suppers I cooked in Stephen’s year as Master are outlined in chapter 15 and one or two others are mentioned en passant.

### *Barbara & Phil*

Barbara Dowell, née Hieger, my childhood friend when we lived in Meadway Court up until I was eight. Our mothers were pals, and we were play-mates. We had the run of a sheltered courtyard, air-raid shelters and frightening underground passages that provided stark backdrops for imagination games. Now we just send the annual birthday card – we don’t have much in common beyond shared experiences and a sort of historic loyalty. It was with Barbara, though, that I published my first-ever piece, in *The Children’s Newspaper*, on what colour days of the week are. I found the cutting not long ago and was intrigued to find that Monday is still red and Friday green: all the colours were the same then as they are for me now. The thrill of seeing that in print under the joint name of Jabar was something I already knew I would want to repeat.

### *Beatrice*

Beatrice and Robert Baumgartner-Cohen, who introduced us to Dan and Peter. Stephen met them originally on a skiing trip, before they had any children, and we have been friends ever since. Bea is a vegetarian cook, trained as a deep-sea glass-thermometer blower, then a linguistic theoretician and now a cartoonist and printmaker. Talented and funny. Robert is a banker, and gifted and amusing too.

### *Bertek*

Also known as Norbert or Bertus – he was Stephen’s uncle. He and Marion lived in Nottingham where he worked at Courtauld’s as an expert in warp knitting. In an ideal world perhaps he would have liked to be a pianist or an actor, but the fates decided his fortune. Before he was 20 he had run into the woods at his mother’s entreaty as she, and he, had been rounded up to be shot. He escaped; she did not. For the next ten months (or it could have been longer) he spent his days in an underground tomb where he and one other could just about sit up. A Polish farmer fed them and let them out for exercise at night. I believe payment was involved, not only humanitarianism: it was nevertheless brave. Bertus never talked about it, and he had nightly insomnia. Ludek managed to locate him after the war and find a place at Nottingham University where the only study on offer was a degree in textiles.

### *Bill*

See Sophie.

### *Bo*

Barbara – formerly of Chris and Bo; now B and George. Another surprise divorce after 40 years, and painful. They moved into our road when Vita was two and their youngest not much older. We had a great deal in common right from the start and met as couples, or just the two of us for coffee, over many years. Bo is a very knowledgeable classicist and nice-to-be-with warm, intelligent and attractive woman. She has now moved to a flat round the corner and

we see just as much of her as before, and think George suits her better than Chris did.

### *Bobby & Ruth*

Bobby and Ruth Magid, who now live in Australia. She and I knew each other through our sons at Cello Group. He was an entrepreneur who had already made money inventing a modular climbing frame and funded the Genie kitchen computer project. It was briefly quite exciting and all the things we thought of have now happened. We visited them in Australia during Emily’s year there and stayed in their penthouse flat (which just happened to be unlet) right on the waterfront. You could see the Opera House from the bed, pressing a button to draw the curtains. Ruth always said she had had the potential to be a great opera singer, but had given it up to have children: Someone like Joan Sutherland (possibly actually her) had been her singing teacher.

### *Bronwen & Gavin*

The Vinsons, whom we also know through our children – two of them were in the same year at primary school. They live round the corner and are marvellously positive people. He is an endocrinologist and likes to play jazz piano; she used to teach English literature and now does watercolours. We often have a meal together before or after seeing a film at the Phoenix Cinema.

### *Catriona*

Catriona (née Trevelyan & ex-Tomalin) is now married to Richard Tyson and they live in a marvellous house that

they built in Gloucestershire. Stephen and I did our first glass and wood collaboration with a screen to visually separate the bath from the bed in their bedroom. I met her at Hornsey Art School, where she started costume design at the same time as I launched into jewellery, and we have had a strong friendship ever since. I was at her first wedding in Attingham Hall, where a Shakespeare play formed part of the weekend entertainment.

### *Cecily*

Cecily Mendelssohn was Emily and Vita’s violin teacher and then mine. I was 36 when I asked her if she would teach me and I fell in love with the whole thing. I got as far as playing in quartets (very badly), one of which we performed on my 40th birthday when we had a series of ‘turns’. I can’t remember how long I plugged on with lessons, eventually realising I couldn’t ever catch up for lost years. But I worked hard at it for a long time. She moved away from Muswell Hill and we lost touch.

### *Cesca*

Francesca (née Wolf) and Gillies MacKinnon, she a teacher at the City Lit, he a film director with some cracking and prize-winning feature films to his name. Also a gifted cartoonist and painter. Cesca is Stephen’s third cousin (the family tree on page vi does not show all the links). Cesca used to be in publishing and I introduced her to A&C Black and to Vivienne’s editorial agency, and she introduced me to Granada as a fiction reader.

### *Charles Palliser*

See Hunter & Boo, and Silent Three.

### *Charlotte & Jasper*

Charlotte de Syllas (fine jeweller and gemstone carver) and Jasper Vaughan (architect) whom we have known since she and Stephen exhibited together at a Craft's Council exhibition in Norwich in 1979. I think it was an offshoot of the v&a's *The Craftsman's Art*. Stephen has made boxes for Charlotte's amazing pieces for several years. Cooking is not absolutely Charlotte's thing, so she is represented here by a couple of memories, because this is a significant and long-term friendship. She is one of the most talented craftsmen I know.

### *Chess*

Francesca Black, Georgia's mum, and we are both grandmothers to little Ossian. There isn't a name for that relationship, though she has suggested 'grandsters' which I quite like. Chess gets the food accessory prize for her wonderful porte tartière (our coinage) which she made us on her sewing machine as a picnic-cum-bring-a-dish carrier for quiches and tarts. Inspired! She is some sort of e-learning whizz at Oxford Brookes, being comfortable with technology, like me. And, like me too, has artists as her forebears and might have followed the artistic life herself, had choices been less complex.

### *Chris*

Chris Barlas has been my friend (briefly more than that) since 1988. I can date it

because we were both in the forefront of trying to sort out the impact of computers on authors. That led to ALCS and CLA and various boardroom dramas, in one of which I am ashamed to say I betrayed him (though he did deserve it). However, he forgave me and we both appreciate our occasional friendship – he lives in France where we visited him one hot summer and the dish in this collection is what Maggie, his friend, cooked though he is a superb cook himself, and made a wonderful dinner à deux the night we ... oh, never mind.

### *Christina*

Christina Preston of MirandaNet. I got a lot of lucrative work from Tina for quite a long time when she and I saw where technology was going long before other people; she in education and I in writing and copyright. I remember the two of us going to advise the BBC on how the World Wide Web (as we called it then) could be a useful tool. I kid you not: we came as consultants. There were five people in the department then. Might even have been three! The BBC!

### *Clarissa*

Clarissa Dorner, née King, my sister-in-law. Social services director, and now turned potter. Ace breadmaker in Catherington days and a superlative cook, possibly more anxious about correctness to the recipe than I am and so it always comes out right. We used to play flute and violin duets together when we were both learning – terrible din I am sure but we shut ourselves away in the kitchen to do it. We

have also exchanged knitting and dress patterns over the years and child-care advice by the legion, Sam being only six weeks older than Emily and Polly less than a year older than Vita.

### *Clarissa L*

Clarissa Lewis (née Piper), who lost David to galloping pancreatic cancer in the year in which I began this collection. Essentially my brother's closest friends (an early memory is that they gave me the Robert Welch candlesticks for my 21st), we formed a relationship of our own through buying a tiny house in the medina at Asilah together with the Tysons and the Meyrick Hughes's in 2003. Clarissa is possibly the best cook I know. She does things seemingly effortlessly and has a very fine palate.

### *Corina*

Corina Poore, Argentinian friend of Nick Houghton who lives in the parallel road to Angelos so we meet occasionally through that connection. An ebullient entertainer with something of the wise woman about her. Married to film-maker, Roger, who is more shadowy than her.

### *Dan*

Also see Peter (only because the recipes are from him) though Danièle and I are closer; not least because I am her webmistress for the British Wittgenstein Society which she founded in 2008. Unusually, we have a really good working relationship completely independent of our friendship, and I think we both know that the website does a lot for her Society and I have

been proactive with ideas and suggestions. We like to wine and dine each other and it's always gastronomically delicious and intellectually stimulating. It was from Danièle I got the idea to do my Dinner Party Record, and that led on to this book, because I had started asking for recipes after being entertained and putting them into the record book. She is the only person I know who has two PhDs and I ought to respectfully give her the title Dr Dr. I have the honour of having endorsed her for British citizenship in 2003.

### *Dave*

Dave the Butcher, whom I have known ever since we moved into the area, and whose meat is essential to good cooking. It is quite special to have such friendly local relationships.

### *Elsa*

See Granny

### *Ellie & G*

Elvina John and Gerard Hawthorne live in Muswell Hill. Ellie used to teach Lotte painting at Camden Institute and exhibited three times at our house for the East Finchley Open House weekends. Ellie is

the most touchy-feely, warm-hearted person I know, and she gives splendid hugs – even hugs by text message. Gee is an expert in Chinese and Oriental Art. Interested in fine dining: they very generously took us to Le Gavroche and I will always remember it not just for the occasion itself but because the following Monday (25 February) the whole saga of Stephen's cancer flared up. I did the envelope (below) for them as a thank you.

### *Emily*

Emily, my daughter. Stage Manager at the Royal Opera House for about 12 years and supported by RO as the Performing Arts Fellow on the Clore Leadership Programme in 2013, after which a world of opportunities opened out for her. Currently in a new strategic role at the ROH. Appears throughout the book.

### *Esther*

Esther and Andrew Bryson, cousin to Julia, and seen occasionally all the years I knew her. When and why we picked up and became friends, I can't recall. I think it was over mudlarking, about which Andrew is passionate. We would go with him under the

Millennium Bridge and then have Sunday lunch together. I have a good collection of mudlarked marbles, some of which I found myself and others that he has given me. Hard to spot; but satisfying when you do.

### *Eva*

Eva Szita-Morris, who, with Ian, is one of the Devonians (see Annie). Also Hungarian and with a keen interest in food. She grew up in Hungary at a time when parents did not tell their children they were Jewish; when it became possible to talk about it, she and her best friend were devastated to be told by their parents that one was Jewish and the other was Hebraic – wanting to be the same and not realising they were. Ian is a talented and keen photographer: he made a short film of the Devonian trip, as well as later footage of the Devonians in France in 2006, which is a touching record.

### *Flip-Flop*

Philip Watson is now married to Rosalind (née Toynbee) who is a well-practised entertainer; she seems to find it just as easy to cook for a dozen as for four. Sunday lunches at Ganthorpe Hall are gastronomically and socially a delight. They'll plonk magnums of no-fuss red wine on the table with liberal help-yourself acuity. I call him Flip-Flop because it was what Patty, his first wife, used to call him and I somehow always think of him that way. From being something a bit hush-hush at the Foreign Office he now translates Chinese poetry into English.



## *Francis*

Francis Golding introduced me to Stephen when he and Peter Howard were living round the corner from me. I lived at 46 Noel Road and he in Colebrook Row, in a flat that I don't think had a loo. Or maybe it was on the ground floor, shared, and they lived on the top floor. We would drop in on each other and had a special fondness for each other: I think he slightly regretted introducing me to Stephen, as he had a possessiveness about his women friends, though content to declare himself gay a few years later. An aesthete with a museum-quality collection of porcelain, he was killed in a bicycle crash in November 2013. He always planned to write about being a collector and I am glad that I got him to do a short article for *Glass Circle News* (No.129): photographing his glass for that was the last time we saw him.

## *Gaby*

Gabriel, my son, and father of our first grandchild, Ossian. Opera, lieder and choral singer with a mixed portfolio that includes the BBC Singers and the ROH extra chorus; composes and conducts and teaches too. Appears throughout the book.

## *Gail & Dari*

Gail Sheridan, married to Dari Sagar. We knew them in London years ago – and went to their Zoroastrian house blessing – but lost touch for a number of years when they moved to Worcestershire. Now we have taken to seeing them once a year at our Stratford-upon-Avon picnics. Two food memories stand out. Once

we turned up at their house in Crouch End and they had clearly forgotten we were coming, but quickly pretended they had been planning a take-away all along. The other is that Dari remembers me making pancakes for them as a thank you for helping to move our grand piano. I don't see how that could have happened, but we did have a grand piano in our flat, and it *was* moved.

## *Georgia*

Georgia Black, Gaby's partner. Dr Black, no less, with a PhD in personality disorder diagnosis. At the time of writing is a Research Associate in Epidemiology & Public Health and champions qualitative analysis as a research tool, but some day she will be adviser to the Prime Minister, I feel sure. A girl who is good at everything. Now juggling career with bringing up a baby.

## *Gerda & Harold*

Gerda and Stephen's father were cousins by marriage. His grandmother (Pepi, née Degen) was Gerda's grandfather's second wife. It's not a blood bond, but because there were so few relations left, they clung to those they had. Pepi's family came from Budapest and there is very likely another pack of distant cousins somewhere. Gerda emigrated to America after the war and married Harold, a doctor and a Harvard man. They live in Los Angeles and the most recent postcard says: 'Growing old is not for wimps'.

## *Gidek*

Stephen's uncle – actor and cabaret singer, handsome

and charismatic. Lived most of his life in Melbourne with his second wife Ewa. His most famous role was in *Hotel Sahara* with Peter Ustinov. Nada and Jojo were watching it on television the evening we came back to announce our engagement. Poor things, they didn't know whether to concentrate on the son or the brother.

## *Granny*

Else Simon, née Wertheimer, my maternal grandmother. I never liked her, though one had to obscurely admire someone who travelled from Sheffield to London every three weeks at the age of 80 for piano lessons. Ego-centric and stubborn, she adored her son Werner and would stay six months of the year in California with him (left all her money to him too). When she died at 93 she left her house and contents to Käte and nothing to Lotte, so sowing the seeds of a rift between the sisters that never healed.

## *Greenwald*

Stephen Greenwald – who calls our Stephen 'Herman' – and dates back to City of London School days (hence the surnaming); married to Sally Forster. You could say we have a sort of cuisine rivalry – not rivalry exactly, but a sense that one needs to push the boat out a bit because the guests expect and appreciate it; I recall getting a recipe from Sophie that I appropriated with a gleeful cry and that has gone down in Badley legend as, 'That'll wow the Zumblatts' (Bill, of course, being inventive with surnames). Don't remember what it was though. My first memory of Greenwald

was of him toasting crumpets on an electric bar heater in his rooms in Hertford College, Oxford. He is now Professor of Cardiovascular Mechanics at Queen Mary University of London.

### *Hazel*

Hazel Bell, indexer and long-time publishing colleague whom I met in various contexts, mostly in the 1990s. She was editing *Learned Publishing* and my British Library reports were reviewed in it. She did the index for my book *The Internet: A Writer's Guide* (2000). And if that sounds blue-stocking, it's not; she turns out to have a theatrical bent for singing and dancing as well. Hazel also introduced me to Gordon Graham, former chieftain of the Publishers' Association, who invited me onto the editorial board of *Logos* and to become a trustee of the Krazsna-Krausz Foundation. Hazel once told me that he had read out my apology for not being at one of his magnificent summer parties in Marlow to his assembled guests, saying it was one of the most original excuses he had ever had; I could not come, it read, because I was glass blowing in Turkey.

### *Heino*

Henrik Dörner (as it was originally spelled), my father, born in Trstená (formerly Hungary, then Czechoslovakia and now Slovakia) in 1902. He died of cancer of the liver in 1977. His two sisters Sidonia and Margit probably died in a concentration camp, but Sidonia's three daughters Joszi, Alice and Elli survived (thanks

to Heino) and have abundant families. Only Vera (Joszi's daughter) and Kim (Alice's) are contributors.

### *Helen & Julian*

Helen Likierman and Julian Hale, new friends whom we met through the Brearleys and really like. (We like their amazing penthouse flat at the top of the Cromwell Tower in the Barbican too.) Both marvellous cooks in an inventive who-needs-a-book sort of way. And they are jolly good sports for some of our dafter dinner party occasions and ebulliently rise to the challenge. They have two charming children and returned the compliment by thinking ours delightful when I celebrated my 69th birthday in their penthouse and Emily, Vita and Gabriel all came, and did me proud.

### *Humphrey*

Humphrey is a liver specialist at the Royal Free (retired) and has watched me down many a glass too many without expressing concern. He once told me that it is worse to feast and famine than to drink steadily and that days or weeks off isn't always a good idea. I think he actually meant the 'steadily' to mean a couple of glasses only. Also see Shirley.

### *Hunter & Boo*

I picked Hunter up in the first place as a writer on issues electronic and we became firm friends, starting in our Society of Authors days and continuing over many years. One of the characters in his novel *Succeeding at Sex and Scotland* is modelled on me; it

was on the pages of that novel that I first met Charles Palliser who is a denizen of Silent Three, and lends me novels. Hunter and Boo have a gift for finding palatial residences in the Scottish countryside for very little rent, where they house vast quantities of books including their own Black Ace Books label.

### *Isabel*

Isabel Coe, one of Emily's closest friends from North London Collegiate, now married with three children and living in Australia. I've always taken a bit of a special interest in her as she confides in me about this and that from time to time. Her book *La Dolce Vita* is about her family and has lots of chocolate recipes in it.

### *Janie and Charlie*

Hampton. Not contributors though we've broken bread together – an amazing picnic aboard their barge *Mrs Noah* when Janie pulled apart a chicken in her bare hands as we tootled about the Thames in Oxford; and a duck-egg breakfast with just-laid eggs from their small-holding of a garden. Janie once helped me perform an opera libretto I had written while on an Arvon writing week run for members of the Society of Authors. We did improvised singing. I remember the tears of laughter, but have no record of what the opera was.

### *Ivan*

The fabulous Ivan Day, whose many historic recipes are on his website. The ones here were given to me personally. We have been to several of his courses,

but the best ever was the one he did just for us for our 40th wedding anniversary that was centred on the theme of weddings and anniversaries. I printed eight aprons with a logo for the occasion and we have a lovely selection of pictures of us all laughing and Ivan clearly thoroughly enjoying it. I managed eventually to lure him chez nous for a dinner cooked by me and gave him a glass rondel as a thank you for his generosity. He also made a cucumber ice-cream (in a cucumber mould), after the spit-roasted rack of beef, just for us when he invited us to stay for a weekend which turned out to be our last trip away together – at his house the last bed Stephen slept in that was not his own.

### *Jen*

Jane Howard, Susanna's sister and latterly our near neighbour. Formerly an English Lecturer at London Guildhall University, and always intellectually stimulating, she is now active in the London Orchards Project which looks after fruit trees in London streets and makes sure the produce is distributed to local communities. Hence her pear recipe. Also manages a Bach orchestra and seems to eat the *London Review of Books* for breakfast. Lucy is her daughter.

### *Jennie*

Jennie (née Crawford; which name her son has adopted), now Erdal and erstwhile Bradshaw, when married to Stephen's school friend Graham. When they split – acrimoniously – we stuck with Jennie. Not possible to remain friends with both sides and

when Graham moved on to his fourth wife, going from Japan to Bali, we lost touch with him. Even so, we've had our moments of misunderstanding with Jennie. But old friends are best friends and she is one of those.

### *Jess*

See Susanna.

### *Jennifer & Laura*

Stephen's nieces. They came from Canada to see us in 2012 and took copious videos of a variety of eating experiences (including a picnic I gave them to have on the train to Rye). All details of meals we had together are recorded on a CD somewhere, but these things become a bit like white noise when there is so much footage and one never looks at it. Jennifer is married to Andrew and Laura to Alex.

### *Joachim*

Joachim Fleury, Vita's husband – and so imaginatively caring of her it warms my parental heart. Erstwhile partner at Clifford Chance specialising in telecoms law and still globe-trotting for them all the time (don't know how he does it). He wouldn't want to be defined by that though as, like our Vitz, he's many-faceted and complex and has lots of interests in music, theatre and arts, and knows everything. They both love to travel and have the same travel ethos.

### *Joan*

Joan Kaskell, married to Peter who is theoretically Steven's god-father, though that's not anything anyone follows. Old family friendship dating back

to Berlin. The family emigrated to America and converted, as so many did, and Joan, hailing from the New York aristocracy, entrenched Peter in the upper echelons of New York life. He was always someone special in my childhood and would come bearing packets of life-savers – butter rum was my favourite. He also introduced me to clam chowder when I first visited New York. I've never made it.

### *Jojo*

Joan Gottlieb (née Elam) born in Canterbury as the fourth child in a family of five, Stephen's mother. She met Nada (Ludek) when he was in Guernsey inspecting some tomato fields that did not interest him very much. 'But' he writes, 'I did take a great interest in a slim, tall, blonde, with an open, lovely face, ready smile and heart-warming friendliness who came one day to dance at the hotel. I did not know that she had already visited the Hotel with her elder sister on the evening before and had told her "I've seen this man on the beach. He's got nice long legs. Could be French; I shall dance with him tomorrow." We did.' And spent the rest of his life with her. She died of multi-infarct dementia the day we bought Emily's 18th-birthday present.

### *Joszi*

Josephine Knight, née Eberstarck, my cousin and a superb cake-maker. Joszi is one of 'Nicholas's children' – Nicholas Winton, who was responsible for the Kindertransport, and her sponsor was Dame Myra Hess. I have the picture taken the day they left: their mother, Sidonia,

looks chokingly sad and the girls are dressed in identical sailor suits. I've seen Joszi's diary for 1939. It had four entries: 26 June: left Trstenà. 29 June: left Bratislava. 2 July: arrived in the children's home. And a list of mother's, sisters' and Heino & Lotte's birthdays. She must have been given the diary on arrival as it is an English one, so she must have written in it afterwards. Entries in Czech. But that was all there was in it. She is in the film *Nicky's Children*, which my descendants will find on my computer and the moving scene showing a mother taking her child off and on the train is their mother, the child being Elli, Joszi's youngest sister. Elli's granddaughter, Naomi, was a model for one of the statues of children now outside Liverpool Street Station.

### *Judith & Mike*

Judith and Mike Fage used to live in the next road parallel to ours and we have known them since Vita was three and Celie was two. Their two older sisters had gone to a birthday party in Judith's road and we found ourselves coerced into having a private party for the two younger ones. From that sprung the closest friendship of both Vita and Celie's lives. They became inseparable: we couldn't have moved from Muswell Hill. Growing up loosened the intensity, but they are still firm friends and Celie was best bridesmaid at Vita's wedding.

### *Julia*

Julia Singleton, née Bryson, who had three children all roughly four months younger than mine so we got together a

lot. It was while I was with her at Baby Bounce at the Sobell Centre that Gaby 'started'. Mostly we swam together at the Highgate Ladies' Pond – picnicking in the field outside when the babes were little and taking it in turns to have our swim. One year we kept on going two or three times a week all the way through till Christmas, when we broke the ice together (literally) on Boxing Day. We would leave the car at Cuckoo's house (her mother) in Merton Lane, the loss of which (the house, that is) she never really got over. Always subject to hospitalising bouts of manic depression, she eventually committed suicide in 2000 and I got the news by email while we were in Japan.

### *Julia S*

Julia Singer, whose recipes must be from the days when we had babies of the same age and would meet frequently. Luke is one day older than Vita and his birth probably led to Vita's induction next day and may even – who knows – have affected her character. I had been due a week before Julia and on going for a check-up, and finding she had already given birth, burst into tears and was admitted there and then, and induced. Julia and Stephen knew each other from wonderful summers at the Château Pourcieux in Provence. She was a person of such life and vitality that it is hard to take in how she suddenly went down with pancreatic cancer and was gone. Life had dealt her a series of undeserved blows when her husband of nearly 40 years left her for a younger model.

### *Julian*

See Helen.

### *Käte*

Käte MacKinnon, née Simon, my aunt – not a marvellous cook, it has to be said, but a pretty remarkable person. Born in Schöneberg in 1908, she died in Scotland two weeks shy of her 104th birthday and was cheerful and childlike to the last. One never got a straight story out of Käte – everything was always couched in sighs and allusions – but I understood that she had 14 miscarriages, and being childless was a great sadness and a source of jealousy towards my mother. I don't know this, and maybe it is my fantasy, but from some nods, sideways glances and meaningful looks I formed the theory that she had been raped by the Gestapo and that may have been the cause of the miscarriages. Käte's happiest memories were of Oerlinghausen, their country estate between Detmold and Bielefeld.

### *Kim*

Kim Masters (my second cousin) is now an Editor at Large and Hollywood Reporter and one of those feisty and powerful journalists who are admired and feared. She's won lots of awards. I always think of her when I was 19 and she was 10 and sent over to London. I was the nearest in age and deputed to look after her. She remembers that I took her to see *Oliver* and I recall how mature she was at 10. We got on well then and have an affinity that re-opens on the rare occasions when we see each other. Siblings Anne & Tim and daughter Delia are not on the tree.



### *Lesley & Tony*

Relatively new friends (jeweller and product designer) and game for last-minute invitations (in both directions) which I rather like. He does most of the cooking, and it is always served on attractive tableware. Both now Brethren of the AWG.

### *Liz*

Liz Jensen, whom I see once or twice a year, is one of my favourite people. She's a novelist with a quirky sense of humour and writing style, and Cassandra-like prognostications about the future. We've been in her place in France twice and visited her and her second husband Carsten in Copenhagen, where they now live. One day she might write 'my' novel – that's to say I have given her an idea about a glass-eating bug that would make the world fall apart. She likes the idea, but has so many more of her own.

### *Lotte*

Lotte Dorner, née Simon, my mother, born in Bremen in 1906 She died of lymphoma in 1998. Appears throughout.

### *Lucy*

Lucy Nabijou; see Jen.

### *Ludwik/Ludek*

See Nada.

### *Lynette*

Lynette, married to Jüri who at one time was Chairman of ALCS when I was Chair of CLA. It all seems like a strange part of my life now. We still meet up for a meal and enjoy each other's company.

### *Madeline*

Madeline Fenton, née Thorner, painted Zim's portrait as a *quid pro quo* for me designing her website. I've known her my entire life and we have had various bouts of being friendly; it fading away and then renewed again – no reason other than the vagaries of life. We used to do weaving classes together at the Camden Institute (me with Vita in a baby seat by my loom), and had a smocking phase once. By profession a cellist (touring once with Barry Humphries), she is actually very gifted creatively. Gabriel first saw a cello at her house, and thence followed his cello lessons.

### *Margaret*

Margaret Brearley, one of the most beautiful, most intelligent, socially talented and cultured people I know, who has a huge flair for cooking for crowds, and buckets of social charm. Boundless energy for collecting interesting people. Margaret finds solace in Judaism, though brought up by a mother who fervently supported the Barbican Mission to the Jews (responsible for many conversions of the Kindertransport children). If she is Jewish on her mother's father's side (a possibility) she doesn't look it. She and her husband Stephen were amused participants at the Stephens party. Both love music and are always inviting us to concerts, and we have three times coincided at Glyndebourne.

### *Marion*

See Bertek.

### *Master, The*

See Art Workers' Guild (AWG).



### *Matt*

Matthew Lane-Sanderson made the metalwork for my two hospital projects, and he and I won two out of three public art bids that we applied for. It was he who proposed me for the AWG. Rachel, his wife, actually sent me the recipe from him because that is the way they do things – they are a special pair.

### *Mel*

Mel Mars, friend of Gail & Dari who lives in Broseley. I have stayed in his house, The Lawns, (formerly the residence of Iron John) a few times and he is part of the Shakespeare picnics clan.

### *Michael Lowe*

The only other lute-maker whom most cognoscenti would consider to be Stephen's equal (he won't mind me saying that). Lives in Wootton by Woodstock and pleasingly old-fashioned in his outlook. If I want to contact him, I email his lady friend who lives in Alabama, USA, in the knowledge that they talk daily on the phone.

## *Nada*

Ludwik Gottlieb, Stephen's father. Erstwhile head of various departments at the BBC, fluent speaker in five or six languages, with impressive intellect. Melvyn Bragg was in his unit as a trainee and later wrote: 'The European arm of the BBC, where I met, sat alongside and worked with brilliant intellectuals like Konrad Syrop, Ludwik Gottlieb, and Tosco Fyvel who had worked with Orwell on *Tribune*. It was very heaven'. Something I learned – too late – was that it isn't always right to promise to keep a secret. He told me at least two years before his death that he had the cancer that killed him and asked me not to tell Stephen. Firstly, maybe he actually *meant* the opposite of what he said, and secondly, my loyalty was to Stephen not to Ludek. Eventually I did say: 'Either you tell him or I will,' but I should have done it sooner.

## *Nest*

Nest Rubio – married to the violin maker David, and missing him painfully in all the years she survived him. A complete eccentric and a most marvellous rug knoter. Quite mad; spoke her mind and wasn't always kind, but she and I got on famously. We would send each other pussy cat jokes and she taught me how to dye wool with red madder. She gave all her beautiful carpets to Newnham College and invited me there once to High Table when Onora O'Neill was Principal and had shortly before given her Reith Lectures. The whole occasion was enormously impressive, and the Principal would

summon the waiters to bring the next dish with the merest raise of an eyebrow or drop of a little finger.

## *Nick*

Nick Garrett, Emily's beau – an inadequate word for someone she's been with for over 12 years (at the time of writing). An opera singer, with leading roles at Holland Park Opera and the Châtelet in Paris, he's a very fine actor and a sensitive and talented musician. Composes too. I first saw him in 1997 when he was in an opera by Paul Barker called *Dirty Tricks* performed at Spitalfields, which was about British Airways and Virgin Atlantic, and ever since I have thought if you can write an opera about aircraft then why not about copyright. Maybe Nick and I will collaborate on a one-act piece one day.

## *Nick H*

Nick Houghton, Stephen's contemporary at the Architectural Association and close friend. They shared a flat in Ladbrooke Grove at one time. Always a bit of a womaniser, he eventually married Rosita and begat Angola and Lally, but the marriage didn't last. And he died of cancer too young. He was passionate about politics and spent his life pioneering architecture for the dispossessed in Peru and Guatemala.

## *Oscar & Jennifer*

The Hills who live in Muswell Hill and know lots of people we know. Our daughters were at Tetherdown school at the same time.

## *Otto*

My grandfather, whom I never met. Appears in chapter 2.

## *Ossian*

My grandson, see Gaby.

## *Patty*

Patty Watson (née Berndt), my friend and close confidante for more than 10 years – but alas that's already 25 years ago. She died much too young of leukemia (in 1988) and I still miss her. A very special person – I am sure our friendship would have continued. Of the many things we did together, one was knitting and not long ago I made a friendship blanket of her sample squares and mine. It'll be for both our grandchildren's cots – now with Petica. And in good time (I hope) to Emily after that. She gave me all her Chinese recipes from the days when she and Flip Flop lived in Taiwan. Later, they went to Beijing on diplomatic service and I wish we'd visited them there. We were invited.

## *Pavel*

Pavel Sraj, our very dear Slovenian friend who married Sherrie (and that's another surprise breakup after what had seemed like a lifetime's devotion) and went to live in Australia. He had a weak heart and survived many scares (one the year we were in Australia visiting Emily), but eventually succumbed when back in Slovenia. He had just turned 70.

## *Peter H*

Peter Howard, architect living in Milton Keynes, who knew

Stephen before I did. They shared an idyllic Italian holiday with some others, and Peter taught Stephen to draw better ‘and be less mimsy’. I met him through Francis Golding when they both lived in Colebrook Row and I in Noel Road. Lives on his own and that means he can indulge his exquisite taste in rugs, porcelain and paintings. There’s always a new ginger jar or Sung bowl to look at when we brave the M1 for one of his delicious lunches.

### *Peter S*

Peter of Dan & Peter Moyal-Sharrook, South Eastern art specialist. Peter is the main cook in their household, and that includes Moroccan dishes inherited from Danièle’s mother. In his spare time (i.e. all the hours of the day) Peter champions South East Asian art at SOAS.

### *Peter and Mariolina Freeth*

Muswell Hillites, and Peter taught Lotte etching at Camden Institute. for many years. He’s an RA and we have some of his etchings.

### *Petica*

Petica Watson, my very great friend Patty’s daughter and a kind of unofficial god-daughter. It was hard for her to lose a mother at the age of 14; not helped by the very poor pastoral care at Cheltenham Ladies’ College at that time. Picture researcher, film documentary researcher, creative person, gifted at lots of things; doesn’t-know-what-she-wants-to-be-when-she-grows-up person – though she’ll have to grow up fast now that she’s got baby Billy. She’s talented

and attractive, but doesn’t believe it when you tell her. One of Emily’s Best Friends. I am very fond of her.

### *Peyton*

Peyton Skipwith, formerly a Director of the Fine Art Society; he introduced Stephen to the Art Workers’ Guild and was the Hon. Curator there before him (and a Past Master). A terrific raconteur. His wife Anne died a few years ago and it was she who was originally my friend. We picked each other up at the One O’clock Club beneath Parliament Hill when Vita was three weeks old and remained friends over many years. One tip I learned from Anne was to put an egg into mashed potatoes right at the end to enrich the mix. I think this was nursery comfort for sick children.

### *Randall*

Randall and I were members of the Society of Authors Technical and Scientific Group (known as Stag) and once a year a group of us would go out for supper after the annual Stag seminar day. Randall and I went on meeting periodically and gradually involved each other’s partners. It was through Randall that we met our first Abyssinian cat (his cat Cairo) and acquired Zimmy as a result. Randall was our personal pilot before he moved back to New Zealand.

### *Paul White*

The Longmans boyfriend I was with when I met Stephen. Went on to A&C Black and then founded his own publishing company, writing and selling books about Cornwall. I

wrote for A&C Black’s *Writers’ & Artists’ Yearbook* (now Bloomsbury) for about 10 years and they published two of my books, but the connection was not through Paul. My last royalty statement was for £0.52.

### *Philip Cohen*

Philip Cohen is a school friend. He arranged a reunion of our year 25 years after we had left. He had not yet won his Royal Medal, but was seriously respected in his field of research into protein phosphorylation at the University of Dundee. What impressed me about the reunion was how methodical he was in tracking down classmates. I went round with him knocking on doors of erstwhile neighbours asking what they knew. It taught me a lesson about how you achieve success in life; he just wasn’t going to give up on anyone. Despite my earlier moans about that school, the reunion was quite a nice occasion and I was struck by how many people I could have known and been friends with later in life. The biggest shock was that inky-fingered Ungar, who was always bottom of the class and teased by all, had become a rabbinical scholar.

### *Philip MC*

Philip McCleod-Coupe, erstwhile lute-maker colleague of Stephen’s.

### *Polly*

Polly Collier, née Dorner, my niece. Production team at Random House and mother of two sons, Reuben and Rafael; fluent in Catalan. Pol is my sort

of cook – looks at books and the internet for ideas and then goes away and does something based on some of them. In an earlier era she thought of opening her own tapas bar in London – but it's just as well she didn't, as it's really hard to make a financial success. I am looking after her piano – my parents' Bechstein – until she wants it for her boys.

#### *Richard*

See Sally B.

#### *Richard and Adrienne*

Richard Earle, a client of Stephen's.

#### *Robin*

Robin Thodey is married to astro-physicist Alan Martin after years of wanting someone in her life. She has played on several Gottlieb lutes and now lives in Durham so we see her less often than we used to. Once we went for supper and the night and they both asked if we minded watching *Strictly Come Dancing* before dinner. We obliged, somewhat surprised (astro-physicist? hooked?); now I am as ardent a fan as they are.

#### *Rosie*

Rosie married Chris Barlas some years after I knew him and we always got on well. I've got an aubergine recipe on a fax from her that's so faded I can't read it, but it does say: 'Dare I ask how your computer is? Here's something to cheer you up'. She was a costume designer for the BBC and I think Chris liked her artistic side. She died of cancer in 2008 just after they'd moved to a large house in France.

#### *Ruth*

See Bobby.

#### *Sally B*

Sally Bradshaw is married to Richard Singleton. We introduced them at one summer barbecue; they had so much in common that they may have met anyway, but it was a fit that we had not predicted. Both superb cooks and very generous ones too as they buy the best ingredients and marvellous wines. It's always a treat being invited by them. Sally is a singer and Richard a retired fund manager and they now live half the year in Najac in France, where they have a stunning house with a potager that Richard is devoted to.

#### *Sally F*

Sally Forster: Sally switched from being a lecturer in Scientific Computing to becoming a committed psychotherapist, and I can imagine that she is very good at it. She and Greenwald always share the cooking pretty much equally when we come and I've picked up lots of tips, ideas and recipes from them both over the years. Both are 'pinger cooks' – an alien concept to me – setting timers to alert them to a cooking stage. *See also* Stephen Greenwald.

#### *Sally W*

Sally Wraight (we always articulate the silent 'W') née Wedeles, formerly married to Alan Lucas who was a teenage friend of Stephen's. We overnighted in their Oxford cottage on our wedding night – what was left of it after the May Ball at Balliol. She now lives in

Cumbria with second husband Philip and is another of the best cooks I know because, like me, she loves food and cooking. They are both bridge champions.

#### *Sam & Tina*

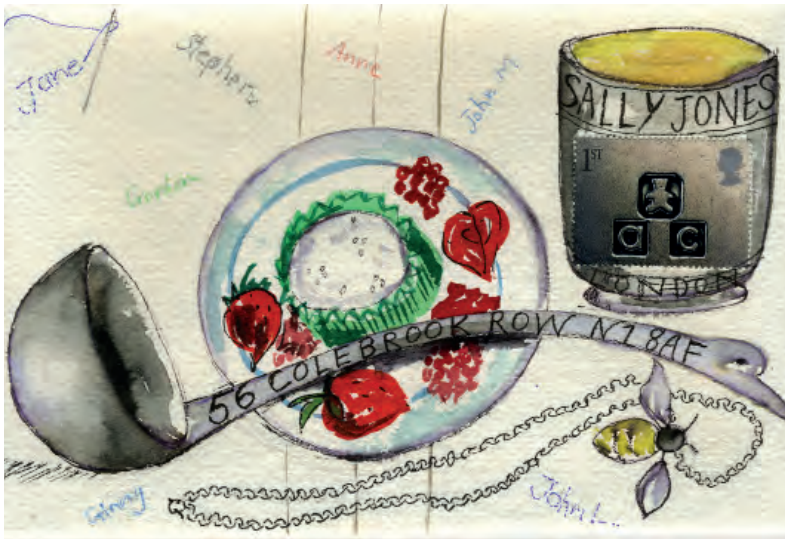
Sam Dorner is my nephew and father of Elias and Naomi. They contributed a whole Sunday lunch menu, but I had to separate it out to fit my sections. They live in Berlin round the corner from where Lotte grew up, but Sam travels to Hamburg for his work as systems analyst to a bank. I always thought he would have an academic career. Their children Elias and Naomi are not on the family tree as they are not contributors, but I hope they will one day cook from this book.

#### *Sara*

Sara Collins whom we originally met through Dan & Peter; a psychoanalyst who lives in a nicely proportioned house beside Hampstead Heath overlooking the ponds. A cook like myself – she just reads ingredients lists; likes to show that she has bothered a bit; cares about what dishes go with what; and is generous with the puddings.

#### *Sarah J*

Sarah Jones, silversmith with whom Stephen once shared a workshop co-operative in Old Street. A pal ever since, she has themes to her dinner parties that are just as mad as mine. Once we had to sign our names on the tablecloth and she embroidered it afterwards until the whole cloth was covered in signatures. Another time, we



had to send back a dollhouse-sized envelope with our ‘thank you letter’ enclosed. I did one of my watercolour envelopes with a tiny version inside. Her repoussé silver-gilded water tumblers are to die for – industrious and hugely talented in lots of ways. She did a brief stint as a detective’s assistant – quite a gal.

### *Sarah-of-the-Soup*

Sarah Westwood, who made the light-bulb-moment soup. We were at Hornsey Art School together at the end of the 1960s and I shared a house with her in Cruden Street, Islington. My first flat on my own and I loved it there. We lost contact for years and years until on a deliciously hot summer’s day in 2011, I went to lunch in a house she had built in the garden of the house where she had had her 21st, right on the Thames at Wargrave. It was a warm and friendly occasion, but I don’t think there will be another.

### *Saša & Sarka*

Friends of Steven and Clarissa. We have stayed about three

times in their house in Prague and see them when they are in London. I’ve even been to their little dacha near Český Krumlov and I think we visited the original Budějovický Budvar. I also still have a bottle of Communist era whisky they gave me. I remember lots of interesting conversations about that whole time, as our first trip was not long after the Velvet Revolution.

### *Shirley and Humphrey*

I was at school with Shirley, though we weren’t friends then (she in the science sixth and I in arts) and met later in life because they moved to Muswell Hill. We wine and dine with each other quite often and for about 20 years we went carol singing with them, until I threw a wobbly and said I couldn’t do the descant any more and didn’t want to come. Shirley once brought round a beautiful casserole of chicken in orange when we were both unwell, which was as unusual and aromatic as it was welcome.

### *Silent Three*

The core of these dinners is

Alex Martin; Annabel Dilke; Charles Palliser; Deborah Moggach; Frankie Hill; Jacqui Lofthouse; Jane Jakeman; Jennifer Potter; John Hands; Leon Arden; Liz Jensen; Louise Doughty; Robert Irwin; Humphrey Hawksley and myself. Almost all of them are novelists, broadcasters, film-script writers; some teach or have taught. On the tenth occasion all of them gave one of their books to Steven and Clarissa as a thank you on the last occasion when we used their Fitzrovia flat.

### *Sissy & Peter*

Sissy von Westphalen and Peter Sohn, who lived in Berlin when I knew them best. Not contributors but should be; I never got a recipe because Sissy died while I was in the middle of this compilation and Peter a year before her. I had asked her for a particular speciality of Peter’s, but it was not to be. They gave us a bit of the Berlin Wall when it fell in 1989.

### *Sonja*

Sonja Linden, née Wilberg, school friend from the age of nine – she had been put to sit next to me and we became best friends. Lost contact during her first marriage to Leslie when she had children and I didn’t. Picked it up again when Emily was about six, perhaps older, and have been best friends again ever since. Three of her recipes date back from her Jewish days with Leslie, but now she is married to Paul and both of them have eschewed all that. I’ve had loads of ideas from her table over many years – many more than are directly recorded.

## Sophie

Sophie Yates (harpsichordist) and Bill Badley (lute player and music teacher) who live in Bradford on Avon, so we always stay the night when we go to supper. Sophie is responsible for more of these recipes than the ones that bear her name because she is always serving something original and delicious and I am always asking her for chapter and verse. I think she has the finest palate of anyone I know, and that includes an acute sense of what wines are right with a dish. Bill did the blood orange sorbet that is mentioned but not written out as a recipe, because fruit sorbets all follow the same pattern. Except this one had to be made just before we had it so it was absolutely fresh. That's the kind of attention to detail they give.

## Stefan

Stefan and Frances (Federer) are glass friends: found through a shared interest is what I mean. She does *verre églomisé* and I edited her book on it and she made me a very luscious mirror as a thank you and *quid pro quo*. I am sure Frances is a good cook too, but it is Stefan who contributed to our book because of the Polish connection.

## Stephen

Stephen Gottlieb, my husband and well-known lute-maker. Appears throughout the book. Incomprehensibly, he died before I had finished the layout. Bone cancer as a secondary to prostate cancer: like his father, but even younger. It is too soon afterwards for me to do more than record it.



## Steven

Steven Dorner, my brother. Child psychologist; now cultural man-about-town, linguistic scholar and copious reader. Appears in various sections of the book.

## Sucre

Joachim's brave restaurant venture in Amsterdam. The chef ran a wonderful desserts class specially for our family in 2010.

## Susanna

Gail Susanna Gladwin, my best friend from Bristol University, civil-partnered to Jess Curtis and both now living in Plymouth. Retired as Senior Lecturer at Middlesex University (aka Muddlesick), where she founded their Writing and Publishing course. More in chapter 6.

## Sylvia

We first met through Sonja and formed a little writing group with others to critique each other's work. One summer, must be 20 years ago, she invited the two of us to her mother's flat in the Algarve: we wrote all morning and sunbathed in the afternoons. She and I went on a memorable trip

to the gently crumbling Palacio de Estoi which made us think of the lost demesne of *Le Grand Meaulnes*.

## Takashi

Takashi Tsunoda and his wife Keiko, and Mutsumi – lutenist and singer; plays one of Stephen's archlutes and baroque lutes – one of which appeared on a Japanese phone card. They used to give a concert in London every other year and he would cook us the most amazing Japanese banquet. When we were in Tokyo, we offered a return match of Western food and came back from sight-seeing so late that the guests were already there and we had to scurry about to get it ready.

## Tina

See Sam.

## Tom

Tom Lyon, with whom Stephen went on holiday to Greece and Turkey back in the 60s. The mothers knew each other and that was how it came about. On the brink of middle age, he and I had a bit of a thing going – flirtatiously pressing on his part, and intellectual fun combined with fine dining on mine. All three of us have eaten together

and talked food together on many an occasion. Sporadically, his wife Judith might join us. Some of the best dinners have been at the magnificent Reform Club, and the very best of all was a tasting menu at Brown's Hotel, just Tom and me, which was seriously out of this world.

### *Vera*

Vera Skaar, née Knight, my second cousin, and Joszi's daughter. Lives in New York State and runs a schoolchildren's holiday exchange with her husband Michael. Her first husband was called Ian and when they got married they decided not to use either of their own surnames and asked my father if he minded if they adopted the name Dorner. It is strange to think there's someone in the world called Ian Dorner, possibly even with Dornlings in the San Francisco area. Vera is facing up to recently diagnosed Parkinson's Disease. Her daughters Samantha & Joelle are not on the tree.

### *Vicki*

Vicki Ambery-Smith, lives in our road and is a fine jeweller – we have several of her architectural earrings and cufflinks – and fellow Brother of the AWG. She and I performed together at one of the musical evenings there with a rendition of Rossini's 'Duetto Buffo di due Gatti' which elicited gratifying laughs. We claimed it was a comment on Grayson Perry's Reith Lectures – though whether because it was playing to the gallery or making a serious comment about art, who's to say. She's made me join a local choir.

### *Vita*

Vita, my daughter, married to Joachim Fleury. Has her own fashion label, and is creative in many different directions – which I understand very well being a bit of a butterfly myself. But the word butterfly in Greek is *psyche*, so being multifaceted is part of our essence, and we should both applaud it. Appears throughout the book.

### *Vivienne*

Vivienne Menkes-Ivry, who ran an editorial agency once many moons ago when I was doing freelance editing. I think I met her in 1969 when I had just left Longman. The first job I did for her was some copy-editing and I didn't do it well. It is to her credit that she rang me up to tell me exactly what I'd missed and to both our credits that I went on working for her agency and that we remained friends. There was a long gap when she went to live in France and got married there: I never met her husband.

We met again through Women in Publishing and picked up again from where we had left off. One memorable time we had together was when I was 'my companion' on a research trip to France in 1995 (also her driver) when she was writing the book *Weekends out of Paris*. A late-night mystical encounter with Chartres Cathedral drifting out-of-sight above us in the October fog is something neither of us will ever forget.

### *Werner*

My uncle, whom I had maybe met six or seven times in my life. Not a contributor, but he is on the family tree and appears in chapter 2. His sisters did not care for him and nor did we.

On the single occasion I took my young family for an evening to his California home, no one was there when we arrived. We walked round the block and, as we came back, there they were unpacking the take-aways they had just bought for supper and inviting us to carry them into the house. There was no furniture in the bedrooms in which their five children had grown up, and we ate our take-aways out of their boxes, perched where we could find a chair or at the edge of the pool that occupied their entire back yard.

### *Zim*

Our beautiful Abyssinian cat. Sometimes, if we are having a roast, he'll be there sniffing into the air on the arm of the sofa next to Stephen's place at the table and looking nonchalantly interested. And I'll say, 'Give him a bit,' and Stephen will say, 'Get him a plate,' so I'll reply, 'He's a cat, what's wrong with the floor'. And they'll both look at me, and I'll get up and get a saucer. We don't do this when we have company unless we know them very well indeed. Andrew Wygard calls him PFC (Paid For Cat) uncomprehendingly, as in Mexico you don't get such pampering – but, he's worth every vet bill.

### *Zizzie*

Zizzie was Patty's mother and something of a character – Patty and I had domineering foreign mothers in common. She was half Danish and half German and mythology had it that she was descended from Queen Victoria on the wrong side of the blanket. This has not been corroborated.

# About the illustrations

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Most of the watercolours have been painted specially for this book, but I have also plundered various scribblings done over the years: the baby books I made for the children; little booklets for odd occasions; thank-you letters; envelopes sent in the post to friends to mark something special (a novel in the one below); some of the painted eggs that capture the essence of the year in which they were painted; a watercolour painted on icing; and cards and menus done over the years. More recently, I was making labels for Anna's Riverford preserves courses in exchange for a free cooking course or two, and my fruit and vegetable collection started with those.

The intention was for the watercolours to create a unity between the disparate recipes, although they too are from different eras and done for varying purposes. Two of them are not by me: the one on page 12, because I could not copy a Renoir, and in any case wanted it recorded just as it was. The other is Stephen's duck egg on page 97. And the banknotes on page 229 are more Photoshopped than painted, but such fun they were to do.

The total number of illustrations is divisible by seven and by the years of our marriage and matches the pagination in a mathematically pleasing way, but in both cases it depends on what is being counted and works if you only count the pages that have print on them and not the blank sides. The distribution of contributors plays a similar (but entirely correct) numerical game.





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## *Books that have inspired some of the recipes*

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