



**EASY
FAMILY FOOD
FOR EVERY
KIND OF DAY**

MARCUS EVERYDAY

MARCUS WAREING

Marcus Wareing

**Marcus Everyday: Easy Family
Food for Every Kind of Day**

«HarperCollins»

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Marcus Everyday: Easy Family Food for Every Kind of Day /
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Create something easy and delicious for all the family, any day of the week. Taking inspiration from Marcus' incomparable cooking career, his childhood experience in his father's fruit and vegetable distribution business, as well as his role as a father of three, Marcus Everyday goes back to his roots, and to the beginning of the journey of a great home cooked dish. The 8 chapters include relaxed Weekday Suppers, the resourceful Garden Patch, quick In the Fridge, delicious Holiday Eats, as well as recipes to rustle up a real treat of a supper when you're Home Alone, cleverly put what's left at the back of your fridge to good use in the Waste Not Want Not chapter, inspirational Home Baking with your children or grandchildren, or catering for the masses in Weekend Dining. There are also tips and tricks to arm anyone with some of the secrets from Marcus's own kitchen, including reimagining familiar ingredients into something magical, while celebrating the process to get there. Maximise flavour, minimise waste, with the added touch of Michelin starred magic from one of Britain's best loved chefs.

MARCUS EVERYDAY

MARCUS WAREING

WITH CHANTELE NICHOLSON

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
SUSAN BELL

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Introduction

Everyday cookery should be just that: something that is achievable on a daily basis and fits in with the busy lives we all lead. This book of recipes for great home cookery will enable anyone to create something delicious and exciting for the whole family, for every occasion.

Each chapter has earned its place in this book and came to mind when I started thinking about how I live my life and how I view food when I'm not being a chef and am in my kitchen at home. It's about my life outside my work, but the inspiration still comes from being a chef – the two are intertwined. This book is divided into eight chapters, which, from my perspective, cover all the

different demands and challenges of everyday cookery and provide a resource for absolutely anyone to create something wonderful in their kitchen. I wanted to explore everything from easy weeknight dinners to ideas for what to eat on holidays, and anything in between.

Home cookery is, and always will be, a way of creating many positive connections through food; from knowing what is in the food on your plate, to minimising what you waste and to the sense of enjoyment gained by knowing that you've created something delicious with your own hands.

In the autumn of 2017 I acquired a property in East Sussex called Melfort House, which has given us an opportunity to spend quality time together as a family all year round, away from the hustle and bustle of London. One of the big pluses for me was the farm and arable land that came with the house: there was an overgrown and unused kitchen garden, a small orchard, some beehives and huge potential for more in terms of what they could produce.

For me, 2018 was a year of discovery. What would grow? Where, and how? What would the yield be? After a huge clearout and clean up, small green shoots were celebrated with a sense of anticipation of what they would grow into. Even though I've been a chef for more than 30 years, this has been the one part of the process I hadn't yet experienced; the growing and harvesting of the produce.



I feel like a child again when I'm there, and the kitchen garden, the bees, the orchard, the apples, the pears ... they all inspire me as a chef. We transported numerous boxes of freshly harvested fruit and vegetables, as well as honey from the beehives, in the back of the car into central London, to the chefs in my kitchens. Their excitement was a joy to see. The logistical challenge of growing, harvesting and then getting produce from Sussex to London was a little trial and error, and we learned a lot in the first year. I'm currently creating a pond at the back of the house, around which we're growing herbs and wild flowers to use in the restaurant. But I have even bigger plans, so watch this space!

I have therefore dedicated a whole chapter to celebrating my first year at Melfort – 'My Garden Patch'. While you may not have your own garden patch, you can source some great produce from farmers' markets, community gardens, and even your local supermarket. Or sign up for online vegetable boxes. We sometimes forget to celebrate the humble vegetable, instead spending time sourcing and investing in a great joint of beef or other meat. I implore you to put the same effort into sourcing good-quality garden produce and use this chapter to inspire you. My kids now know the difference in taste between tomatoes grown under the sun, harvested within their rightful season, and the tomatoes from the supermarket – they're chalk and cheese! But what I've also taught them is how to take those everyday tomatoes we all buy and improve their flavour if we need to.

What you will also see scattered throughout the book is a focus on honey as a fantastic ingredient, used in many different ways. Having comb honey from our own bees at Melfort has made me think about this ingredient in a completely different way and about the flowers (in particular the lavender and roses) they pollinate – all of which flavour our honey. This ingredient that I have always taken for granted as a cook suddenly has magical implications now that I've witnessed its making.

Running a restaurant kitchen from a young age instilled in me an awareness of waste and resourcefulness; of not wanting to needlessly discard a single thing. The cost of food, how you prepare it and how you eventually sell it, can make or break a restaurant business. The notion of throwing something in the bin that could still be used is sacrilege to me. So, for me, this principle should also be applied at home. After *Marcus at Home* and *New Classics* I wanted to write a book that celebrated home cookery and seasonal produce, which would also be a practical guide to creating delicious meals from ingredients that may not have been completely used up, or might otherwise typically be destined for the bin.

We are bombarded with a constant stream of news about environmental issues. The sheer amount of food that we, as a nation, waste on a daily basis is a huge problem. Food gets stacked up in the fridge, then we overbuy – throwing things into our shopping baskets because we think we need it, without necessarily looking in the fridge before we go shopping and planning what we're buying for. It's so easy to buy more than we need, be seduced by 2-for-1 deals and so on. We need to start buying only what we're actually going to eat. Things go off, of course, but having been taught as a young man by my father to appreciate fresh produce, I know how not to take an ingredient for granted as well as how to use it up resourcefully.

The chapter 'Waste Not, Want Not' came about originally because of the sheer volume of some of the Melfort produce (tomatoes, for example) that I could not keep up with, and the recipes that I used to avoid throwing anything away. This chapter provides a framework for how to use what you may have a glut of, but also how to breathe new life into that old potato lying at the bottom of your pantry, or that slightly shrivelled orange in your fruit bowl.

I also felt there was a need for a chapter on cooking solo – 'Home Alone'. Instead of having a cheese sandwich, or ordering a takeout, try these recipes to give yourself a bit of a treat (my favourite is the Sirloin Steak with Brandy Sauce and Crispy Potatoes), and enjoy the silence.

I've included handy methods and tips throughout the book for how to cook ingredients the way that I, as a chef, cook them. It's intuitive for me, but I have realised when cooking at home with my

family and friends that there are certain techniques and procedures that transform a dish from being just okay to being great, such as how to cook a steak, how to make perfect mashed potato, and my foolproof method for cooking omelettes. As well as what to do when things don't quite go to plan ...

Everyone thinks chefs make everything from scratch when they cook at home, but I don't. Like so many, my life doesn't allow me to do that. Instead, I take basic things, like an average shop-bought mayonnaise, which can be a little bland, and make it better. I'll enhance it with garlic, or curry seasoning, or a little bit of saffron or herbs – anything, really. Even gherkins or chillies – it's easy to improve it. I also use stock cubes like salt, as a seasoning, crumbling one over a dish as a flavour enhancer. I still wouldn't ever mess with baked beans, though (apart from maybe adding a bit of HP Sauce).

I've been a cook since I was 14 years old, and ran restaurants as a head chef from the age of 25, so much of my life has been spent in a professional kitchen. This book is about a different style of cooking, and is about me in my everyday life. Some of the recipes will look familiar, but there are little twists, anecdotes, secrets and tips. These are the things that make chefs seem different to everybody else – it might appear that we have a Midas touch, but it's really just layer upon layer of training.

I hope you enjoy cooking the recipes as much as I enjoyed writing them. As I've gone through the process of writing cookbooks, I've been fascinated by the journey; moving forward, rethinking, recreating and reinventing new ideas, which is what I do in my professional kitchen. I want this book to be used by everyone, every single day. Spending your time in the kitchen creatively is an integral part of the process of preparing good food – it's not just about the delicious end result. And these recipes are perfect for that.





My Garden Patch

This chapter is all about my new life at Melfort House. I feel like a young boy when I'm there. I'm finding a new sense of understanding and energy from ingredients I've never used much before – until now my life has always been about professional kitchens. The photographs in this chapter are also special to me – they were taken at the start of the photoshoot, capturing not just the end of summer but the beginning of this book. We were so blessed on that day, with the sunshine and everything jumping out of the ground; we were pulling up beetroots and cabbages, herbs and celery; it was magical. Just don't ask me to choose a favourite dish in this chapter, because I can't!



[Beetroot, Tahini Verde and Sourdough Salad](#)

Beetroot is so versatile, and it grows very easily. I plant a few different varieties, which gives a great variation of sweetness and colour. Tahini verde is a sesame sauce full of garden herbs. It adds a burst of freshness, flavour and richness to the dish. It will keep for a couple of days in the fridge and is wonderful for salads and with fish. If you can't find beetroot with leaves intact, use 50g salad leaves instead.

SERVES: 4 | PREP TIME: ABOUT 25 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: ABOUT 1 HOUR, PLUS COOLING

- 8 large red beetroots, leaves removed, washed and set aside
- 50ml red wine vinegar, plus 1 tbsp
- 2 bay leaves
- 5 cloves

1 tbsp table salt
6 tbsp olive oil
2 candy beetroots, peeled
4 slices of sourdough (about 200g)
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE TAHINI VERDE

100g tahini
2 tbsp chopped tarragon leaves
2 tbsp chopped coriander leaves
2 tbsp chopped mint leaves
2 tbsp chopped basil leaves
½ tsp table salt

1 Put the red beetroots in a saucepan and cover with water. Add the 50ml of red wine vinegar, bay leaves, cloves and the salt. Bring to the boil and cook for about 1 hour, or until just tender. Remove from the heat, drain, leave to cool, then peel and cut each one into 4–6 wedges. Put them in a bowl, drizzle with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

2 Cut the peeled candy beetroots into 1–2mm-thick rounds, using a mandoline if you have one. Set aside.

3 To make the tahini verde, place all of the ingredients in the bowl of a small food processor, or a beaker for a stick blender, add 50ml cold water and blitz together to form a slightly chunky dressing.

4 Mix 3 tablespoons of the olive oil with the tablespoon of red wine vinegar in a bowl to form a vinaigrette, then set aside.

5 Brush the sourdough with the remaining olive oil and break it into chunky croutons. Season with salt and pepper. Heat a large frying pan over high heat, add the croutons and toast for 3–5 minutes.

6 Dress the beetroot leaves and candy beetroot slices with the vinaigrette.

7 Place the cooked beetroot wedges, dressed leaves and raw candy beetroot slices on a serving dish with the sourdough croutons. Dollop the tahini verde on top and serve.

MARCUS' TIP:

I use a lot of bay leaves in my cooking, though they have a pungent flavour so one goes a long way. Plant a bay tree (in the garden or in a pot) – they are very hardy and do not take up much space. This will give you everyday access to the leaves.



Roasted and Pickled Cauliflower Salad with Almonds and Chives

One of the most versatile vegetables around, the humble cauliflower is also a hardy plant (as well as being very attractive to caterpillars, we've found). I like the combination of the nutty, roasted cauliflower in this dish with the sour zing of the pickled cauliflower, which you can prepare up to 12 hours ahead. The toasted almonds also add a richness to the dish and the chives bring a refreshing oniony hit.

SERVES: 4 | PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: 30 MINUTES

2 heads of cauliflower, leaves removed

60g butter, cubed
½ bunch of chives, cut in half
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE PICKLING LIQUOR

2 tbsp demerara sugar
125ml white wine vinegar
2 cloves

FOR THE ALMOND BUTTER

120g flaked almonds
3–5 tbsp olive oil

1 Cut each cauliflower head in half, top to bottom and through the core. Cut 12 thin slices from both the halved (flat) edges, about 3mm in thickness. Cutting through the stem, cut the rest of the cauliflower into florets. Place the thin slices in a large, shallow heatproof dish.

2 To make the pickled cauliflower, put the sugar, vinegar and cloves in a small saucepan, bring to the boil and boil for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and pour the pickling liquor over the thin cauliflower slices. Cover with clingfilm and set aside while you roast the remaining cauliflower and make the almond butter.

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

4 Place the cauliflower florets in a large roasting tray and scatter the cubed butter on top. Season generously with salt and pepper and cover the entire tray with foil. Bake in the oven for 12 minutes, remove the foil and continue to bake for a further 20 minutes, basting the cauliflower with the butter twice during the cooking time, until the cauliflower florets are golden and tender.

5 To make the almond butter, put the flaked almonds in a roasting tray and bake in the oven for 7–8 minutes, until dark golden, shaking the tray halfway through. Remove from the oven, set 20g of the roasted, flaked almonds aside, then put the remaining 100g in a blender with the olive oil and blitz until they reach the consistency of loose nut butter. Season well.

6 When the cauliflower florets are cooked, place them on a large serving platter. Add the chives to the roasting tray and place back in the oven for 1 minute, to gently wilt them, then spoon them over the cauliflower. Drizzle the almond butter over the top and top with the pickled cauliflower slices and reserved toasted almonds.





[Crispy Courgettes with Goats' Cheese and Lavender Honey](#)

Courgettes seem to grow in abundance in my garden, especially in prolonged heat, like we had in summer 2018, when I ended up with quite a few marrows as I didn't pick them soon enough. I enjoy using the plants' flowers too, which I stuff with this goats' cheese mix, coat in batter and fry.

SERVES: 4 AS A STARTER OR SNACK | PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES, PLUS OVERNIGHT INFUSING | COOKING TIME: 25 MINUTES

200g soft goats' cheese
1 tbsp finely chopped marjoram or oregano
grated zest of ½ lemon
4 courgettes, cut into 5mm-thick rounds
vegetable oil, for deep-frying
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE LAVENDER HONEY

6 tbsp runny honey
2 heads of lavender flowers

FOR THE TEMPURA BATTER

100g cornflour
100g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
generous pinch of salt
130–140ml soda water

1 The day before you want to make and serve the dish, place the honey in a small clean jar. Break up the lavender flowers and add them to the honey. Cover and leave in a warm place to infuse.

2 Put the goats' cheese, marjoram or oregano, lemon zest and a pinch each of salt and pepper in a small food processor and blitz (or put them in a bowl and use a stick blender) until semi smooth.

3 To make the tempura batter, mix the cornflour and flour together in a bowl with the salt. Gradually whisk in enough of the soda water to make a thick batter.

4 Pour enough vegetable oil into a deep saucepan or deep-fat fryer to come up to about 5cm and place over medium heat. If using a deep-fat fryer or if you have a thermometer, heat the oil to 170°C. If not, to check the oil is at the right temperature, drop a 2–3cm cube of bread into the hot oil – it should turn golden and crisp in 1 minute.

5 Season the courgette slices with salt then dust them with flour. One by one, dip them in the tempura batter and, straight away, carefully place them in the hot oil. Fry in batches for 3–4 minutes until golden and crisp. Remove with a slotted spoon, shake off any excess oil and transfer to kitchen paper. Season again with salt while they are hot.

6 Place the fried courgettes on a large serving plate and dollop the goats' cheese on top, then drizzle with the lavender honey. Serve immediately, while they are hot and crispy!

MARCUS' TIP:

If goats' cheese is not to your liking, soft cream cheese works well, or mild Cheddar grated and mixed with a little mascarpone.

[Tomato, Wild Garlic and Burrata Salad](#)

Wild garlic grows like a weed in the right environment – it likes a little dampness – and the smell of it always signifies that spring is on the way. It does have a relatively short season, however, and once it's gone, it's gone. When it isn't available, use chives instead. They are a great substitute. Any leftover dressing will keep well in the fridge for up to 2 days.

SERVES: 4 AS A SUMMER LUNCH OR STARTER | PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES

8–12 tomatoes

4 × 100g or 2 × 200g balls of burrata

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE WILD GARLIC DRESSING

2 tbsp pine nuts

16 wild garlic leaves, or 1 bunch of chives

125ml olive oil, plus extra for drizzling

2 tbsp white wine vinegar

1 tsp wholegrain mustard

1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/gas 6.

2 Put the pine nuts on a baking tray and toast them in the oven for 6 minutes, shaking the tray halfway through, then remove from the oven and leave to cool.

3 Put all of the ingredients for the wild garlic dressing in a small blender or food processor and pulse until a chunky dressing is formed. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

4 Cut the tomatoes into slices and wedges, and season well with salt and pepper. Arrange them on serving plates and spoon half of the wild garlic dressing on top.

5 Just before serving, cut the burrata balls in half, if using 100g balls, or into quarters if using 200g balls and place the cut burrata on the plates with the tomatoes. Season the inside of the balls with a little more salt and pepper then spoon over the remaining dressing.

MARCUS' TIP:

Keep tomatoes out of the fridge, until they are becoming overripe, and never serve a cold tomato, as the flavour is dulled.







[Chilled Summer Garden Soup with Lemon and Mackerel](#)

I created this refreshing soup when I had an abundance of beautiful vegetables in my garden, and the weather was very warm, so turning on the oven was not really on the agenda! This recipe features the vegetables I used, but please regard it just as a guide and feel free to use what you have in abundance, or available in your fridge. I use the whole pea pods in this recipe as they contain lots of juice and flavour. The mackerel – a little bit of luxury on the top – is simply cured, so ensure it is as fresh as possible, or use smoked mackerel instead.

SERVES: 4 | PREP TIME: 40 MINUTES

FOR THE SUMMER GARDEN SOUP

16 tender peas in their pods (tops and strings removed) (about 130g)

1 cucumber, skin on, roughly chopped (about 250g)

2 pickled gherkins (40g)

50ml gherkin pickling liquor

100g day-old sliced bread (preferably sourdough), torn

2 courgettes, grated (about 475g)

½ bunch of chives

½ bunch of dill

1 iceberg lettuce, cored and roughly chopped (about 250g)

100g Greek yoghurt

25ml olive oil

8 ice cubes

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE MACKEREL

grated zest and juice of 2 lemons

50ml gherkin pickling liquor

4 mackerel fillets, pin-boned and skin on, cut into 5mm-thick slices

1 Put the peas (including pods), cucumber, gherkins and gherkin pickle liquor in a blender or food processor and blitz until as smooth as possible. Pass through a fine sieve, retaining the liquid. Add the torn bread and leave for 10 minutes.

2 Place the liquid with the bread in the blender or food processor with the remaining ingredients for the soup and blitz until smooth. Season well.

3 For the mackerel, mix the lemon zest and juice into the pickling liquor. Season the mackerel with salt and place in a shallow dish. Pour over the liquid and leave for 10 minutes, then strain off the liquid.

4 Serve the soup in bowls with the mackerel on top.



Asparagus with Bagna Cáuda and Parmesan

The arrival of British asparagus is one of the first signs of spring that I most look forward to, and I like to take advantage of its fleeting season as often as possible. Bagna cáuda originates from Piedmont in Italy and is traditionally a pungent sauce made with anchovies, olive oil and garlic. It pairs so well with the delicate flavour and texture of asparagus. Heaped with freshly shaved Parmesan, it is a dish I can eat over and over again.

SERVES: 4–6 AS A STARTER | PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR

2–3 bunches of asparagus (500–750g), tough ends trimmed

Parmesan, shaved, to serve

FOR THE BAGNA CÁUDA

6 garlic cloves, peeled

2 shallots, peeled and halved

8 good-quality anchovy fillets in oil

150ml olive oil

50g butter

grated zest and juice of 1 lemon

½ tsp Dijon mustard

1 To make the bagna cáuda, place all ingredients in a small saucepan. Place over low heat, bring to a very low simmer and cook uncovered for 1 hour, until the garlic is soft. Remove from the heat and blend until smooth with a stick blender.

2 Remove the woody ends from the asparagus and blanch in a pan of salted water for 3 minutes, then drain.

3 Place the asparagus in a large serving dish, drizzle liberally with the bagna cáuda and top with Parmesan shavings. Serve immediately.

MARCUS' TIP:

If you are not a fan of anchovies, replace them with 8 large pitted Gordal olives, finely chopped.



[Roasted Jerusalem Artichokes with Prunes, Lentils and Sour Cream](#)

Jerusalem artichokes are one of the vegetables that people seem most averse to cooking with at home. This recipe should turn you into an instant fan of this root vegetable – when roasted until dark and crispy, it has a wonderful sweet nuttiness that is rather addictive. We grow them on the farm and I didn't know what they looked like in the ground – they're massive! The prunes add sweetness, the lentils add earthiness and the sour cream brings welcome acidity to this rich dish.

SERVES: 4-6 | PREP TIME: 30 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: ABOUT 1 HOUR

150g puy or green lentils, rinsed

2.5kg Jerusalem artichokes, well scrubbed
4 tbsp vegetable oil
100g pitted prunes
½ tsp ground cinnamon
200ml milk
150g sour cream
½ bunch of coriander leaves, chopped
½ tsp sumac
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 Preheat the oven to 220°C/200°C fan/gas 7 and cook the lentils according to the packet instructions.

2 Place the scrubbed artichokes and vegetable oil in a large roasting tray, toss to coat the artichokes in the oil, and season with salt and pepper. Roast in the oven for 40–50 minutes, depending on the size of the artichokes, stirring them every 10 minutes, until they are dark golden and crispy on the outside and the centres are soft. Remove from the oven and allow to cool slightly, then cut the artichokes in half and place them back in the roasting tray to keep warm, adding a little more salt and pepper.

3 While the artichokes are roasting, put the prunes and cinnamon in a small saucepan. Cover with enough water to just submerge the prunes, add a little salt, bring to a simmer and cook for 10–15 minutes until the prunes have absorbed the water. Transfer the contents of the pan to a blender or food processor and blitz until smooth. Set aside.

4 Take a quarter of the roasted artichokes and place them in a large saucepan with the milk. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat and cook for 10 minutes until the artichokes have absorbed the milk. Transfer to a blender or food processor and blitz until smooth, adding a little more salt if needed.

5 To serve, spoon the warm artichoke purée onto a large serving plate. Top with the warm lentils (reheated if necessary), then the remaining roasted artichokes. Dot the prune purée around and spoon over the sour cream. Finish with the chopped coriander, sprinkle over the sumac and serve immediately.



Carrots with Pine Nuts and Tarragon

Carrots are a vegetable we sometimes take for granted, but they are so full of flavour, colour and texture. Forming the base of any good classic gravy, they add a sweetness unlike most other vegetables. To show them off at their best here, I serve them three ways: roasted, pickled and just lightly seasoned, and make a vinaigrette from the carrot juice. It all adds up to create a very delicious dish. The flavour combination with the tarragon is a simple marriage made in heaven.

SERVES: 4 | PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: 25 MINUTES

12 large or 16 medium bunched carrots, washed, tops removed (a few tops reserved)
2 tbsp vegetable oil

1 star anise
120g pine nuts
2 tbsp picked tarragon leaves
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE PICKLING LIQUOR

100ml white wine vinegar
2 tbsp honey

FOR THE VINAIGRETTE

100ml carrot juice (fresh or shop-bought)
3 coriander seeds
1 tbsp rice wine vinegar
50ml olive oil

1 Preheat the oven to 210°C/190°C fan/gas 7.

2 Cut half of the carrots in half, lengthways. Thinly slice the remaining carrots and put half aside to pickle.

3 To make the pickling liquor, place the vinegar and honey in a small saucepan and bring to a simmer. Put half the sliced carrots in a heatproof bowl, pour the hot pickling liquor over the carrots and set aside.

4 Coat the halved carrots with the vegetable oil and season well with salt, pepper and half of the star anise, grated over the carrots using a Microplane or other fine grater. Place in a roasting tray and roast in the oven for 20–25 minutes until golden, tossing them once halfway through the cooking time.

5 Place the pine nuts on a baking tray and toast in the oven for 8–10 minutes until a deep golden colour, shaking them halfway through. Remove from the oven and set aside 20g for sprinkling over the finished dish and place the rest in a small blender. Season with salt, add 2–4 tablespoons of water and blitz to form a purée – it should have a slightly looser texture than peanut butter. Set aside.

6 To make the vinaigrette, put the carrot juice in a medium saucepan with the coriander seeds and remaining half of the star anise and bring to the boil. Simmer rapidly for a few minutes, until the liquid has reduced to around 25ml, then remove from the heat and strain into a small bowl. Mix in the rice wine vinegar and olive oil, and season with salt.

7 To assemble the dish, place the remaining sliced carrots in a bowl and dress them with the carrot vinaigrette. Spoon the pine nut purée onto 4 plates. Top with the warm roasted carrots, pickled carrots and dressed carrots. Finish with the remaining toasted pine nuts, some reserved carrot tops and the tarragon leaves.



[Parsnip, Rosemary and Horseradish Gratin](#)

This can be a side or a main dish. Gratin is one of the best comfort foods around, and a handy thing to cook given all the preparation can be done in advance of when you need to serve it. You can even bake it a couple of days ahead, then reheat to serve. I like to serve this with roast chicken or braised meat on a cold winter's night.

SERVES: 4 | PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: 1¼ HOURS, PLUS 30 MINUTES INFUSING

225ml single cream

525ml milk
½ onion, thinly sliced
½ nutmeg, finely grated
2 bay leaves
½ bunch of rosemary, leaves stripped
1 tsp table salt
4 tbsp fresh grated horseradish or 4 tbsp horseradish sauce
6 large parsnips, peeled and cut into 5mm-thick slices

1 Put the cream, milk, onion, nutmeg, bay leaves, rosemary leaves and salt in a medium saucepan. Bring to a simmer and cook gently for 15 minutes then remove from the heat and blend using a stick blender until the herbs have broken down. Cover the surface of the mixture with clingfilm and leave to infuse for 30 minutes, then pass it through a fine sieve and retain the liquid. Stir through the grated horseradish or horseradish sauce.

2 Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/gas 6.

3 Place a layer of parsnip slices on the bottom of a 20 × 20cm baking dish, then cover with a little of the milk mixture. Repeat, ensuring the parsnips are fully submerged in the liquid. Cover the entire dish with foil and bake for 25 minutes. Remove the foil and bake for a further 20–25 minutes until a knife inserted into the gratin meets no resistance.

4 Remove from the oven and serve.

MARCUS' TIP:

I prefer a roast dinner with one side done really well, rather than three or four different vegetables on the plate – one great dish like this one that has a bit more effort put into it makes it much more interesting. Nothing wrong with that.

[Celeriac, Ham Hock and Barley Hot Pot](#)

As far as winter warmers go, this one ticks all the boxes. Celeriac is such a versatile ingredient, to serve both raw and cooked. It is a winter staple for me and it pairs well with the salty, rich ham hock in this recipe. Just add some fresh bread and you have a great winter's lunch or supper. Always remember to bring ham hocks to the boil in a pan of water then drain them before cooking, otherwise they will be too salty.

SERVES: 4–6 | PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: ABOUT 3¼ HOURS

1 smoked ham hock (about 1kg)
½ bunch of thyme, tied with string
200g pearl barley, rinsed
100g yellow split peas, rinsed
1 celeriac, peeled and roughly chopped
4 onions, roughly chopped
4 carrots, peeled and roughly chopped
1 leek, rinsed and roughly chopped
½ bunch of flat-leaf parsley, leaves roughly chopped
freshly ground black pepper

1 Place the ham hock in a large saucepan and cover with cold water. Bring to the boil, then drain and rinse the ham under cold running water. Place the ham back in the pan, cover with fresh cold water and add the thyme and a generous grind of black pepper. Place over medium heat, bring to a simmer and cook, uncovered, for 2½ hours, topping up the water to ensure the ham is always submerged.

2 Add the pearl barley and split peas and cook for a further 30 minutes.

3 Check to see if the hock is cooked by putting the handle of a spoon into the flesh: if the handle meets no resistance, the meat is cooked. If the meat doesn't yet yield to the spoon handle, continue to cook it, checking every 15 minutes. Remove the hock, add the remaining ingredients, apart from the parsley, and simmer for a further 30 minutes.

4 Using two forks, remove the skin from the hock, discard it and shred the meat. Return the meat to the pot and simmer gently for 5 minutes. Check the seasoning and adjust if necessary. Remove the bunch of thyme.

5 Finish with the parsley and serve.

Poached Rhubarb and Rhubarb Jelly with Bay Leaf Cream and Shortbread

Rhubarb, jelly and cream. So simple, yet so delicious. The bay leaf infusion in the cream adds a savoury element to the dish which balances the sweetness of the rhubarb and shortbread. During rhubarb season I generally always have some poached in the fridge – it is great to have with cereal for breakfast, to use in baking and also as a simple pudding. Who doesn't like rhubarb and jelly?

SERVES: 6 | PREP TIME: 25 MINUTES, PLUS SETTING AND INFUSING | COOKING TIME: ABOUT 15 MINUTES

200g caster sugar

2 tbsp grenadine

400g rhubarb stalks, trimmed and cut into 4cm lengths

3 gelatine leaves

FOR THE BAY LEAF CREAM

100ml milk

2 bay leaves

300ml double cream

FOR THE SHORTBREAD

70g plain flour

50g cornflour

40g icing sugar, sifted

pinch of sea salt

90g cold diced butter

1 To cook the rhubarb, put the caster sugar and grenadine in a large saucepan. Top up with 500ml water and bring to a simmer over medium heat, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Place the rhubarb pieces in the hot liquid and simmer for 5 minutes, then remove the pan from the heat and allow the rhubarb to continue to cook in the liquid for 10 minutes, as it cools down. Carefully transfer the rhubarb from the liquid into a bowl using a slotted spoon and place in the fridge to cool. Measure out 400ml of the cooking liquor, place it in a medium saucepan and set aside.

2 To make the jelly, soak the 3 gelatine leaves in a bowl of cold water for 5 minutes. Heat the 400ml of rhubarb cooking liquor until it just reaches the boil, then remove the pan from the heat. Squeeze the excess water from the gelatine leaves and stir them into the hot liquid until completely dissolved. Strain the liquid into a clean container lined with baking parchment (around 15cm square), which gives the jelly at least 1cm height, and chill until set. Remove from the container and cut into squares.

3 For the bay leaf cream, heat the milk in a small saucepan. Break up the bay leaves and add them to the milk. Remove from the heat as soon as it reaches the boil. Cover the surface of the milk with clingfilm and set aside to infuse for 20 minutes.

Using a stick blender, blitz the milk to disperse the leaves, strain and place in the fridge to cool. Once cool, mix in the double cream.

4 To make the shortbread, preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/gas 6 and line a baking tray with baking parchment.

5 Put all of the dry ingredients in a food processor and blitz to combine. Add the butter and pulse in short bursts until you have a dough that clumps together in little bits. It may take some time to incorporate the butter into the dry ingredients. Tip onto a clean surface and work together. Place on the lined baking tray and shape into a rectangle about 6mm thick. Bake in the oven for 10–12 minutes until a pale golden colour. Remove from the oven, allow to cool slightly, then break up into pieces.

6 To serve, divide the the cream and rhubarb pieces among 6 bowls. Top with the jelly and shortbread pieces.

MARCUS' TIP:

Make a double batch of shortbread and freeze half of the dough, ready to bake another day.



Strawberry and Mint Eton Mess

Eton mess, said to have originated from Eton when a tray of meringues was dropped on the floor, is a great summer pudding. This is more of a ‘make your own mess’ pudding – the presentation is neat and tidy then you create your own mess by smashing it. All the fun’s inside but you can’t initially see it. The mint gives the dish a freshness which helps cut through the sweetness of the meringue.

SERVES 4 | PREP TIME: 25 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR

350g strawberries, hulled

25ml vodka

2 tbsp strawberry jam

200g double cream, lightly whipped

12 mint leaves, finely sliced

FOR THE MERINGUE

1 lemon wedge

4 egg whites, at room temperature

110g caster sugar

110g icing sugar, sifted

1 Preheat the oven to 120°C/100°C fan/gas ½ and line a large baking sheet with non-stick baking parchment. Draw 4 × 10cm circles on the paper.

2 To make the meringue, rub the lemon wedge around the inside of a clean mixing bowl or the bowl of a stand mixer. Add the egg whites and whisk on high speed until they form stiff peaks. Decrease the mixing speed to medium and gradually add the sugar, whisking continuously. Increase to high speed and whisk for 5–10 minutes until you have a stiff meringue and all grains of sugar have dissolved. Add the icing sugar and whisk until well combined.

3 Place the meringue into a piping bag, and pipe into the centre of each circle on the parchment-lined baking sheet to form a dome. Create 3 more domes.

4 Bake in the oven for 40–50 minutes until crisp on the outside, but still soft in the centre. Turn off the oven and leave the door ajar until the meringues are cool to touch. Very gently, scoop out the soft meringue with a spoon, leaving the shell intact. Set the soft meringue aside.

5 Take 200g of the strawberries and blend together with the vodka. Pass through a fine sieve. Chop the remaining 150g of strawberries and add to the soft meringue. Fold in the strawberry jam, whipped cream and finely sliced mint.

6 Divide the strawberry sauce between 4 bowls then carefully fill the meringue shells with the cream mix. Gently place a meringue in each bowl, on top of the sauce. Allow your guests to then make their own mess by smashing the meringue shell with their spoons!



Gooseberry and Basil Fool

When my dad was a young boy, gooseberries were one of his favourite fruits. Gooseberries tend to grow like weeds, and are a great fruit to just pick and pop in the freezer, whole, to save for a rainy and not so warm day. You can use frozen or tinned berries in this recipe, or try them in a crumble. The addition of basil in this recipe brings a slightly savoury note to the fool and creates an even richer floral aroma. You can make these fools up to a day ahead, if you wish.

SERVES: 4 | PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: 30 MINUTES, PLUS SETTING

- 150g caster sugar
- 400g gooseberries, topped and tailed
- 200ml double cream

FOR THE CUSTARD

- 160ml milk
- 16 large basil leaves
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 tsp custard powder

30g demerara sugar

1 Put the caster sugar in a large saucepan. Add 200ml of warm water and bring to a simmer. Add the gooseberries and simmer gently for 5 minutes, then remove a fifth of the berries and set them aside. Keep cooking the remaining berries for about another 10 minutes until soft. Transfer to a blender or food processor and blitz until smooth.

2 To make the custard, put the milk and half of the basil leaves in a small saucepan and bring just to the boil, stirring frequently.

3 Put the egg yolks, custard powder and sugar in a heatproof bowl and whisk until well combined. Slowly pour in the hot milk mixture, whisking continuously. Return the mixture to the pan and cook over very low heat, stirring constantly, for about 5 minutes or until the custard coats the back of a wooden spoon (take care not to boil the custard as the egg yolks will scramble). Strain through a fine sieve into a clean container, cover the surface of the custard with clingfilm (to avoid a skin forming) and chill in the fridge.

4 Lightly whip the double cream.

5 Once the custard is cold, whisk it well then fold it into the lightly whipped cream. Fold in the gooseberry purée. Thinly slice the remaining basil leaves and fold them through the mix.

6 Divide the fool among 4 glasses. Halve the gooseberries you cooked and set aside, and arrange them on top of the fools. Place in the fridge for at least 1 hour, until set.

Caramelised Honey-roasted Pears with Mascarpone and Filo

One of the wonderful discoveries of Melfort Farm was the honey I inherited. The floral taste is quite remarkable and I found myself wanting to use it in a lot of my cooking. This discovery coincided with the pears ripening too, so it was a no-brainer to combine the two.

SERVES: 4 | PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: ABOUT 30 MINUTES

8 tbsp runny honey

4 ripe (but not too soft) pears, peeled, quartered and cored

6 sprigs of thyme

20g butter, melted

pinch of sea salt

7 sheets of filo pastry

200g mascarpone

100ml double cream

25ml brandy

1 Preheat the oven to 210°C/190°C fan/gas 7.

2 Place the honey in a roasting tray just large enough to fit the pear quarters in a single layer (about 20 × 20cm). Put the dish in the oven for 5 minutes to warm the honey, then add the pear quarters and thyme and return to the oven for 15–20 minutes, until the pears are golden and cooked through. Remove from the oven, carefully lift out the pears and set them aside. Scrape the honey into a bowl, removing the thyme sprigs and set it aside, too.

3 Add 2 tablespoons of the baked honey to the melted butter in a bowl, along with the salt, and mix well.

4 Take one sheet of filo pastry and brush it with the honey butter. Repeat with the remaining sheets and lay them on top of each other. Cut the large rectangle into

8 equal squares and gently scrunch up the edges of each layered piece. Place them on a baking tray and bake for 8–10 minutes until golden and crisp.

5 In a large bowl, whisk the mascarpone until smooth. Add the double cream, brandy and 2 tablespoons of the baked honey and whisk together until stiff.

6 To serve, place 2 pastry pieces on each plate then add the baked pear quarters. Dollop with the mascarpone and drizzle over the remaining baked honey.

MARCUS' TIP:

Filo pastry is a great ingredient to have on hand in the freezer. You can use it for a speedy pie in winter, or for a summer quiche.

Harvest Preservation

When you have an abundance of fruit or vegetables from the garden it is sometimes hard to know what to do with it all if it is too much to get through in your daily meals. Preserving is something we chefs do quite a lot. It's wonderful coming across a little jar of wonder a month or two down the line when the fresh ingredient is no longer available. And preserved foods tend to just get better and better the longer you keep them. They look great on the kitchen shelves, too – just like a good cookbook. The methods of preservation below detail ways to ensure you can maximise the use, and enjoyment, of seasonal produce. It also means a lot less waste, and plenty to look forward to throughout the year.

For any form of preservation, you will need clean, sterilised glass jars, with clean lids. I find the best way to do this is place the clean jars in an oven, at 140°C/120°C fan/gas 1 for 10 minutes. Clean any non-ovenproof lids and rubber seals separately in hot soapy water, then rinse and dry. Remove the jars from the oven and allow to cool slightly before filling and sealing.

The recipes that follow are meant as guidelines so you can adapt them according to what you have a lot of, or flavours you enjoy. Garden herbs, spices and citrus peel are all great things to add to any of the recipes below.

FERMENTING

Fermentation is an age-old preservation method that has had somewhat of a resurgence of late. It's a little more adventurous, and is something everyone should try. It's good for your gut, too. A lot of items we consume daily are actually a product of fermentation, such as cheese and wine. Kimchi is Korean in origin and is a spicy, fermented cabbage. It is great to shred up and use in salads, on burgers, in frittatas and in toasted sandwiches.

Best for fermenting

Cabbage, Cauliflower leaves, Fennel, Lettuce, Kale

Fennel Kimchi

MAKES: AROUND 1KG | PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES, PLUS 2 WEEKS'

FERMENTATION

2 garlic cloves, grated

15cm piece of fresh ginger, peeled and grated

1 tsp demerara sugar

2 tbsp gochujang paste

3 tbsp rice wine vinegar

1 tbsp table salt

3 fennel bulbs (about 900g), cut into 5mm-thick slices

1 Put all of the ingredients, apart from the fennel, in a blender or food processor. Blitz until well combined and a paste has formed.

2 Using gloves, massage the paste into the fennel for at least 4 minutes.

3 Pack the fennel kimchi into sterilised jars and seal with a lid. Leave to ferment at room temperature for at least 2 weeks before eating. The longer you leave

it the more developed the flavour will become. To stop the fermentation, place in the fridge.



PICKLING

Jars of pickled produce not only look beautiful, they are also a very tasty thing to have on hand all year round. Always ensure what you are pickling has been thoroughly washed and that all the pieces are of an equal size. I recommend a minimum pickling time of 14 days, but up to 1 year will yield flavoursome results. Make sure you evenly distribute the bay leaves and peppercorns, and any

other flavourings you use, between the jars. And always ensure the lids are properly sealed, to prevent any spoilage, along with storing the jars in a cool, dark place.

Best for pickling

Cucumber, Beetroot, Cauliflower, Beans, Cabbage, Rhubarb, Carrots

[Pickled Cucumbers](#)

MAKES: AROUND 700G | PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES, PLUS CURING AND PICKLING | COOKING TIME: UNDER 5 MINUTES

2 small cucumbers (about 200g each), washed

4 tbsp rock salt

FOR THE PICKLING LIQUOR

250ml white wine vinegar

55g demerara sugar

½ tsp caraway seeds

6 black peppercorns

6 dill sprigs

1 Cut the cucumbers in half widthways, then each half lengthways into four. Put them in a dish, sprinkle them with the rock salt and leave for 2 hours. Wash off the salt and pack into a sterilised jar.

2 Put all ingredients for pickling liquor, apart from the dill, in a medium saucepan and bring to the boil. Simmer for 2 minutes, to dissolve the sugar, then remove from the heat and add the dill.

3 Pour the hot pickling liquor over the cucumbers and seal with a lid. Leave for at least 2 weeks before eating. They will keep for a good few weeks in the fridge once opened.

JAM-MAKING

I have sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, friends and uncles who all make jam, and everyone makes it completely differently. I wanted to put jams in this book as there is a right way and a wrong way to go about jam-making, and it's all about balance. A big pot of steaming fruit sends delicious aromas throughout the house and is the perfect way to use up overripe fruit. One of the issues we find we have to tackle as parents is the amount of added sugar in shop-bought products. Making your own preserves allows you to control the levels of sugar you add, and thus the end result on your larder shelf. Obviously, fruit that is sourer will need more sugar, but if you combine a few different ones you can get the best of both worlds.

Best for jam

Stone fruit, Berries, Rhubarb, Figs, Quince

[Fig Jam](#)

MAKES: 1.3KG | PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: ABOUT 30 MINUTES

1kg figs, tops of stalks removed, roughly chopped

2 fig leaves, cleaned

500g jam sugar (containing pectin)

1 Put all the ingredients in a large saucepan and stir well to combine. Place over low heat and allow the sugar to dissolve, then increase the heat slightly and bring to a gentle simmer.

2 Once the liquid begins to come out of the figs, turn the heat up a little and stir regularly to prevent the jam catching on the bottom of the pan. Simmer rapidly until the jam reaches 105°. If you don't have a thermometer, use the saucer test:

put a saucer in the freezer, then once it's cold put half a teaspoon of the jam on the saucer. If it does not run, it's ready.

3 Remove the fig leaves, scraping the jam off them and back into the pan, and pour the jam into sterilised jars. Cover with the lids immediately. The unopened jars will keep for up to 12 months, and up to 1 month in the fridge once opened.





CHUTNEY MAKING

We always have chutney in my house, whether it's homemade or shop-bought. It is a staple on cheese sandwiches and a go-to condiment when a little extra flavour is needed.

Best for chutney

Tomatoes, Onions, Stone fruit, Apples, Pears, Rhubarb, Figs

[Apple, Rhubarb and Rosemary Chutney](#)

MAKES: 475G | PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: 40 MINUTES

- 1 onion, cut into 1cm dice
- 2 apples, peeled, cored and cut into 2cm dice (about 400g)
- 4 rhubarb stalks, cut into 2cm pieces (about 250g)
- 4 sprigs of rosemary, tied together with string
- 150ml white wine vinegar
- 100g dried, pitted dates, finely chopped

1 Put all the ingredients in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a simmer and cook gently for 30–40 minutes until sticky and shiny.

2 Remove the rosemary sprigs, pour into sterilised jars and seal. The unopened jars will keep for up to 12 months, and up to 1 month in the fridge once opened.





Weekday Suppers

Weekday meals are some of the toughest to get inspired for. They're the ones we don't think about until we get home or call for a takeout. Or we eat something quick and rubbish because we just don't have time to prep a meal. We're all working incredibly hard, and we also have to fit in travel, family and down time, so making food can quickly become a chore. These simplified dishes are really easy to make, and they offer great nutritional value, too. Don't overthink it and don't worry about it.



Beetroot, Wasabi, Feta and Pine Nut Salad

This dish makes a great summer, or early autumn, meal. It is delicious and also surprisingly filling, with the chickpeas, feta and pine nuts all playing a part. The wasabi is there to season the dish, not to overpower it. So even if you are not a fan, do try it!

SERVES 4 | PREP TIME: 25 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR

100g pine nuts

500g cooked beetroot

100g tinned chickpeas, drained, rinsed and roughly chopped

100g lamb's lettuce

200g feta

2 slices of sourdough (about 100g), gently toasted then torn
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE DRESSING

½ tsp wasabi paste

50ml olive oil

1 tbsp rice wine vinegar

1 Preheat the oven to 210°C/190°C fan/gas 7.

2 Place the pine nuts on a baking tray and toast in the oven for 8–10 minutes, shaking halfway through, until a deep golden colour.

3 Slice the beetroot into large chunks and lay them on a platter. Scatter the chopped chickpeas on top, followed by the lamb's lettuce. Crumble the feta on top, then add the pine nuts and a generous grind of black pepper. Finish with the torn sourdough pieces.

4 For the dressing, whisk everything together in a bowl, season with salt, then drizzle over the top of the salad. Serve immediately.



Field Mushroom, Walnut and Thyme Filo Pie

I'm from the North and two things I really love are pies and mushrooms. This is rich, satisfying and a total winner, providing a delicious weekday supper or weekend lunch. It's technically a little challenging, but once you've got the hang of it, it's simple to put together. In summer, a side of chargrilled broccoli makes a great accompaniment, and in winter I like it with kale sautéed in a little butter and soy sauce.

SERVES: 4-6 | PREP TIME: 25 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: 55 MINUTES

100g puy lentils
70g butter

2 onions, thinly sliced
1 garlic clove, finely grated
½ bunch of thyme, ⅔ of it tied together with string, the remaining third's leaves picked
8 large field (or flat) mushrooms, thinly sliced
100g walnuts
1 tbsp vegetable oil
100g cream cheese
2 tbsp milk
50g Cheddar cheese, grated
7 large sheets of filo pastry
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 Cook the lentils according to the packet instructions.

2 Melt 15g of the butter in a large frying pan over medium heat, add the onions, garlic, tied thyme and season well with salt and pepper. Cook for about 15 minutes until lightly browned, then transfer to a large bowl. Heat another 15g of the butter in the same frying pan, with the bunch of tied thyme, and when the butter has melted, add the mushrooms and season well with salt. Cook for about 15 minutes, until all of the liquid has evaporated. Transfer the cooked mushrooms to the bowl containing the onions. Squeeze any liquid out of the bunch of thyme into the bowl then discard.

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

4 Put the walnut pieces in a roasting dish with the vegetable oil. Season well with salt, toss to coat in the oil and toast in the oven for 5–7 minutes until a deep golden colour. Remove from the oven, leave to cool then roughly chop.

5 Add the walnuts, lentils and thyme leaves to the large bowl. Mix well. In a separate bowl, whisk the cream cheese and milk together until smooth. Add to the large bowl, along with the grated Cheddar, and mix well.

6 Melt the remaining 40g of butter in a pan. Brush a 23cm pie dish with a little butter. Lay one sheet of pastry on your work surface, brush liberally with melted butter and place in the dish. Brush a second piece of filo with butter then add in an overlapping criss-cross pattern. Continue with 2 more buttered sheets to create a star shape. Add the mushroom mixture and smooth the surface. Brush the remaining 3 filo sheets with butter, then scrunch up and place on top of the pie. Bake in the oven for 20–25 minutes, until the pastry is golden and the mushroom mix is lightly bubbling.

7 Remove from the oven and serve warm with your chosen side dish.



Roasted Cauliflower and Walnut Tagliatelle

Well-roasted cauliflower has the most delicious, nutty flavour. I always find that home cooks do not roast it for long enough, thus missing out on the best flavour from it. This recipe combines a roasted cauliflower purée to create the sauce, with roasted florets and crunchy, toasted walnuts.

SERVES: 4 | PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: ABOUT 50 MINUTES

1 large cauliflower, leaves removed, broken into florets

50g butter, cubed

100g walnut pieces

1 tbsp vegetable oil

150ml milk
150ml good-quality vegetable stock
350g tagliatelle
200g cavolo nero, roughly chopped
¼ bunch of flat-leaf parsley, leaves chopped
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 Preheat the oven to 230°C/210°C fan/gas 8.

2 Place the cauliflower florets in a roasting dish with the cubed butter. Season well with salt and pepper and bake in the oven for 6 minutes. Stir well, to coat the cauliflower in the butter, and cook for a further 20 minutes, stirring again after 10 minutes. The cauliflower should be a dark golden brown by this point. If it's not, return it to the oven for a further 5 minutes.

3 While the cauliflower is roasting, put the walnut pieces in another roasting dish with the vegetable oil. Season well with salt, toss to coat in the oil and toast in the oven for 5–7 minutes until a deep golden colour. Remove from the oven, leave to cool then roughly chop.

4 Pour the milk and stock into a medium saucepan and bring to the boil. Add a third of the toasted walnuts and simmer for 5 minutes, then add a third of the roasted cauliflower florets and simmer for a further 5 minutes. Remove from the heat, transfer to a blender or food processor and blitz until silky smooth. Taste, and add more salt if necessary.

5 Bring a medium-large saucepan of salted water to the boil. Cook the tagliatelle according to the packet instructions, adding the cavolo nero for the last minute of cooking. Drain, reserving a little of the pasta water.

6 Mix the tagliatelle and cavolo nero with the roasted cauliflower and walnut sauce. Add a little pasta water to your sauce to loosen it a little if desired. Stir through the remaining roasted cauliflower and toasted nuts and parsley and serve.



Chargrilled Mackerel, Pickled Onions and Salsa Verde

There is not much that beats freshly caught mackerel that has been lightly chargrilled on the barbecue or on a griddle pan. The quick pickled onions are a great, speedy, addition to the dish, giving it extra texture and acidity, and will keep happily in the fridge for up to 2 weeks. I like to serve the mackerel with some steamed new potatoes and a peppery rocket salad.

**SERVES: 4 | PREP TIME: ABOUT 15 MINUTES, PLUS SOAKING AND PICKLING
| COOKING TIME: 5–10 MINUTES**

1 tbsp vegetable oil

8 mackerel fillets, pin-boned, skin scored

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE QUICK PICKLED ONIONS

2 small red onions, sliced into 3mm-thick rings

100ml pickled gherkin liquid

2 tbsp caper brine

100ml white wine vinegar

4 tbsp honey

1 tbsp onion seeds

FOR THE SALSA VERDE

2 heaped tbsp finely chopped tarragon leaves

¼ bunch of flat-leaf parsley, leaves picked

20g drained capers in brine

grated zest and juice of 1 lemon

125ml extra virgin olive oil

1 To make the pickled onions, separate the onion rings from each other and place them in a bowl of cold water. Leave to soak for 10 minutes, then drain and transfer to a shallow heatproof dish. Place all other ingredients for the pickled onions in a small saucepan and bring to the boil. Pour the hot pickle mix over the onions and cover the dish with clingfilm. Set aside.

2 To make the salsa verde, put all the ingredients in a mini food processor or blender and pulse until you have a chunky sauce. Add salt to taste and set aside.

3 If using a barbecue, preheat it until hot. If using a griddle pan, place it over high heat until almost smoking. Brush the vegetable oil onto the mackerel fillets, on both sides. Season the skin side with salt and pepper and place on the hot barbecue or griddle, skin-side down, for 2 minutes (in batches if you're using a griddle pan). Season the flesh side then carefully turn the fillets over and cook for a further 2–3 minutes.

4 Serve immediately, with a good dollop of the salsa verde and the pickled onions.

MARCUS' TIP:

Salsa verde literally translates as 'green sauce'. This is the traditional Italian version, but you can use the same quantities of different herbs, such as coriander, mint or lemon balm, to create delicious sauces depending upon what's in your fridge or herb pots.



[Green Chilli Salsa Cod with Roast Potato and Almond Salad](#)

Weekday suppers are all about meals that are delicious, but time friendly. In some ways, these ingredients shouldn't go together – cod is classically English, roast potatoes too, but then the salsa and the almond salad hail from somewhere quite different – but it's my job to be daring. Cod is a meaty fish and can carry all of those elements brilliantly, working a treat with the salsa, which brings a lovely, spicy freshness to this rich dish, balancing it well.

SERVES: 4 | PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: 35 MINUTES

2 tbsp olive oil

4 skinless cod fillets (about 150g each)

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE GREEN CHILLI SALSA

grated zest and juice of 1 lime

1 garlic clove, finely grated

1 small green chilli, deseeded and roughly chopped

2 tbsp rice wine vinegar

2 tbsp chopped coriander leaves, plus 2 tbsp for the potato salad

2 tbsp chopped mint leaves

60ml olive oil

FOR THE ROAST POTATO AND ALMOND SALAD

500g small potatoes, scrubbed

4 tbsp olive oil

100g almonds

75g good-quality mayonnaise

1 Preheat the oven to 210°C/190°C fan/gas 7.

2 First, cook the potatoes. Toss them in the olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Place in a large roasting tray and bake in the oven for 25 minutes. Add the almonds and bake for a further 8–10 minutes, until the potatoes are cooked and the almonds are toasted.

3 To make the salsa, blend all the ingredients together in a small food processor, or in a jug or bowl with a stick blender, until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

4 Heat the 2 tablespoons of olive oil for the fish in a large non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Season the cod fillets with salt and pepper on each side then place them in the hot oil. Cook for 3–4 minutes until golden brown, then gently flip them over and cook for a further 3–4 minutes to brown the other side, until the fish is cooked through. Remove the pan from the heat and add the green chilli salsa to the pan, spooning it over the fish. Leave to rest for 2 minutes.

5 To serve, mix the 2 tablespoons of coriander for the salad into the mayonnaise along with 2 tablespoons of cold water to thin it down to drizzling consistency. Roughly chop the almonds. Combine the warm roasted potatoes with the chopped, roasted almonds, place on a large serving dish and drizzle with the mayonnaise. Finish with a generous twist of black pepper.

6 Serve the salad immediately, alongside the fish.



Baked Haddock with Lentils, Basil and Mascarpone

This dish is a comforting one-pot wonder, as well as being extremely easy to make. Just serve it with some green vegetables on the side, such as broccoli or kale, and you have a complete meal ready to go. You can use cod or hake instead of haddock, too – whichever is available to you (it's useful to keep fish fillets in the freezer for dishes like this). You can also use pre-cooked lentils.

SERVES: 4 | PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: 50 MINUTES

4 skinless, boneless haddock fillets (about 150g each)

4 tbsp rock salt

2 tbsp vegetable oil

2 onions, thinly sliced
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 tsp sweet smoked paprika
2 tbsp tomato purée
250ml tomato juice
600ml good-quality chicken or vegetable stock
250g puy lentils, well rinsed
1 tbsp olive oil
100g mascarpone
2 tbsp milk
grated zest of ½ lemon
½ bunch of basil, leaves picked
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 Cover the haddock fillets with the rock salt and refrigerate for 10 minutes, then rinse the salt off under cold running water and pat the fish dry with kitchen paper. Set aside.

2 Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/gas 6.

3 Heat the vegetable oil in a large casserole dish over medium heat. Add the sliced onions, season well with salt and pepper and cook for about 10 minutes, until soft, then add the garlic and cook for a further 3 minutes. Stir in the smoked paprika, followed by the tomato purée. Cook for 1 minute, then mix in the tomato juice and stock. Season again with salt and pepper and bring to the boil. Add the lentils, mix well, cover the casserole dish with a lid, or foil, and place in the oven for 20 minutes, stirring after 10 minutes.

4 Remove the casserole from the oven. Remove the lid or foil and place the salted haddock fillets into the lentils, pressing them down with a spoon so they are almost submerged. Drizzle the olive oil on top of the fillets. Pop the lid, or foil, back on top and return the casserole to the oven for 10 minutes. Remove from the oven and leave to rest for a further 5 minutes, covered, until the fish has cooked through.

5 Place the mascarpone in a bowl with the milk, lemon zest and a pinch each of salt and pepper and whisk until smooth. Dollop on top of the fish and lentils. Pop the casserole back in the oven for 2 minutes then serve, sprinkled with the basil leaves.

MARCUS' TIP:

Salting white fish with rock salt seasons the fish right the way through, while also removing some of the water content. Leave the salt on the fish for maximum 10 minutes, before rinsing it off (5 minutes for thinner fish).



Thai Chicken Salad

I am sure everyone has their own version of their favourite Thai chicken salad. This is mine. I really enjoy the freshness of the lime and coriander, and the savoury richness that the toasted peanuts add. My kids love the noodles, but not too much heat, so I tend to scatter extra chilli on top of mine after serving. To maximise the flavour, I suggest marinating the chicken breasts the night before, though you can skip this step (or marinate for a shorter time) if you're in a hurry.

SERVES: 4 | PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES, PLUS MARINATING | COOKING TIME: 15 MINUTES, PLUS RESTING

3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts

100g unsalted peanuts, roughly chopped
200g rice noodles
2 medium carrots, peeled and cut into thin strips
1 cucumber, cut into thin strips
200g beansprouts
½ bunch of coriander, leaves picked
¼ bunch of mint, leaves picked
red chillies, sliced, to serve (optional)

FOR THE MARINADE

4 tbsp coconut cream
1 tsp red curry paste
1 tsp white miso paste

FOR THE DRESSING

100ml rice wine vinegar
25g palm sugar, grated, or soft brown sugar
50ml fish sauce
100ml toasted sesame oil
2 tbsp tamarind paste
2 lemongrass stalks, tough outer layers removed, inner layers grated with a fine or Microplane grater
4cm piece of fresh ginger, peeled and grated with a fine or Microplane grater
2 tbsp peanut butter
grated zest and juice of 1 lime

1 Whisk together the marinade ingredients in a small bowl. Put the chicken breasts in a dish, coat them in the marinade and refrigerate for at least an hour (ideally overnight).

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

3 Lay a sheet of foil on your work surface. Place the marinated chicken on top then gather the foil around it. Place the foil package on a baking tray and bake in the oven for 15 minutes. Put the peanuts on a separate baking tray and roast in the oven for 5–7 minutes. Remove the nuts and chicken and allow the chicken to cool in the foil for 20 minutes, then unwrap and slice.

4 Place the rice noodles in a large heatproof bowl and bring a kettleful of water to the boil. Cover the noodles in the boiling water and leave to sit for 10 minutes.

5 Blitz all the dressing ingredients together in a blender, or in a jug using a stick blender.

6 Drain the noodles and place them in a large bowl. Add the carrots, cucumber and beansprouts and mix well. Arrange on a large serving platter then top with the chicken and the dressing. Finish with the coriander, mint and peanuts (and sliced chillies, to taste, if using).

MARCUS' TIP:

Make a double batch of the dressing and keep it in a jar in the fridge for up to 2 days. It is great to have on hand for coleslaw or a quick vegetable stir-fry.



[Chicken, Leek and Wholegrain Mustard Potato Pie](#)

This is a great dish when you need something substantial and warming for supper during the week. Use leftover cooked chicken from a Sunday roast instead of the chicken legs, if you've got it. The mashed potato and mustard sauce can be made ahead, and it can be assembled in advance, too. See [my mashed potato masterclass](#) for the ultimate pie topping.

SERVES: 4–6 | PREP TIME: 25 MINUTES, PLUS COOLING | COOKING TIME: 50 MINUTES

4 chicken legs, or 4 ready-roasted chicken legs

2 tbsp butter (plus an extra 2 tbsp if using uncooked chicken)

4 leeks, thinly sliced into 5mm-thick rounds and rinsed
100ml good-quality chicken stock
100g Cheddar cheese, grated (optional)
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE MASHED POTATO

400g King Edward potatoes (or other floury variety), peeled and cut into large equal-sized chunks

50g butter, melted
75–100ml warm milk
pinch of table salt
2 egg yolks

FOR THE WHOLEGRAIN MUSTARD SAUCE

60g butter
60g plain flour
300ml milk
200ml good-quality chicken stock
1 tbsp Dijon mustard
2 tbsp wholegrain mustard

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

2 If using uncooked chicken legs, lay a sheet of foil on your work surface. Place the chicken legs, 2 tablespoons of the butter and a generous pinch of salt and pepper on top then gather the foil around it. Place the package on a baking tray and bake for 25–30 minutes. Remove from the oven and allow to cool in the foil for 20 minutes, then unwrap and roughly shred the chicken, discarding the bones and skin. If you are using ready-roasted chicken legs, do the same with those.

3 Melt the remaining butter in a large frying pan, add the leeks, season generously with salt and pepper and cook for about 5 minutes over medium heat until they start to wilt, then add the chicken stock and simmer for 3–4 minutes until the leeks are almost cooked through.

4 Put the potatoes for the mash in a saucepan of salted water and bring to the boil. Simmer for around 20 minutes, until tender, then drain well, return to the pan off the heat and mash with the melted butter and milk until smooth. Add the table salt and egg yolks and mix well.

5 To make the wholegrain mustard sauce, melt the butter in a medium saucepan and when it starts bubbling whisk in the flour. Cook for 30 seconds, stirring, then gradually whisk in the milk and stock, a little at a time. When all the milk and stock have been added, bring the sauce to a gentle simmer and cook for 5 minutes, whisking regularly to prevent it catching on the bottom of the pan. Remove from the heat, add both mustards and season with sea salt. Add the chicken and leeks and mix well.

6 Pour the chicken and leek mix into a casserole dish or deep pie dish (about 26cm). Top with the mashed potato, smoothing it over, then fluff up the surface with a fork, and sprinkle over the grated cheese (if using). Bake in the oven for 15–20 minutes until lightly golden on top and bubbling, remove from the oven and serve.

[Chicken, Split Pea and Kale Curry](#)

There often seems to be a jar of split peas lurking in the back of store cupboards, and this is a great recipe to get the most out of them. They add a lovely richness to this nutritious curry, and also help bulk it out. I prefer to use chicken legs or thighs in a curry, rather than chicken breast, as

the fat content makes them a bit more flavoursome, and stops them drying out as chicken breasts can tend to do.

SERVES: 4 | PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: 55 MINUTES

4 tbsp vegetable oil
4 boneless, skinless chicken thighs, diced into large chunks
200g kale, thick stems removed and leaves roughly chopped
180g yellow split peas, rinsed well under cold running water
1 × 400ml tin coconut milk
sea salt
steamed rice, to serve

FOR THE SPICE BASE

2 onions, halved and sliced
3 garlic cloves, peeled and finely grated (use a Microplane if you have one)
4cm piece of fresh ginger, peeled and finely grated (use a Microplane if you have one)
8cm piece of fresh turmeric, peeled and finely grated (or 1 tbsp ground turmeric)
1 green chilli, finely diced
2 bay leaves
12 green cardamom pods, bashed well
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 tbsp cumin seeds
1 tbsp black mustard seeds

1 Heat half the vegetable oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Season the chicken pieces with salt and pepper then fry them in the hot oil for around 5 minutes. Once browned, but not cooked through, remove them from the pan and set aside. Return the pan to the heat and turn the heat up to high. Add the kale and fry for 3–4 minutes until browned, then set aside.

2 Heat the remaining vegetable oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add all the ingredients for the spice base, season with a little salt and cook for 5 minutes, until fragrant.

3 Add 300ml warm water and the split peas, stirring well. Cover with a lid and simmer gently over low heat for 20 minutes, stirring regularly.

4 Mix in the coconut milk then add the browned chicken and simmer for a further 15 minutes, covered.

5 Mix in the kale and cook for a further 5 minutes, covered.

6 Remove from the heat, discard the cardamom pods and bay leaves and serve with steamed rice.

[Hasselback Potatoes with Red Wine and Pork Ragu](#)

Hasselback potatoes are a firm everyday favourite in my household. They are pretty quick to prepare, and they are delicious – crispy on the outside and soft in the centre. They go very well with this pork ragu, which can be made ahead and chilled or frozen. The ragu can also be used as a very tasty pasta sauce, or in a lasagne, ready for a speedy midweek meal.

SERVES: 4 | PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: ABOUT 1½ HOURS

850g small–medium baking potatoes
40g butter, melted
100g Cheddar cheese, grated

FOR THE RAGU

1 tbsp vegetable oil
300g minced pork

6 smoked bacon rashers, finely chopped
1 onion, chopped
1 garlic clove, finely grated
2 carrots, finely diced
300ml red wine
1 × 400g tin chopped tomatoes
2 tbsp tomato purée
1 tbsp sweet smoked paprika
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
1 tbsp Dijon mustard
200ml good-quality beef or chicken stock
1 bay leaf
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 To make the ragu, heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the minced pork and bacon and fry for 7–9 minutes, until brown all over, breaking up any clumps of meat with a wooden spoon. Stir in the onion, garlic and carrots and continue to fry for another 10 minutes until the onion softens. Season with salt and pepper, pour in the wine and bring to the boil, to allow the wine to reduce completely. Stir in the tomatoes, tomato purée, smoked paprika, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, stock and bay leaf. Bring to a simmer, cover and cook gently over low heat for up to 1 hour. Once cooked, remove from the heat, taste and add a little more seasoning if you like, and remove the bay leaf.

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