



Welcome!

For me, cooking is all about using the best local, seasonal and Irish food.

Tonight's recipes are a selection from some of my most popular cookery school courses "Entertaining Made Easy" and "Nations Favourite Food Healthy". I hope you enjoy the dishes I cook tonight and that you will try them at home. You may be lucky enough to win them tonight!

If you have any questions about food please come up and ask me or my team. Thank you again for coming and let's have a fun evening.



Butter Bean and Bacon Soup

Ingredients

450g (1lb) carrots, diced
1 onion, diced
50g (2oz) rindless smoked
streaky bacon, diced
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 tsp freshly grated root ginger
1 tbsp mild curry powder
1 tsp ground turmeric

1 tbsp Donegal rapeseed oil

1 x 400g (14oz) can of butter beans, drained and rinsed

1.2 litres (2 pints) vegetable stock

200ml (7floz) Avonmore semi-skimmed milk

1 tbsp tomato purée

1 tbsp chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Method

Heat the rapeseed oil in a pan over a medium heat. Sauté the carrots, onion, bacon, garlic and ginger for 10 minutes, until softened and just beginning to catch a little colour. Tip in the curry powder and turmeric and cook for another 2 minutes, stirring.

Stir in the beans, stock, milk and tomato purée. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 15-20 minutes, until the carrots are completely tender.

Season to taste and stir in the parsley, then remove a ladleful of the chunky ingredients to reserve as a garnish, if liked. Blitz the rest of the soup with a hand blender until smooth. Ladle into warmed bowls and add a spoonful of the reserved ingredients to serve.



Fragrant Pork and Sweet Potato Thai Red Curry

Ingredients

3 tbsp Thai red curry paste

1 tbsp finely grated fresh root ginger

2 garlic cloves, crushed

1 quality assured large pork fillet, trimmed and thinly sliced

4 kaffir lime leaves, halved

400g can coconut milk

500ml (18fl oz) chicken stock

2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed

1 tbsp lime juice

1 tbsp Thai fish sauce (nam pla)

1 tsp palm sugar

1 tbsp chopped Thai holy basil

1 tbsp chopped fresh mint

1 tbsp chopped fresh coriander

2 spring onions, trimmed and sliced

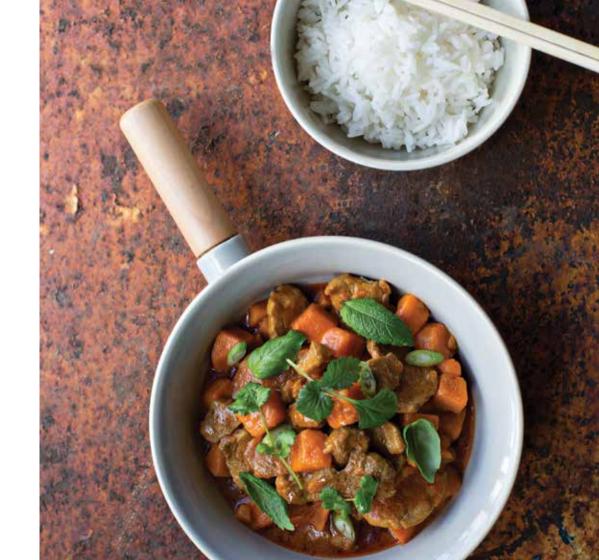
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Thai fragrant rice, to serve

Method

Heat a large non-stick pan or wok over a medium heat. Add the curry paste, cook for 1 minute. Add the ginger, garlic and pork and sauté for 5 minutes. Stir in the lime leaves, coconut milk and stock and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes.

Add the sweet potatoes to the coconut and pork mixture and continue to simmer for another 15 minutes until the pork and sweet potatoes are cooked through and tender. Stir through the lime juice, fish sauce and palm sugar. Finally stir in the basil and mint. Spoon the curry into deep bowls and scatter the coriander and spring onions on top. Serve with separate small bowls of the steamed rice.



Crispy Salmon with Pomegranate and Watercress Couscous

This is a super-healthy dish packed full of omega-3. Sumac is made from the dried berries of a flowering plant that are ground to produce an acidic, reddishpurple powder that is very popular in the Middle East. You'll find it in places like Fallon & Byrne in Dublin or ask a good local deli if they stock it.

Ingredients

250g (9oz) couscous

2 tbsp lemon Donegal rapeseed oil, plus a little extra, if liked

500ml (18fl oz) boiling water 75g (3oz) rice flour

1 tbsp sumac, plus a little extra to garnish

150g (5oz) organic salmon fillets, pin-boned and skinned

75g (3oz) toasted pumpkin seeds

2 tbsp flax seeds

Finely grated rind of 1 lemon 2 large handfuls of watercress

1 small pomegranate, halved and seeds removed (skin discarded)

Lemon wedges, to garnish

Harissa Yoghurt:

2 heaped tbsp. thick Greek yoghurt

2 tsp harissa paste

Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Method

Place the couscous in a heatproof bowl and season well, then stir in 1 teaspoon of the oil. Pour over the boiling water, cover tightly with cling film and set aside.

Heat the rest of the oil in a large non-stick frying pan over a medium to high heat. Put the rice flour in a shallow dish with the sumac and season generously with salt and pepper. Dust the salmon in the flour mixture, shaking off any excess. Add to the heated oil in the frying pan and cook for 2-3 minutes on each side, until crisp and golden.

Meanwhile, fluff up the couscous with a fork, then fold in the pumpkin seeds and flaxseeds with the lemon rind. At the last moment, roughly chop the watercress and toss it through the couscous with the pomegranate seeds.

Mix the yoghurt and harissa together in a small bowl and season to taste. Cover with cling film and chill until needed.

Arrange the crispy salmon on plates and add an extra light sprinkling of sumac. Add a small mound of the couscous, then drizzle over a little extra oil, if liked. Garnish with lemon wedges and add a spoonful of the harissa yoghurt to serve.



Coffee Cake With Mixed Toffee Nuts

Ingredients

150 g (5oz) butter, softened, plus extra for greasing

100g (4oz) coconut sugar

1 tsp vanilla extract

1 egg

1 egg yolk

150g (5oz) plain flour, sifted

1 tsp baking powder

1 tbsp instant coffee

1 tsp hot water

5 tbsp milk

Toffee Nuts:

50g (2oz) coconut sugar

50g (2oz) honey

50ml (2fl oz) water

2 tsp softened butter

75g (3oz) toasted mixed nuts (flaked almonds, walnuts and pecans)

Method

Preheat the oven to 160°C (325°F/gas mark 3). Lightly grease a 23cm (9in) loose-bottomed cake tin and line with parchment paper.

Place the butter, coconut sugar and vanilla extract in a bowl. Using a standalone electric mixer, beat for 5 minutes, until light and creamy. Add the egg and egg yolk and beat well, until combined. Add the flour and baking powder and beat again until combined. Place the instant coffee and hot water in a cup and mix well, until the coffee has dissolved. Add the coffee and milk to the butter mixture and fold it through using a large metal spoon. Spoon the mixture into the prepared cake tin.

Bake for 30 minutes, until cooked through when tested with a skewer. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack and leave to cool completely. When cold, unmould onto a cake stand or plate and set aside.

Meanwhile, to make the toffee nuts, place the coconut sugar, honey and water in a small pan over a medium heat. Cook for 6-8 minutes, without stirring, until golden brown and slightly thickened. Add the butter and another 2 tablespoons of water. Cook for 3 minutes more, then add the mixed nuts and stir well until they are all evenly coated. Spoon immediately over the cake and serve straight to the table.



Nutty Energy Bites

Makes 25

Ingredients

100g flaked or blanched almonds

50g Brazil nuts

50g cashew nuts

3 tbsp pumpkin seeds

50g dried cranberries, very finely chopped

100g desiccated coconut pinch of sea salt

4 tbsp honey

1 tsp vanilla extract

4 tbsp peanut butter (no added sugar or salt)

4 tbsp coconut oil

Method

Place the Brazil nuts in a food processor with the cashew nuts, almonds and pumpkin seeds and then pulse until finely chopped (but do not pulse too long, you do not want the nuts to turn to a paste). Tip them into a bowl and stir in the cranberries berries with half of the desiccated coconut and a pinch of sea salt.

Melt the coconut oil in a pan and once it is melted remove from the heat, then stir in the honey, vanilla extract and peanut butter. Mix well in the pan using a whisk or a fork. Pour this over the nut mixture and stir together until it is all evenly combined.

Leave to harden in the fridge for 1-2 hours.

Transfer to a 20cm parchment lined baking tin or use a small ice cream scoop to shape into balls. Sprinkle over the remaining desiccated coconut or roll each ball in it. Place back in the fridge for 2-3 hours to firm up, then cut into squares if you put them into a baking tin; either way serve straight from the fridge.





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