



Autumn Bhel Puri
With curried apple bhaji

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Minestrone

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Aduki bean and pumpkin stew
With miso and spring onions

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Harvest wheat sheath

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Warm butternut, beetroot and feta salad
With basil and lemon dressing

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Courgette and hazelnut pinwheels

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Apple glazed tempeh

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Perry and pepper spiked apple fritters
With butterbean mayonnaise

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Almond clafoutis
With caramelized apple

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Autumn Bhel Puri

With curried apple bhaji

Bhel Puri is a popular street snack found throughout India. It is based around puffed rice mixed with seasonal vegetables and cooked pulses dressed with a tangy sauce. Improvise with the ingredients and adjust the spices and chilli to your palate. The apple bhaji is not traditional, but it is delicious. The combination of sweet and tart apples with, the puffed grain, veggies and pungent spices makes for a delicious dish. Prep the parts in advance, but assemble just before serving or it goes soggy!

For the apple bhaji:

- 2 sweet eating apples, peeled, cored and cubed
- 2 tart cooking apples, peeled, cored and cubed
- 1 onion, sliced very fine
- 1 tsp green chillies, minced
- 1 tsp mustard seeds
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp ginger, minced
- ½ tsp turmeric
- 2 tbsp sunflower oil or gee
- 6 curry leaves

1. Heat oil or gee in a large pan over a medium heat. Add mustard seeds, when they start to pop, add the cumin seeds, curry leaves, green chillies, ginger and onions and sauté till the onions just start to turn brown.
2. Add the diced apples and turmeric and mix vigorously.
3. Add 2 tbsp of water, cover and cook on low heat for few minutes and add salt to taste.

For the Bhel Puri

- 2 cups puffed rice, wheat or spelt
- 1 red onion, very finely chopped
- 1 large tomato, finely chopped
- ½ cucumber, diced
- Juice of one lime
- 250 ml natural yoghurt
- 2 tsp home made masala or a shop bought chaat masala powder
- 2 green chillies, deseeded and finely chopped
- 4 tbsp fresh coriander, chopped
- Salt to taste
- 2 tsp mustard oil

1. For home made masala powder, dry roast 3 tsp cumin seeds, 1 tsp coriander seeds and 2 dried red chillies. Cool and grind together with a tsp of salt to a fine powder.
2. To make up Bhel Puri, just before serving, toss the puffed rice with the chopped vegetables, chillies and masala powder. Dress this with lime juice, mix well and top with a spoon of apple bhaji, some yoghurt and chopped coriander.





Minestrone

This staple Italian favourite refers to a hearty vegetable soup which is enriched with pasta, rice or beans. It is quick to prepare but favours long slow cooking. The vegetables used in this recipe are only a guide. Don't be afraid improvise, using the vegetables you have to hand, but as a guide, use something strong from the onion family, like onions or leeks, something rich and dense like potatoes or pumpkin and something green like peas, runner beans, kale or broccoli. Add leftover vegetables to this soup and eat it over a couple of days as it just keeps getting better. I also save the hard rind of parmesan cheese which I cook in the soup to add flavour and richness. Don't add the pasta to early as it goes to mush, and if cooking in bulk for the freezer, portion off the soup to store before adding the pasta. Serves 6

2 onions, finely chopped
3 carrots, washed and cubed
2 medium potatoes, washed and cubed
2 sticks of celery, washed and chopped
200g dried pasta shapes, penne or shells work well
1 cup frozen or fresh peas
2 tbsp tomato puree
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 bay leaf – fresh or dried
2 tbsp olive oil
1 litre vegetable stock (I recommend Marigold Low Salt Vegetable Bouillon Powder)
Salt, sugar and pepper

Method:

1. Make up the vegetable stock using boiling water.
2. Prepare all of the vegetables and heat the oil in a large soup pot.
3. Fry the onion on a slow heat until coloured and soft.
4. Add the carrots and celery and cook for a few minutes before adding the potatoes, garlic and bay leaf.
5. Cook on a medium heat, stirring often for a minute or two and then add the tomato puree and a pinch of sugar followed by all of the stock.
6. Bring to a rolling boil and then turn the heat down to a simmer, cover with a tight fitting lid and simmer for 20 - 30 minutes.
7. Check the seasoning, add salt and pepper to taste and serve, turn up the heat a little and add the pasta and the peas.
8. Simmer for a further 10 – 15 minutes until the pasta is cooked.
9. Remove the bay leaf and serve with grated parmesan.

Variations:

- You can add nutritional substance to this soup by adding pearl barley or puy lentils at the start of the cooking.
- Some tinned butterbeans included with the vegetables and a spoon of readymade pesto added before serving makes this soup even more hearty and delicious
- For a spicier soup add 1 fresh chill (deseeded) and 1 tsp each of mustard seeds, cumin seeds and coriander seeds at the same time as you add the garlic.





Aduki and pumpkin stew

The aduki bean is a tiny, reddish-brown bean with a cream coloured seam and sweet, nutty flavour. It is particularly popular in Asian cooking, and is used for sweet and savoury dishes. Aduki beans are regarded as the king of beans in Japan and are prized for their health-giving properties. They reputedly help to regulate blood sugar imbalances and benefit the liver and the kidneys. If using dried beans, soak overnight in water, then drain and simmer in unsalted water for an hour. Alternatively, use tinned aduki beans, preferably in unsalted water. When combined with pumpkin and served on brown rice you have a quick and nourishing, nutritionally balanced meal. For this recipe I recommend using a sweeter pumpkin with firm flesh such as Crown Prince, Kabocha or Butternut Squash. Serves 4

- 1 ½ cups cooked aduki beans (1 x 400g tin)
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 tbsp sunflower oil
- 2 cm chunk of fresh ginger, sliced fine or grated
- 2 cups pumpkin or butternut squash cut in bite-sized pieces
- 1½ tbsp tamari soy sauce (a lower salt, wheat free, slow brewed soy sauce)
or
- 2 tbsp miso (a paste made from fermented Soya beans, rice or barley)
- 2 spring onions, sliced fine

Method

1. Drain and rinse aduki beans.
2. Heat a large saucepan; add oil and sauté the onion.
3. When onions begin to soften, add half of the ginger and chopped pumpkin
4. Cook for 5 minutes and then add enough water to just cover the pumpkin.
5. Cook for 10 minutes more or until the pumpkin is soft.
6. Add the aduki beans and ½ cup more water
7. Bring to a boil then turn the heat down to low and simmer for a further 15 minutes.
8. Add the remaining grated ginger and tamari or miso.
9. Mix the stew gently to combine everything and serve garnished with spring onions.





Harvest wheat sheath

In many places across the world bread shaped like a sheaf of wheat is a traditional symbol of the harvest or thanks giving. They are often made for the “alter” and not the table, which seems like a waste of good bread to me. This recipe is for a small wheat sheath, glazed with an egg wash using a simple bread dough. It is best eaten on the day of baking as it will dry out quickly.

2 cups/500g strong white flour (more for dusting)
1 cup/250g strong wholemeal flour
1½ cups/600ml warm water
1 tsp/5g of ready yeast
1 tsp/5g salt
1 tsp/5g sugar
1 egg
2 tbsp milk

Method:

1. Put the flour, yeast and salt into a large bowl and pour in the water. Mix these ingredients to form sticky dough. Allow this to sit for 5 minutes before stage 2.
2. Dust a clean, dry surface with flour and vigorously knead the dough for 5 - 10 minutes. Add more flour only if the dough is unworkably sticky, and even then only add a light dusting. You are aiming to have soft and elastic dough with the texture of an ear lobe.
3. Return the dough to the bowl, cover with a tea towel, and leave in a warm place to rest for 10 minutes
4. Split the dough into two pieces, approx 70/30 in proportion. The smallest piece will be used for the base of the sheaf and the rest for the “stalks” and “ears”.
5. Roll the base out to form a teardrop shape about 30cm long, 20cm wide, narrowing to 15cm at one end. Transfer the base onto a greased and dusted baking tray and prick the entire surface with a fork. Brush lightly with water.
6. Take the remaining dough and divide into 16 equal parts. Roll these into balls, cover and rest them for a few moments before rolling them out as long round strips, about 30cm long which will represent the wheat stalks.
7. Turn the baking tray so the top of the teardrop is away from you and starting from the centre lay the strips down on the base and bend them over slightly at the top. Keep working outwards in both directions. You will aim to have two layers of these strips.
8. Keep one strip back and fold it in half. Twist this to form a “rope” and place it around the centre of sheaf. Tuck the ends underneath, and gather the sheaf together.
9. Cover with oiled plastic and rise in a warm place until doubled in size, about 1 hour. Preheat the oven to 200c. Just before the bread gets baked, you will need to make the “ears. Cut diagonal snips with scissors along the bent portion of “stalks” above the twist. Mix the egg and milk together and brush the bread gently but thoroughly.
10. Bake for 30 - 35 minutes or until golden and firm. Cool on a rack before eating.





Warm butternut, beetroot and feta salad

With basil and lemon dressing

A warming autumn/winter salad which is filling, low in fat and packed with flavour and goodness. The main ingredient is butternut squash which is a versatile, inexpensive vegetable rich in vitamins A and C and minerals. Its sweet creamy flesh is delicious hot or cold and it carries other flavours beautifully. For this dish I use Danish feta cheese, sometimes called “hard salad cheese”, because it has a fraction of the fat (4-10%) found in other cheeses, it also tends to be less expensive. Serves 4

- 1 small butternut squash (about 500g), deseeded and cut into 2cm cubes
- 3 small beetroots, peeled and cut into 2cm cubes or a pack of ready cooked beetroot, drained and cut into cubes.
- 1 small red onion, very finely sliced
- 200g low fat feta or salad cheese,
- 1tbsp olive oil
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 1 clove of garlic, more if you like garlic
- 2 tbsp fresh basil, washed, drained and roughly torn
- 4 tbsp sunflower seeds, dry toasted
- Black pepper

Method

1. Prepare the squash and beetroot. To cook, either steam until tender or for a richer dish, preheat the oven to 200’c, dress the squash and beetroot lightly in olive oil, season with salt and roast for 25 minutes until it is soft and starting to char.
2. While it is cooking, prepare the rest of the salad.
3. Toast the sunflower seeds in a dry pan or under a grill until a shade or two darker.
4. Chop the garlic with a pinch of salt and work into a paste with the side of a knife.
5. Mix this with the olive oil, lemon juice and 1 tbsp basil.
6. Chop the feta cheese into cubes and mix together with the sliced onions, chopped beetroot, steamed squash and the lemon and basil dressing.
7. Gently mix the salad together, season with black pepper, and garnish with the sunflower seeds and the remaining basil. The feta tends to be salty so no need to add any more salt to the dish.





Courgette and hazelnut pinwheel

Courgette gluts happen every year. It is one of those vegetables which never fail to be abundant. Because courgettes are so wet, they steam inside dough and alter the hydration considerably. By cooking them first, you improve the flavour and have a better idea of how their addition will affect the dough. These pinwheels are perfect for packed lunches and children love to help prepare them. They can be made ahead and frozen cooked or uncooked. This recipe uses a simple bread dough but a scone or short crust pastry work equally well. Will make about 12 individual pinwheels

Dough

2 cups/500g strong white flour (more for dusting)

1 cup/250g strong wholemeal flour

1½ cups/600ml warm water

1 tsp/5g of ready yeast

1 tsp/5g salt

1 tsp/5g sugar

11. Put the flour, yeast and salt into a large bowl and pour in the water. Using a wooden spoon mix these ingredients to form sticky dough. Allow this to sit for five minutes before stage 2.
12. Dust a clean, dry surface with flour and vigorously knead the dough for 5 – 10 minutes. Add more flour only if the dough is unworkably sticky, and even then only add a light dusting. You are aiming to have soft and elastic dough with the texture of an ear lobe.
13. Return the dough to the bowl, cover with a tea towel, and leave in a warm place to rise for 30 – 45 minutes. Knock the dough back, lightly knead and then use as instructed below.

Courgette filling

1 onion, finely chopped

250g courgettes, finely sliced

1 clove garlic, chopped

1 tbsp olive oil

50g hazelnuts, chopped and lightly toasted

100g soft goat's cheese

1. Heat the oil in a pan and fry the onions until soft.
2. Add the garlic and courgettes and cook slowly for 10 minutes until soft but not mushy
3. Add the hazelnuts and season with salt & pepper. Cool before assembling the pinwheels.

To assemble:

1. Dust your work surface and roll out the dough to a square about 40cm X 40cm.
2. Spread the courgettes and nuts evenly over 2/3rd of the rolled out dough
3. Brush the uncovered dough with milk and roll up towards this like a Swiss roll. Using a sharp knife, cut into 12 slices, each about 2 cm thick.
4. Place cut side down on a greased and dusted baking tray, with the wheels just touching. You are aiming to have them "batch" as they rise. Top each pinwheel with a little goat's cheese, cover with oiled plastic and rise for up to an hour in a warm place
5. Bake for about 20 - 25 minutes and allow them to cool slightly before tucking in . . .





Apple glazed tempeh

Tempeh is made from fermented soybeans bound by *Rhizopus* fungi into a compact bean cake. It has a unique flavour and texture and is a complete protein as it contains all of the essential amino acids. It is also rich in isoflavones, which are said to strengthen bones, help to ease menopause symptoms, reduce risk of coronary heart disease and some cancers. One can buy it in Asian and health food stores and it comes raw, smoked or ready fried. This dish is essentially fried tempeh in a teriyaki sauce, but I use apple juice or apple concentrate as the sweetener in my teriyaki. Serves 4

250g ready fried tempeh or raw tempeh cut into 8 strips

1 tbsp grated ginger

50ml apple juice concentrate or 100ml apple juice

50ml tamari or dark soya sauce

50ml water

Juice of 1 lime

25g sesame seeds, dry toasted

Sunflower oil

Method:

1. Heat a large frying pan over a medium to high heat and brush with oil and fry the tempeh strips until they go golden brown. Raw tempeh will need more oil and a longer fry.
2. Add the ginger and cook for a moment or two before adding the apple juice, soya sauce, lime juice and water.
3. Turn up the heat and cook hard until the liquid has reduced by $\frac{2}{3}$ rd and it starts to produce big dark glossy bubbles. Turn the tempeh over in this sauce once or twice and remove from the pan.
4. Top the tempeh with the remaining sauce and sprinkle over the sesame seeds.
5. You can de-glaze the pan with more water or apple juice to make extra sauce.





Apple Fritters

Spiked with perry and pepper

This is a truly delicious dish, sweet, hot and rich, which on cold winter days, really hits the spot. Serve it as a sweet, dusted in sugar or dipped in thick hot chocolate or with strong cheese, white meats or fish. Make sure the oil is up to the correct heat or the batter will drink up the fat and be greasy and soggy.

Sunflower oil, for deep frying
150 g self-raising flour
½ tsp cinnamon
½ tsp ground black pepper
50g caster sugar
175-200ml perry or pear juice
4 firm eating apples such as Cox or Windsor

Method

1. Heat the oil in a deep fat fryer or large saucepan to 180°C.
2. Cut out the core from the apples using an apple corer and peel. Remove the top and bottom from the apples and then slice the into about 2cm thick slices.
To make the batter, sift the flour and cinnamon into a bowl and stir in the sugar. Whisk in enough of the perry or pear juice, giving you a thick coating batter.
3. Dip the apple slices into the batter and carefully slide into the hot oil. Do just a few at a time, to prevent them from sticking together. Fry for about 1-2 minutes until they are light golden brown and crispy.
4. Remove from the oil, drain on kitchen paper and eat straight away.

Butterbean Mayonnaise

1 tin butter beans, drained
3 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp cider vinegar
1 tsp wholegrain mustard
1 clove fresh garlic
1tbsp chopped parsley
½ tsp salt

Method:

1. Blend the ingredients together while adding the oil in a slow and steady stream.
2. You are aiming to achieve a smooth and silky texture. Season to taste and keep refrigerated for up to a week.





Almond clafoutis

With caramelized apple

Clafoutis is the French version of an Eve's pudding. It is traditionally made with cherries or plums, but I love it made with apple. For simplicity, I make mine in an oven proof frying pan, but you can do this in two stages and transfer the apple to a baking tray before topping with the batter and baking. It is a very forgiving dish if you get your timing right and lends itself to countless variations. Serves 4

4 firm eating apples
1 tbsp/25g/1oz butter
1 tbsp/25g/1oz brown sugar
1 tbsp/25g/1oz butter, melted
3 tbsp/75g/3 oz caster sugar
2 tbsp/50g/2oz self raising flour
2 tbsp/50g/2oz ground almonds
3 eggs, beaten
100ml milk

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 180 C/350F/Gas 4/5
2. Prepare the apples - peel, remove the core with an apple corer and cut into half horizontally through the core. Trim the rounded ends so that you have apple disks about 3 cm thick
3. Heat a medium sized frying pan on a low - medium heat and melt 1tbsp of butter
4. Add the apples and cook gently for 5 minutes, turning once. The fruit should start to soften and brown at the edges. Add the sugar and a few table spoons of water, apple juice or cider. Turn the heat up slightly and cook for a further few minutes or until a light glossy caramel has formed. Turn the apples to coat and then remove from the heat. Be attentive as it only takes moments for the caramel to catch and burn.
5. If your frying pan is oven safe you can finish the dish off in the pan, alternatively, transfer the caramelized apples to medium sided round or oval ovenproof dish.
6. To make the batter, beat the eggs, milk, caster sugar and melted butter together and then fold in the flour and ground almonds, you are after a batter with a smooth dropping consistency like loose double cream.
7. Spread the batter over apples and bake for 15 - 20 minute until golden.
8. Serve in the pan or baking dish or turn over onto a plate, and serve apple side up dusted with cinnamon spiked icing sugar.

