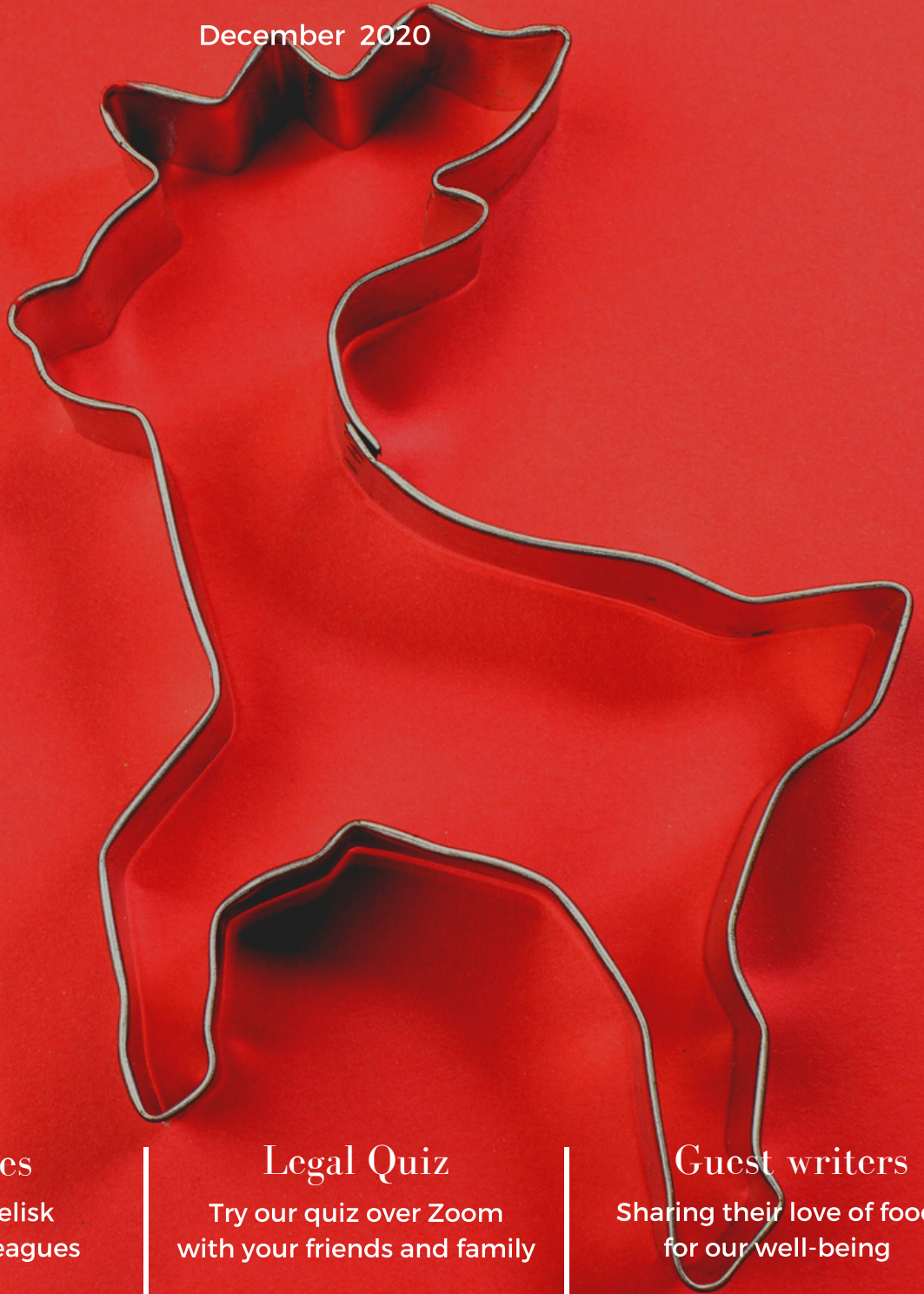


Festive Recipes

 **obelisk** AT HOME

December 2020



Festive Recipes

Contributed by Obelisk
consultants and colleagues

Legal Quiz

Try our quiz over Zoom
with your friends and family

Guest writers

Sharing their love of food
for our well-being

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Foreword

BY ISHAN KOLHATKAR

Little brings people together better, than a good meal. We tend to focus social chats, reunions and networking around food and drink. Food can divide us. There are ingredients, mainstream and eclectic, that are liked and loathed in possibly equal measures. I will try almost any food but goats cheese is where I draw the line. I've tried many types but ultimately, they all taste deeply unpleasant.

Cooking for others is a way to express thanks, to show appreciation and love. Particularly during the festive season these points come together as we gather around tables with friends and family. 2020 will, of course, be different.

In Spring of 2020 when Covid first came into view I suspect few of us thought it would mean restrictions on how we celebrate Christmas and the New Year.

Recipe books like this, however, can play a part in bringing us together even where we can't physically be in the same place. Sharing recipes, be they one passed down through generations, something you've discovered on your travels or an accidental late night creation that tasted great, sharing them with others is a way to spread the same thanks, appreciation and love albeit in a different form.

This collection also asks us to look beyond our own circle of friends and relatives. To those who are less fortunate and need to rely on food banks. If you can help, please do.

Increasingly supermarkets both in-store and online are making it easier to donate. In an ideal world we would not need food banks but until we reach that goal, those of us who can help, should.

I know that this collection of recipes is the product of lots of hard work. As someone who has edited two charity cookbooks I have sympathized with everyone involved in the process. I also know just how much people enjoy the product of their hard work, as I'm certain you will.

With best wishes for the festive season and beyond,

Ishan



ABOUT

Ishan Kolhatkar is a former Barrister who became an educator and now works as General Manager for a digital assessment platform called Inspira. He continues to teach advocacy for Middle Temple. Outside of work his passion is cooking. He enjoys cooking increasingly complicated food and posting it on Twitter; possibly in equal measures.



Holiday Legal Quiz

BY LAURE LATHAM - ALL ANSWERS ON PAGE 64

#1 In 2012, a pub chef and manager were jailed after a woman who ate a Christmas meal they served died from food poisoning. What did they serve?

- a. Turkey
- b. Steak and kidney pie
- c. Cured salmon
- d. Roast beef

#2 The lawyer husband of Vice President-elect Kamala Harris is set to quit his role at DLA Piper. What is his name?

- a. Richard Harris
- b. Bill Hardwick
- c. Doug Emhoff
- d. Cyrus Rose

#3 Which fictional female lawyer returns to screens in 2022 to everybody's delight?

- a. Ally McBeal
- b. Elle Woods
- c. Jessica Pearson
- d. Alicia Florrick

#4 Parliament under Oliver Cromwell outlawed the eating of festive meals on Christmas Day, leading many in modern-day England to believe that they cannot "legally" eat what famous English Christmas treat?

- a. Fish and chips
- b. Black pudding
- c. Mince pies
- d. Beef Wellington

#5 On 2 February 2020, the Law Society's office suffered a devastating fire. Law Society Gazette's Eduardo Reyes tweeted that the library was

- a. All gone
- b. Damaged by the blaze
- c. Fine
- d. Incredible

#6 In 2020, The Secret Barrister's second book came out. What is its title?

- a. Defending the Guilty: Truth and Lies in the Criminal Courtroom
- b. How To Be Right: ... in a world gone wrong
- c. Under the Wig: A Lawyer's Stories of Murder, Guilt and Innocence
- d. Fake Law and Stories of the Law and How It's Broken

#7 In 1647, after the English Civil War, Oliver Cromwell banned Christmas festivities. When was the ban lifted?

- a. 1651
- b. 1669
- c. 1660
- d. 1672

#8 In which countries do workers get a Christmas bonus of one month's salary by law?

- a. Greece, Italy, Spain and Germany
- b. Switzerland, Denmark, Austria and France
- c. Denmark, Hungary, Portugal and Sweden
- d. Belgium, the Netherlands, Poland and Finland

#9 Before the Reformation in 1560, Christmas in Scotland had been a religious feasting day and in 1640, a law declared 'Yule vacations' illegal. When did 25 December become a Scottish public holiday?

- a. 1919
- b. 1903
- c. 1984
- d. 1958

#10 Which of the following is not a UK courtroom blunder?

- a. Judges seen with gavel banging
- b. Lawyers wandering around the courtroom
- c. Lawyers shouting "Objection!"
- d. Witness summons in a criminal trial mentioning neither "claimant" nor "plaintiff".





Food, family and fulfilment in 2020

BY MARK HUMPHRIES

Against the backdrop of the challenges and changes of 2020, spending time in the kitchen making food for my family has been a satisfying escape, a real pleasure on the occasions when the world outside has felt too much.

Baking in particular has been a source of comfort and well-being through this most unpredictable of years as, aided by my trusty bread maker, I've tracked the changing seasons. When Easter came around, it made hot cross bun dough before I shaped them by hand and baked them in the oven.

We've even created a new family tradition, our Saturday night family treat is now home-made pizza with home-made dough and home-made tomato sauce (with a little cheating...).

Later in the spring, I went out hedge foraging to make stinging nettle soup and served it with home-made focaccia. On that note, I now think a lot more about using locally-sourced natural ingredients.

Often, they come from my own garden or nearby hedgerows – so home-grown onions, rosemary, garlic, peppers, blackberries, nettles, pears etc. I've definitely used this year to appreciate my immediate environment more.



The Covid crisis has given us time to reflect on our true priorities and our privileges.

This Christmas, I'm going to enjoy cooking and time with my family more than ever before. As my village newspaper advised, "During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other, let us find ways to be a loving embrace to our neighbours."

Now that the days are short and cold, food gives us new ways to create the connection we crave in our wider community, whether that's by contributing if we can to our local food bank or sharing home-baked goodies with friends and neighbours at a distance.

May this Festive Recipes book inspire you to try something new and delicious to share with your loved ones, with the knowledge that these recipes come straight from the kitchens of the Obelisk community around the world. As ever, our #HumanFirst spirit is here for you.

Mark Humphries
Chairman, Obelisk Support





*Join our efforts to help
stop UK hunger this
festive season.*

IF YOU CAN, PLEASE:

DONATE ONLINE AT [TRUSSELLTRUST.ORG](https://www.trusselltrust.org)

FIND YOUR LOCAL FOOD BANK AND TAKE
THEM ANY GOODS YOU CAN SPARE.



Festive Recipes

We hope you enjoy the following selection of festive treats, contributed by Obelisk consultants and colleagues around the world.

Whilst we have made every effort to make sure these recipes are accurate, please note that we have not cooked every dish. Likewise, all the photographs are intended for inspiration only. We hope you have fun trying these as they're presented, or perhaps you'll make tweaks to create a new traditional dish of your own.

Dip into this collection as you prepare for the festive season and have a fantastic break when the time comes.

Happy holidays!





Photo credit: Wikipedia

Spanish Torrijas

By Lara Grant
Consultant, Obelisk Support

Torrijas are a typical treat in Spain which can be eaten hot or cold as a dessert, nibble or as breakfast. My grandmother from Santander (north of Spain) made this delicious and simple dish every Christmas when I was a kid. They are also consumed typically in Spain at Easter. The origin of the torrijas is attributed to the Roman star chef Marcus Gavius Apicius (1st century CE) who included them in his cookbook Apicius.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 loaf of bread
- 4 cups (1 litre) milk
- 3 tbsp sugar
- 1 stick cinnamon
- 2-3 medium eggs
- Olive oil
- Sugar and cinnamon for sprinkling or honey if you prefer

HOW TO

- Slice the bread into slices.
- Arrange them on a shallow dish that can hold the milk.
- Pour the milk in a saucepan with the sugar and the cinnamon stick and bring it to boil. Turn off the heat the moment the milk starts to boil and leave it for 5 minutes

- Pour the milk on the bread and let it soak for 15-20 minutes.
- Beat the eggs in a plate large enough to hold at least one slice of bread.
- Heat the oil to medium temperature.
- Put each of the soaked slices of bread into the whisked eggs and turn them around to soak.
- Then fry the sliced bread in hot oil for a couple of minutes on each side, until brown.
- Take out to a dish lined with a paper towel and thoroughly sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon.
- Torrijas can be eaten warm or cold as a dessert, breakfast or nibble.



Mulled cider

By Lola Moses
Consultant, General Counsel,
Obelisk Support

Normally at this time of year, I like to visit the Xmas markets in Europe (France and Belgium are my favourites).

In order to keep warm and get into the Xmas spirit, I like to drink mulled wine or mulled cider - this not only enhances the shopping experience but keeps your hands warm while walking around the markets.

One year I visited the Christmas markets in Rouen, Normandy and tried some mulled cider. It was absolutely delicious so this is my take on it!

INGREDIENTS

- 750ml of apple cider
- 500ml of apple juice
- 2 oranges sliced
- 1 lemon sliced (plus the zest)
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 7 cloves
- 3 star anise
- 1 vanilla pod
- 3 heaped tablespoons of organic cane sugar

HOW TO

- Put all ingredients into a saucepan and simmer on a low heat for 12 -18 minutes (do not boil!)
- Serve in heatproof glasses/mugs



Classic Glühwein

By Rashda Rana SC
Consultant, Obelisk Support

This is such a warming drink to have indoors or outdoors. We have had a few Christmases in Vienna and no matter which stall you go to at the Christmas Markets (in every open space in Vienna), you will find fabulous Glühwein to warm you while you roam around

Thanks to friends from Vienna for the recipe!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 (750 ml) bottle red, rose, or white wine (cheap wine works just fine)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup water or orange juice (fresh is best, including pulp) retain orange peel
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar (reduce if prefer a less syrupy drink)
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 1 orange, halved
- 10 whole cloves

HOW TO

- Put the water, sugar, and cinnamon sticks in a medium saucepan over medium heat.

- Bring to a boil, while whisking, then reduce the heat to a simmer.
- Pour orange juice into the simmering sugar water.
- Add the orange peel and cloves.
- Simmer for 30 minutes, or until syrupy.
- Add the wine, and heat just until steaming, but not simmering.
- Strain to remove the peel, cloves, and residual pulp.
- Serve hot in mugs or glasses that have been preheated in warm water. Keep remaining glühwein warm.
- Enjoy!



Seaweed oatcakes

By Laure Latham
Marketing & CSR Manager,
Obelisk Support

At our Christmas party with friends, I always serve bitesize savoury snacks alongside Glühwein to cut on the sweetness. Seaweed oatcakes combine my love of foraging (including by the seashore), with being outside as an outdoor blogger, the great umami taste of seaweed and nutritious gluten-free oats. You can find dried seaweed (nori is best) in food shops.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup (100g) nori seaweed, finely chopped
- 3 cups (240g) jumbo oats
- 1 cup (200g) steelhead oats
- 1 cup (100g) quick-cook oatmeal
- ¼ cup white sesame seeds
- ¾ cup (160g) olive oil
- 400 ml (2 cups) hot water

HOW TO

- Preheat the oven to 180C/350F and line 3 baking trays with wax paper.

- Mix all the ingredients in a bowl.
- Pour the oil, then pour in enough boiling water to bind it into a firm, not sticky, dough. Work quickly. Don't worry if you over-water a bit - you can remedy the situation by adding more oatmeal.
- Form the dough mixture into a ball and leave it to rest 5 minutes.
- Roll out the dough with a rolling pin on a floured surface or between two sheets of wax paper (to minimise the mess) to about 5mm thick.
- Cut out discs with a cookie cutter (I use a 5 cm/2 in one).
- Place on the baking trays and bake for 20 minutes, then turn and bake for a further five to 10 minutes.
- Cool on a rack. Store in an airtight container.



Union Street Cafe Bar's Nuts

By Shalini Sequeira
Consultant, Obelisk
Support

With thanks to Nigella Lawson –
a fabulous and easy recipe for
something to have with drinks
and a real crowd pleaser!

INGREDIENTS

- 500g assorted nuts (I use almonds, pecans, walnuts, brazils, hazelnuts and cashews, but change for others as you like)
- 2 tbsp coarsely chopped fresh rosemary
- 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper
- 2 tsp dark muscovado (or other brown) sugar
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp unsalted butter, melted

HOW TO

- Preheat the oven to 180 degrees C/ gas mark 4.
- Toss the nuts in a large bowl to mix and then spread onto a large baking sheet.
- Toast in the oven for about 10 minutes, until they are golden brown.
- In a large bowl, mix the rosemary, cayenne, sugar, salt and butter and toss the warm nuts in this when they are out of the oven.
- Serve warm (but they are also good cold!)



Aioli

By Laura Vosper
Head of Talent, Obelisk
Support

INGREDIENTS

- 2 large egg yolks
- 1 - 2 cloves of garlic (depending how strong you like it)
- Around 250 to 300 ml extra-virgin olive oil
- Squeeze of lemon juice
- Dab of dijon mustard to taste
- Grind of salt

Although we weren't religious, Christmas was always a special time when I was growing up. My favourite part of the celebrations was Christmas Eve. It was a busy day of preparations, including an early-morning trip to the greengrocers, then in the evening friends would drop by. Along with cheeses, fish and other goodies, my mum would make an outsize platter of vegetables with aioli. The idea was that this was a light meal before the traditional roast the next day, but I always remember it as a feast.

HOW TO

- Chop up the garlic very finely and add some salt, then mash with a fork to a paste. Put to one side.
- Take the egg yolks and beat in the oil, one small spoonful at a time. (You can do this with a blender or food processor - we always did it by hand with a balloon whisk). Keep going, slowly, until you have a smooth, golden sauce.
- Beat in the lemon juice and mustard to your liking, then add the garlic and mix again.
- To serve, put the sauce in a bowl in the centre of your dish and then arrange vegetables around it.
- Serve with a selection of vegetables - carrot, cucumber, cauliflower, cherry tomatoes, celery - anything you like!
- To make into a meal, add bread and/or new boiled potatoes, along with oven-baked or poached fish.



Cranberry orange relish

By Laure Latham
Marketing & CSR Manager,
Obelisk Support

INGREDIENTS

- 1 whole unpeeled orange, quartered (organic)
- 1 cup (200g) sugar
- 1 punnet (300g) fresh cranberries (it's very important that they are fresh and not frozen or dried)

When I lived in San Francisco, my friend Sue invited me to her family's Thanksgiving celebration in the Santa Cruz mountains. It was a pot luck and everybody brought a different dish for the communal table. This vegan cranberry relish was so delicious that I immediately asked for the recipe and I've been making it ever since, both at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Not only is it a no-cook recipe (always a plus in my book), but it is delicious and fresh, a welcome side in an otherwise rich culinary affair. Enjoy the anti-oxydant benefits of raw orange and cranberries!

HOW TO

- Plop all 3 ingredients in an electric blender and whizz until you reach a granular consistency. The relish should hold its own but you should see chunks of cranberries.
- Serve cold!
- This relish keeps for at least a week in the fridge which means it can be made ahead of time and served when needed.
- I like to serve this relish in a wide mouth jam jar to give it a "rustic" feel.
- Great served with meat or roasted veggies.



Beef with pickled walnuts, port and Guinness

By Haidee Stephens
Alumni, Obelisk Support

I think this is a great easy winter/festive recipe and it tastes like you've spent ages making it (when you haven't). You can also make it in advance and reheat gently but I'd buy the meat in large pieces if you do that, as it tends to fall apart leaving you with a chunky soup!

Many years ago, I bought 'Delia Smith's Christmas' and tried 'Venison with port, Guinness and pickled walnuts'. It was lovely but I couldn't taste the venison much so the following time, I made it successfully using cheap cuts of beef instead. I then wondered whether you could get away with just chucking all the ingredients into a pressure cooker, and found that it was a good way of cooking it, and much quicker. The Guinness does tend to froth up so I'd put less in if making a large quantity in the pressure cooker as froth coming out of the valve is a bit alarming. My cooking is a bit rustic, so you might like to remove the stalks and bay leaves before you serve.

INGREDIENTS

HOW TO

- About 750g stewing steak in large-ish chunks or any beef with some fat on.
- A can of Guinness or other stout
- A small wine-glass of port (150ml approx or more if you like)
- Couple of bay leaves (I include these as we have a couple of bay trees outside and it seems churlish not to include them as we have hundreds of bay leaves within arms' reach - apparently they impart some flavour yet I've never identified it in a dish).
- 4 sprigs of thyme, I often chuck some rosemary in too as it's growing by the door
- A couple of onions, finely sliced is my preference
- Some shallots, halved or whole instead of or in addition to the onion (according to your preference for oniony-ness)
- 2 cloves of garlic – crushed or chopped
- 1 jar pickled walnuts (drain and retain juice) halve the walnuts
- Olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- Cornflour to thicken the gravy if needed at the end
- Soften onion and garlic in some olive oil on a low heat for 10 mins or so in the body of a pressure cooker (open on the hob) and then add half the walnut juice and everything else.
- Cook for 45 minutes.
- Have a look, adjust seasoning / port / walnut juice
- Thicken gravy.
- You can slow cook it in the oven if you don't have a pressure cooker – on low for about 3 hours.





Chicken and mushroom pie

By Will Stephens
COO, Obelisk Support

This recipe has been a long time favourite with my children (and everyone else), so I associate it with family mealtimes. A wonderful winter comfort food!

FILLING

- 4 x fresh chicken breast cut into bitesize chunks
- 1 x large onion
- 80g lardons
- 10 fresh Portobello mushrooms sliced
- $\frac{3}{4}$ pint chicken stock
- Salt and pepper
- 2-3 fresh bay leaves
- Groundnut oil
- 1 egg

WHITE SAUCE

- 2 tbs plain flour
- Approx. 50g salted butter
- Milk to taste

SHORTCRUST PASTRY

- I normally cheat by using a chilled pastry sheet bought from the supermarket!
- Make it fresh if you prefer.



HOW TO

- Preheat the oven to around 170C
- Peel and roughly chop the onion and gently fry in the oil in a large casserole dish or saucepan.
- Add the lardons and continue to fry.
- Once the onion is soft and translucent add the chicken pieces to the pan and continue to fry gently.
- Once the chicken has started to cook through, add the chicken stock, bay leaves, and season.
- Continue to cook over a low heat for 15-20 minutes.
- Make a roux by gently melting the butter in a small pan and then slowly adding the flour.
- Once you have a reasonably stiff mixture, slowly stir in the milk over a low heat until you have a lump free, creamy consistency.
- Add the sauce to the other ingredients in the large pan and continue to cook slowly.
- Trim and wipe the mushrooms and chop coarsely. Add these to the pie filling in the pan and continue to cook slowly.
- After a further 10 minutes or so remove from the heat and allow to cool by placing the pan in cold water.
- Take a suitably sized pie dish and cut the pastry to shape adding around 2cm extra all round.
- Cut a cross in the centre of the pastry for the funnel. Add a ceramic pie funnel to the centre of the pie dish and then add the cooled pie filling to the dish. Spoon off surplus liquid and set aside.
- Lightly beat the egg and brush the rim of the pie dish and around the top of the pie funnel and then lift the pastry over the filling. Press around the edge of the pie dish with a fork to create a good seal.
- Make two slots in the top for steam to escape. Baste the pastry all over with the beaten egg, and then place the pie in the pre heated oven for 15-20 minutes, or as per the instructions for the pastry.
- Once the pastry is golden brown, check to make sure the filling is hot and serve immediately.
- Enjoy!



Miso cod with braised leeks

By Ishan Kolhatkar
General Manager, Inspira

This dish takes simple ingredients and showcases them in a relatively simple festive meal when a piece of fish can be a welcome relief from meat, cheese and chocolate. Not that there is anything wrong with meat, cheese and chocolate, as evidenced from my weekly shop.

INGREDIENTS

- Two thick pieces of cod loin each weighing approximately 200g
- 2 tsp of miso paste
- 4 tsp of mirin
- A clove of garlic
- 4 leeks
- A knob of butter
- 200ml of light chicken stock
- Two pieces of baking parchment, each the size of your pieces of fish
- 2 tsp vegetable oil



HOW TO

- Create a marinade by combining the miso paste and mirin in a bowl. If it's very thick you may want to add a teaspoon of water to help bring it down.
- You can use either yellow or red miso paste as you prefer, noting that yellow is sweeter and less salty whereas red is richer and more intensely salty. Red miso will also produce a much darker finish and is what I used in my dish.
- Add the fish to the marinade, cover the bowl with cling film and leave it in the fridge for at least a couple of hours or ideally overnight. If you leave it overnight then try to give it a mix from time to time.
- When you are ready to cook, remove the fish from the fridge so that it isn't cold when it goes into the pan.
- Trim and wash the leeks before cutting into rounds approximately the width of a one pound coin.
- Gently melt the butter in a wide shallow frying pan and then add the leeks a lightly crushed clove of garlic.
- You will need to remove the garlic at the end so ensuring it's in as few pieces as possible will help.
- Soften the leeks by moving them around in the butter for a few minutes ensuring that they don't brown.
- When soft, pour in the chicken stock ensuring that the leeks are covered. If not, add water. Bring to a simmer and leave to cook gently for about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- Preheat your oven to 180C
- Take a second frying pan large enough to cook both pieces of fish. Heat to a medium high heat and place the pieces of parchment paper in the pan with a teaspoon of oil on each. The parchment paper will help stop the marinade from welding to your pan.
- Cook the fish for 2 minutes on each side and then finish in the oven for a further four minutes. The oven time is approximate. You want the fish to retain its moisture and a marginally undercooked piece is far preferable to an overcooked one.
- To serve, remove the garlic from the leeks and spoon into warmed bowls. Place the fish on top. You could finish the dish with a little chili oil if you want a little more warmth.



Roast beef with crust and foie gras

By Golnar Assari
Consultant, Obelisk Support

This is my go to Christmas dinner as it is delicious and very, very easy to make! I discovered this recipe from my local butcher in Paris, on a typical 24th December panic shopping for a dinner for 6... This recipe saved the day and is being asked for ever since!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large piece of beef for roasting (1 kg)
- 2 pastry rolls (eq 460g)
- 1 bloc of Foie Gras (approx. 300g - no need for high quality product as it will be cooked)
- 250g of Girolles mushrooms
- 2 egg yolks
- Butter
- Salt
- Pepper



HOW TO

- Roast the beef in a roasting pan on each side with some butter to sear it
- Let it cool off and take the extra fat off if it is too greasy.
- Once cold, spread the foie gras on the beef
- Roll the pastry rolls open and add the fresh mushrooms on it, put the beef on the rolls and fold it back.
- Add the yolks to the pastry top
- Put it in the oven at 200° for 40min (15-20 min per 500g of meat)
- It's ready!
- It goes very well with potatoes, beans, or butternut squash.
- For a more traditional French Christmas, serve with chestnut puree.



Roasted Christmas vegetables / appetiser blue cheese and broccoli soup

By Dana Al-Dulaimi
Consultant, Obelisk Support

You can't have Christmas dinner without a side of roasted vegetables and an appetizer. They really compliment and bring the meal together. My family is diverse; my husband is Arab/Canadian, I'm British/Chinese/Arab. We also have a few vegetarians in the family. I am a very busy woman, and so I try to capitalise on the ingredients and time I have at my disposal. My rule is to never cook anything that takes over an hour.

For the past 15 years, I have always been in charge of the appetiser and golden vegetables.



ROASTED VEGETABLES

- Butternut squash
- Egyptian sweet potatoes
- Lebanese potatoes
- Carrots
- Rosemary
- Salt and pepper
- Rice bran oil

BLUE CHEESE AND BROCCOLI SOUP

- Blue cheese
- Broccoli
- Vegetable stock
- Salt and pepper
- Cream

HOW TO

- Cut potatoes / sweet potatoes into medium-sized cubes, and the carrots/butternut squash vertically.
- Boil the potatoes and carrots with rosemary until half cooked.
- Boil carrots / butternut squash separately with rosemary for just a few minutes. Don't throw away the stock from all the vegetables.
- Mix all vegetables on a non-stick tray with rice bran oil, salt and pepper and roast (180-190 C) until golden (mix every 15-20 minutes) depending on your oven.
- You can turn down the heat if guests will arrive later.
- Use the stock as the soup base.
- Add broccoli.
- When it is cooked add the blue cheese (as desired) and leave to slow cook for around 20 minutes.
- Add salt, pepper and parsley.
- Enjoy!



Salmon with mascarpone and spinach

By Evi Kierzkowska
Client Relationship
Manager, Obelisk
Support

I have chosen this recipe, because it's one of my favourite dishes during the festive season.

INGREDIENTS

- 500g of salmon fillet
- 1 cup of sundried tomatoes in oil
- 3 cloves of garlic
- 2 tbsp of honey mustard
- 1 onion
- ½ tbsp of butter
- 400 ml of double cream
- 1 tbsp of mascarpone
- 200g of fresh spinach
- Pinch of lemon pepper
- Pinch of salt

HOW TO

- Mix 2 tbsp of oil from sundried tomatoes with 2 tbsp of mustard, 1 clove of finely chopped garlic, add pinch of lemon pepper and pinch of salt. Marinate the salmon in the sauce.
- Place the salmon on a baking tray (with baking paper) and bake it in the oven for 15 minutes at 180 C.
- Dice the onion, slice 2 cloves of garlic & 6-8 sundried tomatoes. In a medium pan over medium heat, melt butter. Add onions & garlic with a pinch of salt. When the onion is translucent, add 400ml of double cream, sliced sundried tomatoes and mascarpone. Stir and cook the sauce for a couple of minutes until thickened. Add 200 grams of fresh spinach, stir it and cook for another 5 minutes.
- Place the sauce on a plate and put the salmon on top of it.



Sea salad

By Daniela Meloni
Consultant, Obelisk Support

This recipe means a lot to me and to my entire family. It is something that you can order in restaurants all year round but my mum makes it only at Christmas and we all long for that moment because the way she makes it is unique, never ever tasted it anywhere else. And there is a reason for it... she adds a secret ingredient that she was taught by my father!

She has disclosed this secret ingredient only to us (my brothers and sisters), but we had to promise not to tell anyone.... I must comply with my promise sorry 😊. But I can assure you that it is an excellent dish even without that secret ingredient, and you will enjoy it!

The reason why this recipe means Christmas for me is that it immediately makes me think of my mum who starts going to the fishmongers days well in advance to tell him that for that certain day she would buy this and that and everything must be super fresh, not too big, not too small, etc and then she reports it to us with excitement and worry too as she knows that the ingredients must be premium quality.

So that's when the anticipation begins, and we start savouring that moment on Christmas Eve when we will taste her masterpiece again 😊

At first, there is always some silence while everybody is tasting the first mouthful and then... it's a flow of "Wow! It's delicious!", "Oh wow mum! This tastes fantastic, even better than last year!", "Oh please what's the secret ingredient" (the in-laws 😊) and so on and so forth and this is something that happens every year without failing and I will be forever grateful for these moments.

So, I hope you enjoy it! And cheers to a wonderful Christmas for everyone!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Octopus: 2 kg (two 1 kg each. Please note: the octopus needs to be fresh but then it must be frozen and taken out the freezer the night before preparing the dish to defrost. This way the octopus will be more tender)
- Mussels: 2 kg
- Squids: 3 (about 500 g)
- Cuttlefish: 2 middle size (about 500 g)
- Shrimps: at least 10
- Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Lemon: 1 or 2
- Vinegar
- Parsley
- Salt



OCTOPUS

- Wash the octopus thoroughly especially the tentacles.
- Put the octopuses head down in a big saucepot in cold water. Take to boiling and let cook for about 25 minutes. Test with a fork to see if it is cooked.
- Let it cool down and when it is lukewarm, slice it up and put it in a big bowl. Please Note: the head must be cut in half and then sliced and if necessary, wash off any remains.



MUSSELS

- Get the fishmonger to clean up the shells properly. You will still need to get rid of the byssal threads.
- Put some cold water in a saucepan (big enough)
- Put the mussels and let them cook.
- Once they are all open, take them out.
- Get rid of the shells and cut them in half and add them to the octopus.



SQUIDS AND CUTTLEFISH

- Put them in a saucepan in cold water and take them to boiling and cook for about 20/15 minutes.
- Get rid of the cuttlebone.
- Then slice them all up and add them to the octopus and the mussels.



SHRIMPS

- Scald them in a saucepan.
- Peel off the carapace and cut the head apart.
- Please Note: if there are any eggs, put those to the side.

DRESSING

- In a bowl put at least two glasses of extra-virgin olive oil.
- Add the shrimps' eggs if there were any.
- Add a squashed lemon (make sure no pips go in there)
- Add some vinegar
- Add some salt
- Add some parsley.
- Mix it all up together and taste it.
- If you think you need to add more of anything go ahead.
- Pour this mix over the sea food that you have prepared in a separate bowl.
- Mix it all up and taste it to check whether the dressing is well balanced, or whether you need to adjust it by adding more lemon/salt/vinegar
- Leave it to rest for few hours in the fridge.
- Then take it out of the fridge at least 30 minutes before serving as it must not be served too cold.



Chanukah Sufganiyot

By Rob Rome
Consultant, Obelisk Support

Chanukah is an eight-day Jewish festival celebrated around December time commemorating the miracle of the oil which lasted for eight days instead of one day following the rededication of the Jewish temple after the Greeks were defeated by the Maccabees.

In addition to lighting candles on an eight-branched candelabra – each night, one more candle is lit than the night before – oily and fried foods are traditionally eaten. For me, this time of year becomes one huge donut fest with all variety of fillings ranging from traditional strawberry jam to custard, caramel, apple sauce and even strawberries and fresh cream.



INGREDIENTS

- 225 ml water
- 375 ml buttermilk (as an alternative you can use regular milk and squeeze a lemon into it)
- 5 oz / 141g butter melted
- 5 cups / 625g flour
- 2/3 cup / 133g sugar
- 2.5 tsp salt
- 3.5 tsp yeast
- 3 medium eggs
- Vegetable oil for deep fat frying
- Strawberry jam for filling
- Icing sugar to sprinkle on at the end

HOW TO

- Combine all wet ingredients in one bowl and all dry ingredients in another bowl.
- Mix the wet and dry ingredients together.
- Knead into a dough.
- Let it rise for an hour or so.
- Shape into balls.
- Leave for another half-an-hour or so.
- Heat oil in a saucepan – I put a carrot in the oil to stop the oil going black.
- Carefully put the balls into the hot oil and fry until golden brown all over – this will take around 2 minutes on each side.
- Remove from oil and put on kitchen paper.
- Put donuts in a bowl of caster sugar until they are coated all over.
- Using a piping bag with a small nozzle pipe the jam into the donuts.



Easy cheesecake

By Katie Mauthoor
Consultant, Obelisk Support

I chose this recipe because I love cheesecake but during the lockdown I could not get my favourite one from my local restaurant so I endeavoured to make one! However, not being the best patisserie chef, I knew I needed to find something within my culinary capabilities to make and this one ticked the boxes and turned out delicious! It's also great as you can change the fruit / topping according to your individual taste or the season!



BASE

- 200g of biscuits of choice (I use chocolate digestives but your choice)
- 100g of butter

TOPPING

- 400ml of condensed milk
- 600ml of double cream
- Juice of 2 or 3 lemons (3 if small)
- Seasonal fruit of choice
- Chocolate chips / topping of choice

HOW TO

- Line the bottom of a round 20cm cake tin with greaseproof paper.
- Use the end of a rolling pin to crush the biscuits finely in a large bowl (into small chunks but not so that they become dust).
- Melt the butter in a saucepan or microwave.
- Add the crushed biscuits to the butter. (N.B. The biscuit crumbs should stick together, if not add a little more melted butter – I usually add more butter!).
- Firmly press the biscuits into the bottom of the cake tin using a large spoon and making sure they are spread evenly.
- In another large bowl, mix together the double cream and condensed milk whilst simultaneously (but very gradually) adding the lemon juice and stirring.
- The mixture will begin to thicken and it is important to continue adding lemon juice until your mixture no longer runs and falls slowly off a spoon.
- Once you are happy with your mixture spread it over the biscuits creating a flat surface.
- Chill in the fridge for 2 hours or until completely set. Remove and add topping of choice.
- Enjoy!



Chocolate mince pies

By Kate Lambie
Consultant, Obelisk Support

We make these mince pies every year and the children love getting messy. They always make the whole house smell like Christmas. We make extra mince meat (3 or more times the quantity below) and keep jars in the fridge for speedy mince pies whenever we fancy them over Christmas and New Year.

I am not a candied peel fan, so this is a perfect way to enjoy peel-free mince pies and children love them because of the chocolate!



PASTRY

- Homemade shortcrust (if you have the time and energy)
- Readymade if not!

MINCEMEAT

- 50g sultanas
- 50g raisins
- 50g currants
- 50g semi-dried apricots
- 25g very high cocoa dark chocolate, finely grated
- 2 small green cooking apples, peeled and grated
- 1 Tbsp each light brown and dark brown muscovado sugar
- 1 tsp each ground cinnamon, grated nutmeg and mixed spice
- Zest and juice of 1 lemon or orange
- 3 tbsp rum or Calvados or Grand Marnier or cognac
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Icing sugar, to finish

HOW TO

- Heat oven to 180°C.
- Roll the pastry on a lightly floured surface to the desired thickness (ideally about half a cm).
- Cut out 12 discs and line a 12-hole fairy cake tin with them.
- Use a smaller cutter to cut 12 discs for the lids. We use a star-shaped cutter for the lids instead.
- Make the mincemeat by putting the sultanas, raisins, currants and apricots in a food processor. Whizz until finely chopped, then stir in the other ingredients.
- Spoon 2 tsp of mince into each tart, dampen the edge of the pastry bottom with water/milk/egg and place a lid on top.
- Bake for 12-15 minutes until golden brown and leave to cool on a wire rack.
- Lightly dust with icing sugar.



Chocolate truffles

By Brooke Wilson
Client Marketing Executive,
Obelisk Support

My mum makes chocolate truffles every year over the festive period to give to friends and family. My younger brothers and I have always loved to help / get in the way, and so making this recipe brings back a lot of memories of singing along to Christmas songs in the kitchen and watching my brothers argue over who gets to lick the bowl.



INGREDIENTS

- 50g unsalted butter
- 150ml double cream
- 150g milk chocolate
- 150g dark chocolate
- Vanilla extract

COATING OF YOUR CHOICE

- Cocoa powder
- Sprinkles
- Icing sugar
- Chopped nuts, etc..

SHAPING

- Sunflower oil, or other flavourless oil, for shaping

HOW TO

- Heat the cream and butter in a pan.
- Bring to a simmer.
- Chop the dark and milk chocolate into very small pieces. Place the chocolate in a bowl. Pour the hot cream over the chocolate and stir until it melts.
- Add the vanilla extract.
- Refrigerate until the mixture is set, about 1-2 hours.
- Roll into balls. This can get messy!
- To shape the truffles you can lightly rub your hands with flavourless oil and roll teaspoons of the truffle mix between your palms.
- Alternatively, you can coat your hands in cocoa powder.
- Coat in toppings like sprinkles, cocoa powder, or crushed nuts.
- You can also dip the truffles in melted or tempered chocolate.
- Enjoy!



Christmas Butterfly Cakes

By Elaine Jephcott
Consultant, Obelisk Support

Butterflies are not traditionally associated with Christmas, but have become more popular recently. I am a big fan of this recipe because it can be adapted and decorated for any occasion. It's a less heavy alternative to Christmas cake and mince pies, so usually proves to be very popular with all members of the family. Especially for Christmas, think about adding optional extras such as food colouring and sprinkles!!

If you need creative inspiration try Googling "Christmas Butterfly Cakes" and viewing the images tab. However, perhaps this recipe's most endearing charm is that it is so easy to execute and younger members of the family can play an active role in its preparation and decoration.



CAKES

- 3 medium eggs
- 100g self-raising flour
- 25g custard powder
- 140g softened butter
- 140g golden caster sugar

ICING

- 600g of sifted icing sugar
- 300g softened unsalted butter

EXTRAS (OPTIONAL)

- Jam
- Food colouring
- Food flavouring
- Cake decorations
- Sprinkles

HOW TO

- Heat the oven to 190C/fan 170/gas 5.
- Arrange paper cases in bun tins. Put all the cake ingredients in a large bowl and beat for about 2 mins until smooth.
- Divide the mixture between the cases so they are half filled and bake for 12-15 mins, until risen and golden. Cool on a wire rack.
- Beat the sifted icing sugar and butter together with your chosen flavouring and colouring if using, add 2-3 tablespoons of boiling water to loosen and beat until smooth.
- After the cakes have cooled use a sharp knife to slice off the tops, then cut the tops in half. Spread the buttercream on top of the cakes, then gently push two semi-circular halves into the buttercream on each cake, doing this at an angle to look like butterfly wings. You can serve the cakes at this stage, or decorate them with a little blob of jam in the centre and a scattering of sprinkles, if you like.
- They will keep for up to 2-3 days stored in an airtight container in a cool place or can be frozen in advance, but if you are freezing them it is better to do this before decorating etc.



Cozonac

TRANSYLVANIAN
BRIOCHE WITH
WALNUTS

By Dana Denis-Smith
CEO
Obelisk Support



As a child, I don't ever remember a Christmas in my family that did not start with a slice of this brioche and a cup of hot chocolate.

Christmas Day was so special, not least because it was the first in which we would have been allowed to have sweets after Christmas Lent. All of us children loved the walnut core and hoped that our slice would have the biggest swirl in the middle but we enjoyed it all as it smelled of lemon peel and vanilla and was soft and moist. There was a lot of baking going on around Christmas not least as we always welcomed a lot of Christmas carol-singers all night long on Christmas Eve and we wanted to make sure we had enough goodies to treat them.

The weather was often harsh, freezing temperatures and snow, so we wanted to welcome them with treats to keep them going for the night. My mother and us made so many desserts every year that the baking process started over a week before Christmas as they took a lot of patience – layered Viennese cakes, small cookies to hang in the tree. This Pannetone-style brioche is a recipe that was passed on from my grandmothers and we loved to share it on Christmas Day.



Ingredients

DOUGH

1 kg flour (ideally 00 flour)
5 eggs (separate the whites and the yolk)
50g fresh yeast
200g sugar
500ml milk
8 tbsp sunflower oil
1 tsp salt
2 tbsp vanilla sugar
1 tsp grated lemon peel

FILLING

500g walnuts
4 egg whites
350g sugar
1 egg yolk
Rum

To make the dough:

Mix the yeast, 1 tbsp of sugar and a fistful of flour and a cup of lukewarm milk until you make a smooth paste. Set aside.

Put your flour into a big bowl and make a hole in the middle. Pour the yeast mix paste in the middle and start mixing in the flour with your hand. Mix the yolks with the salt and add the whites afterward to make it creamy and then start pouring into the flour mixture. Slowly start adding the milk, the vanilla, sugar, lemon zest and the oil. The dough should feel quite elastic at touch and knead until you don't have any lumps.

Cover with a towel and let it rest for 30 min somewhere warm.

Make the filling:

Meanwhile, make the filling whilst the dough is resting. Beat the 4 whites into a firm froth and add the sugar and the walnuts (they need to be ground separately beforehand if you bought walnut halves); if you want to add a little rum (1 tbsp), that's very much in the spirit of Christmas and the equivalent of a drunken Pannetone – but I don't recommend it if you have kids around.

Assembling:

Oil both loaf tins to make sure they are ready to receive the assembled ingredients.

Take the dough out of its bowl and split it in two equal parts. Try not to knead it.

Take each half in turns and lay it on the table. Use your hands to spread it out until it becomes about 1 cm deep. If you want to roll it out, you should make sure you grease the rolling pin so it doesn't stick to the dough.

Spread half of the filling on top and start rolling the dough from one end and put it into the cake tin (I suggest you use a rectangular bread loaf tin, about 31 cm long. Be careful to ensure that the edge is underneath and that the surface of the dough is the smooth side as this will help it not to crack in the oven.

Repeat the above with the other half of the dough – you should now have two lovely loaves ready to cover with the towel again and let rest for a further 15-30 min so that they rise.

Baking:

Turn your oven on gas mark 180 C (fan ovens)

Take the egg yolk and mix it and just before you put the loaves into the oven spread the egg on top, evenly.

Put both in the oven and let them bake for 45 min

When you take out, ideally remove from the loaves and cover again with the towel and let them cool.



Sweater Weather in Sibiu

Located in the south of Transylvania very close to the Carpathian Mountains, Sibiu becomes a winter wonderland after the first snow.





Fig, Mascarpone, and Amaretto Tart

By Myoung Rhee
Consultant, Obelisk Support

Firstly, I must profess that I have not ever made this recipe before. And secondly, the below is unabashedly my own highly abridged and assorted mix of a whole host of similar recipes found, randomly or otherwise, online – including Nigel Slater’s delicious take on a Fig Compote. Disclaimers aside, this is what I had actually been hoping to cook for our Christmas dinner party this year. And as the invites had already gone out (in September!), we are glad the Rule of 6 will be lifted just in time for a very merry Christmas.

Happy Christmas all!

TART

- 1 roll of sweet shortcrust pastry 250g
- 1 bag of (crunchy, rather than soft) amaretti biscuits 250g

MASCARPONE

- 1 large tub of mascarpone cheese 500g
- 1 egg medium
- 1 shot of Amaretto almond liqueur generous
- 1 Tbsp runny honey

FIGS

- 100g soft brown sugar
- 100g runny honey
- 8 large fresh figs
- 100ml medium-dry sherry
- 200ml double cream

HOW TO

- Blind bake the tart base: Roll the (pre-bought) sweet shortcrust pastry so that it will fit generously over and beyond a 10/11 inch flan tin.
- Lift up the pastry using a rolling pin and unroll it lightly over the tin; press in and line the tin with the pastry, leaving a slight lip, and otherwise cut off the excess pastry.
- Use fingers to push up the pastry at the sides slightly over the height of the tin so that when it shrinks during baking there's still enough depth for the filling.
- Blind bake (using baking beans over a round of greaseproof paper) for 15 mins at 180C.
- Remove paper and beans and cook for 5 mins further. Alternatively, do try Waitrose's pre-made tart base which is also excellent...
- Make the mascarpone filling: While the tart base is baking, crush a large number of the amaretti biscuits in a blender.
- Separately, mix the mascarpone, egg, honey and amaretto liqueur in a bowl.

HOW TO

- When the tart base is done, brush the base with honey, sprinkle a nice dense layer of the crushed amaretti biscuits over the base; and then spread the mascarpone mixture over top.
- Return to oven and cook for another 10 mins.
- Completely cool and then refrigerate for at least 1 hr.
- Make the fig compote: As Nigel Slater says, "put the sugar, honey and sherry into a wide, shallow pan and warm over a moderate heat. As the sugar starts to melt, cut each fig in half and place them, seeded side down, in the pan. As the figs start to soften, transfer them to a serving dish. Stir the cream into the pan, leave to bubble for a minute."
- Nigel says to serve this sherry jus straight over the figs from the hot pan, but I would leave both the figs and jus to cool, so these can be layered decoratively over the mascarpone tart just before serving.
- Slice cool and serve with a glass of Madeira.



2-ingredients mince pies

By Laura Vosper
Head of Talent,
Obelisk Support

Fun, easy and your
house will smell lovely -
with very little effort!

INGREDIENTS

- One jar of good-quality mincemeat
- One packet of ready rolled short-crust pastry

HOW TO

- Heat the oven to 200C or equivalent.
- On your own or with a willing child to help, cut out circles of pastry to line a 12-pie tray.
- Fill with a teaspoon of mincemeat
- Cut out 12 stars, sit on top
- Paint with beaten egg
- Bake until golden (about 15-20 minutes).
- Take out, allow to cool on a wire tray
- Place on a pretty plate and dust with icing sugar.
- Enjoy!



Natilla (Colombian Christmas Custard)

By Daniela Garcia
Consultant Experience
Manager, Obelisk Support

For me, the first sign that the Christmas season has arrived, is the smell of a Natilla; a firm custard-like pudding which is usually served alongside buñuelos, (round deep-fried cheese fritters) making it the ultimate, iconic Colombian Christmas treat. As a child I remember having as many slices as I could to help me stay awake, waiting to open the presents baby Jesus had brought at the stroke of midnight.

Feliz Navidad!

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups whole milk
- 1 heaped cup corn-starch
- 1 cup coconut milk, (not low-fat) - if the cream has separated in the can, give it a good mix before measuring)
- 14 oz condensed milk
- 3/4 cup grated coconut
- 3 sticks cinnamon
- 1 pinch ground cloves
- pinch salt
- 1 tbsp brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- Ground cinnamon or powdered sugar, to garnish

HOW TO

- Place the coconut milk and grated coconut in a blender until smooth. Set aside.
- In a medium saucepan, simmer 2 cups of milk over medium-low heat. Add the cinnamon sticks, and warm through for 10 minutes, or until the milk is slightly steaming.
- Add the coconut mixture to the warm milk, and stir to combine. Once it is warm, add the condensed milk, vanilla, clove, sugar, and salt. Stir for a minute.
- Increase heat to medium-high, and cook the mixture for another 10 minutes, make sure to stir frequently so the milk doesn't stick to the bottom of the pan.
- Meanwhile, combine the remaining 1 cup of milk with corn-starch in a bowl. Whisk until dissolved, the mixture should be thick.
- Remove the clove and cinnamon sticks.
- Reduce heat back to medium-low, and stir in the corn-starch mixture continuously for 4 minutes, or until it thickens. Make sure to stir constantly so that the corn-starch doesn't clump.
- Remove from heat, and pour the mixture into a greased loaf pan or greased cupcake/muffin tray.
- Refrigerate for 2 hours before serving or until firm.
- Garnish with ground cinnamon or powdered sugar. Enjoy!





Panettone bread and butter pudding

By Rashda Rana SC
Consultant, Obelisk Support

We were brought up by an Italian nanny who lived with us for 60 years (she brought up my mother and then was part of the package when my mother got married!). She made this for us on Boxing Day from leftovers of bread, Christmas pudding and, of course, panettone which in those days (a very long time ago) she used to bring over from Italy.

INGREDIENTS

- 750g of panettone (throw in any other bread or cake bits and pieces)
- 600ml of double cream
- 7 eggs (whole)
- 1 egg yolk
- 200g of caster sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 Tbsp of Demerara sugar

HOW TO

- Preheat the oven to 150°C/gas mark 2.
- Cut the panettone into 2cm thick slices and place in overlapping layers into a baking dish
- Bring the cream almost to the boil over a medium heat.
- In the meantime, whisk the eggs, yolk and sugar together.
- Pour the hot cream slowly into the eggs, whisking constantly to stop the eggs from scrambling.
- Add the vanilla, sieve the custard into a jug, and pour into the baking dish, covering all of the panettone.
- Baste any parts of the panettone that are dry, and leave to soak for 10 minutes.
- Then sprinkle the Demerara sugar over the top for a crispy topping.
- Cover with foil and bake for 40-45 minutes, or until the custard has set and the pudding is golden brown.
- Serve warm with lashings of cream.
- If there is actually any left, you can keep it in the fridge for a few days.
- To reheat cover with foil





Pavlova

By Jane Leader
Recruitment Manager,
Obelisk Support

The pavlova made a regular appearance at our Christmas lunch and at many large family gatherings. Often referred to as a 'pav' it was always a nice light summery dessert to make and eat, typically topped with whipped cream and sliced kiwifruit. There is still some disagreement about the nationality of its creator, but in New Zealand, we're calling it!

INGREDIENTS

- 4 egg whites
- Pinch of salt
- 1 cup of caster sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 2 tsp cornflour
- 1 tsp vinegar

HOW TO

- Preheat your oven to 150C.
- Beat the egg whites and salt until stiff peaks form. Gradually add the caster sugar beating all the time; it is most important to ensure that all of the sugar is completely dissolved. You should now have a wonderfully thick white glop!
- Next, lightly fold in the cornflour, vinegar and vanilla essence into the mix. Turn the mixture out into the centre of a baking tray lined with baking paper and shape into a circle.
- Turn the oven down to 140C and bake for 15 minutes, then turn the oven down to 120C and bake for a further 1 ¼ hours.
- Let it cool in the oven (ideally make it in the evening and let it sit in the oven overnight). Top with whipped cream and your choice of fruit.



Trifle

By Debbie Tembo
Client Relationship
Director, Obelisk Support

This is my childhood
Christmas favourite
trifle recipe.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 sponge cake
- Apricot jam
- Strawberry jelly
- Greengage jelly
- Custard
- 1 Can of canned peaches/Fruit cocktail/Fig preserve /Glazed figs
- Walnuts /Sprinkle peanuts
- Fresh Cream
- Glazed cherries
- Optional sherry

HOW TO

- Spread jam on sponge cake and layer in trifle dish.
- Make jelly and set aside. (my method,I sprinkle jelly over the cake) also the Sherry.
- Layer the fruit, nuts and custard in dish and the jelly as you prefer.
- Last layer is the Fresh cream and decorate with cherries and sprinkled nuts.



Vanillekipferl (Austrian vanilla crescents)

By Laure Latham
Marketing & CSR Manager,
Obelisk Support

When I was a teenager living in Bangkok, our German neighbours threw a yearly December open house with plates full of homemade German Christmas cookies. They looked beautiful, dusted white with icing sugar, and with full air conditioning blasting, this party gave a feel of European white Christmas in sharp contrast with the coconut trees and humidity outside.

This is how I discovered Vanillekipferl, Austrian almond cookies in the shape of crescent. They require very few ingredients - only a lot of patience. Typically, they are well worth inviting friends over for a wine evening with cookie making thrown in. We make them every year at home and they are always the first ones to go when we have guests over.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 vanilla bean
- 100g ground almonds
- 250g pastry flour
- 75g icing sugar
- 1 egg yolk
- 225g softened unsalted butter

HOW TO

- Preheat oven at 180C.
- Split the vanilla bean in two with a knife and scrape out the seeds.
- Make a shortcut pastry by mixing all the ingredients in a big bowl or blender with pastry hook.
- Roll out the dough into 3- or 4cm-long logs about 2cm in diameter, flatten slightly with the palm of your hand, store in the fridge for an hour.
- Take out the dough from the fridge and with a knife, cut out 2 or 3cm long chunks.
- Shape each piece into a crescent and place on a parchment-lined baking tray..
- Bake approximately 8 to 10 minutes. .
- Let cool and carefully roll in icing sugar so they are all dusted white.
- They are best eaten fresh out of the oven but will keep in a tin box for a couple of weeks in a cool place if you can wait that long.



Vegan fruity Banana Cake

By Nicola Evans
Consultant, Obelisk Support

I chose this recipe as it is a staple in our home. My son has allergies to egg and dairy so when the kids in his class at school were given cakes as treats at playtime, my son wasn't able to join in.



INGREDIENTS

- 2 large or 3 small bananas
- 115g caster sugar
- 60g melted vegan butter (vitalite) or equivalent of sunflower oil if you don't have vegan margarine
- 180g self raising flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- a sprinkling of ground cinnamon (optional)
- a few drops of vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons of dried sultanas
- teaspoon of demerara sugar
- Note:- If you prefer a chocolate version instead of dried fruit, then add dark choc chips instead or some walnut halves

HOW TO

- Mash the bananas in a bowl.
- Add the sugar and melted vegan butter (or sunflower oil), mix together, add vanilla extract and mix again.
- You can add the dried fruit now or after the flour.
- Add the self raising flour and the baking powder to the bowl together with a sprinkling of ground cinnamon and mix to form a batter.
- Put the mix into a loaf tin (I prefer to use a cake tin liner as its easier to get it out afterwards 180mmx90mm liner works well).
- Sprinkle demerara sugar over the top.
- Put in oven for between 30-40mins (I have an aga and it takes around 35mins in that but a fan assisted oven at 160-170 may be faster).
- Enjoy with a nice cup of tea!



Vegan oatmeal cookies

By Nicola Evans
Consultant, Obelisk Support

This is a nice hearty cookie that I adapted from several recipes with the aim of it being vegan (again) for my son. You really wouldn't notice as they taste yummy.



INGREDIENTS

- 140g rolled oats
- 125g all purpose flour
- 80g or thereabouts of dried raisins
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 200g brown sugar (I sometimes add less than this depending on how much of a sweet cookie you like)
- 100g vegan butter (vitalite)
- 3 tbsp Golden syrup or maple syrup
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tbsp soya milk (optional)

HOW TO

- Add rolled oats, flour, raisins, baking soda, salt and cinnamon to a mixing bowl and mix together.
- Cream the vegan butter and brown sugar together then add the golden (or maple) syrup and vanilla extract.
- Mix the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients by hand, stirring until the mixture is very crumbly.
- Add soya milk and mix in.
- See if you can roll some into a ball- it should be sticky enough to do so. If it's still too crumbly, add a little more soy milk or a little more syrup to act as a binder.
- When rolling into balls, you may find you are pressing them into balls rather than rolling which is fine.
- Place the rolled balls (no bigger for each one than a walnut as they will get bigger when they cook; but if you prefer big cookies make the balls bigger) onto a parchment lined baking tray.
- Bake in oven (170 if fan assisted or top oven in aga) for between 10-15 mins. Keep checking as they can brown quickly.
- The edges should be firm and the tops lightly browned. They will come out soft, but will firm up when they cool down.
- When they come out of the oven put them on a wire cooling tray to cool completely.



Vegan shortbread

By Nicola Evans
Consultant, Obelisk Support

I adapted this into a vegan version from the wonderful Scottish book *Aran* by Flora Shedden. Her book is a lovely read, even the photography alone is worth it. The great thing is these 'shorties' as we call them up here in Scotland are perfect festive treats as the children can help with this and cut them into shapes with festive star and heart cookie cutters.



INGREDIENTS

- 140g caster sugar, plus extra for dusting (I use icing sugar for dusting)
- 280g vegan butter (vitalite)
- 425g plain all purpose flour

HOW TO

- Preheat oven to 140c (or if using aga use a cold shelf to moderate the heat a bit).
- Put some baking paper on a baking tray.
- Beat the sugar and butter until well combined- a wooden spoon works fine with soft vegan butter.
- Once the sugar and butter mix is pale and combined, add the flour. Beat it again until the mixture resembles sandy breadcrumbs.
- You can either tip into a lined tin and press down lightly to bake, or knead into a ball and put in the fridge for 30 mins to harden up a bit.
- Then roll out with a rolling pin and get the children to help with cookie cutters to make some nice shapes.
- Bake for about 15-30 mins (depending on whether you keep the mix together in a tin or if you have individual shortbread made with cookie cutters and also depending on your oven. If the mix is kept whole and is denser it will take longer to cook).
- Once it comes out of the oven and is cool, sprinkle with caster sugar or icing sugar.



Chocolate Yule Log

By Elizabeth Rimmer

CEO of LawCare, the charity that promotes and supports good mental health in the legal community across the UK and Ireland

This is an easy recipe and very forgiving as you can cover up any cracks with icing. It's a real crowd-pleaser.

I love the rituals of cooking and in particular Christmas cooking. It's a time to pause, put the radio on and lose myself in my thoughts. I make this yule log every Christmas with my son, although now that he's 15 he does have more options than spending time with me in the kitchen, but a bowl to be licked will usually lure him off a screen elsewhere. When he was little he would stand on a chair, in his dinosaur apron and it wouldn't be long before there was more chocolate on him than in the mixing bowl. I still have that apron hanging up on the back of the kitchen door, now worn from time to time when my 6 year old niece visits.

One of my greatest pleasures is friends and family around the table. Eating together deepens and strengthens relationships; it's a place to share ideas, stories, debate the news of the day, put the world to rights, laugh, cry or shout. There's life in all its messy glory at the table and that must be why I love cooking (and eating) so much.

INGREDIENTS

- 6 large eggs (separated)
- 150g caster sugar
- 50g cocoa powder
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 5 tsp icing sugar (to decorate)

ICING

- 175g dark chocolate (chopped)
- 250g icing sugar
- 225g soft butter
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract



HOW TO

- Preheat the oven to 180°C/160°C Fan/gas mark 4/350°F.
- In a large, clean bowl whisk the egg whites until thick and peaking, then, still whisking, sprinkle in 50g / ¼ cup of the caster sugar and continue whisking until the whites are holding their peaks but not dry.
- In another bowl, whisk the egg yolks and the remaining caster sugar until the mixture is pale and thick. Add the vanilla extract, sieve the cocoa powder over, then fold both in.
- Lighten the yolk mixture with a couple of spoons of the egg whites, folding them in.
- Then add the remaining whites in thirds, folding them in carefully to avoid losing the air.
- Line a Swiss roll tin with baking parchment, leaving a generous overhang at the ends and sides, and folding the parchment into the corners to help the paper stay anchored.
- Pour in the cake mixture and bake in the oven for 20 minutes. Let the cake cool a little before turning it out onto another piece of baking parchment.
- If you dust this piece of parchment with a little icing sugar it may help with preventing it from sticking. Cover loosely with a clean tea towel.
- To make the icing, melt the chocolate – either in a heatproof bowl suspended over a pan of simmering water or, in a microwave, – and let it cool.
- Put the icing sugar into a processor and blitz to remove lumps, add the butter and process until smooth.
- Add the cooled, melted chocolate and the tablespoon of vanilla extract and pulse again to make a smooth icing.
- Sit the flat chocolate cake on a large piece of baking parchment. Trim the edges of the Swiss roll.
- Spread some of the icing thinly over the sponge, going right out to the edges.
- Start rolling from the long side facing you, taking care to get a tight roll from the beginning, and roll up to the other side. (I sometimes use whipped cream as the filling)
- Cut one or both ends slightly at a gentle angle, reserving the remnants, and place the Swiss roll on a board or long dish.
- The remnants, along with the trimmed-off bits earlier, are to make a branch or two; you get the effect by placing a piece of cake at an angle to look like a branch coming off the big log.
- Spread the yule log with the remaining icing, covering the cut-off ends as well as any branches.
- Create a wood-like texture by marking along the length of the log with a skewer.
- Decorate and dust with icing sugar, to make it look like snow.



Answers to the Holiday Legal Quiz

#1 Turkey

#2 Doug Emlhoff

#3 Elle Woods

#4 Mince pies

#5 Fine

**#6 Fake Law and Stories of the Law
and How It's Broken**

#7 1660

#8 Greece, Italy, Spain and Germany

#9 1958

**#10 There is no “claimant” (or
“plaintiff”!) in a criminal trial.**



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