



The Restaurant

@ The Mill

Winter

Warmers

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1. Winter sausages – hearty food for hearty people!

Serves 4 people

8 sausages

Two large onions (one white, one red)

3 medium size sweet potatoes (or two large ones)

2 large carrots

2 large parsnips

Olive oil

Fresh rosemary and two bay leaves

Freshly ground salt and pepper and some mixed herbs

Method:

Peel and cut into 1 inch pieces the sweet potatoes, parsnips and carrots, bring to the boil in a pan of salted water for about 10 minutes so they are still 'whole' and firm. Drain.

Peel and chop the onions into four quarters.

Pop sausages into a pan of boiling, lightly salted water. Simmer gently for ten minutes, cool slightly and remove the skins, but leave whole.

Place the sweet potatoes, carrots, parsnips and onions into an ovenproof dish. Pour a little olive oil over the top, add the seasoning and herbs, mix lightly with your hands.

Cook at 200°C in the centre of the oven. After 10 minutes add the sausages and cook for a further 35-40 minutes (turn the sausages half-way through the cooking time) until everything is golden brown.

Note: Simmering the sausages first enhances their flavour - you will be surprised at the difference it makes!

Serve:

- 1) Delicious with a hunk of crusty granary bread and a home-made tomato sauce on the side, or
- 2) Serve with cauliflower cheese for a hearty meal, or
- 3) Serve it in a large Yorkshire pudding and top with red wine gravy

Turn the sausages half-way through the cooking time

Whichever way you serve it, this really is winter comfort eating!

Sharing a meal with friends and loved ones is special, meals are for sitting around a table enjoying good food and good conversation. It's about laughter and love - whether you are in a restaurant or at home



2. Red Wine Chicken in a Pot

Serves: 4 people (and some will want seconds)

4 large or 6 small chicken breasts
1½ oz (or 3½ level tablespoons) of cornflour
Chicken stock cube (or small stock pot)
2 bay leaves
Freshly ground salt and pepper
Dried mint and thyme (or mixed herbs) about 2 level tea-
spoons
1 level tablespoon of sugar
8 small onions
8 rashers of lean bacon
A little olive oil
½lb button mushrooms
¼ pint red wine
¾ pint water



Method:

Wash and dry the chicken breasts; season the cornflour with salt and pepper and coat the chicken. Add any cornflour remaining to the water and set aside. Heat a little olive oil in a pan and brown the chicken until the cornflour crust is golden. Place the chicken in an ovenproof dish. Peel the onions and clean the mushrooms, leaving them whole. Slice the bacon into one inch strips. Saute the onions, mushrooms and bacon in the pan, then add to the chicken. Use the same pan, adding the water (with cornflour), wine, stock, sugar and herbs; bring to the boil stirring continuously. Pour the sauce over the chicken, onions, mushrooms and bacon; add the bay leaves and cover with a double layer of silver foil. Cook in the centre of the oven at 190°C for an hour and a half.



Roasted winter vegetables—carrots, parsnips, swede—the perfect accompaniment!

Serve: with roasted root vegetables. Chop into small pieces, scatter on a baking tray, season with salt and pepper, then drizzle with olive oil. Roast for about an hour.

Note: perfect for a dinner party when you need something you can turn down low and leave in the oven if there is a delay in serving

3. Pork and Stuffing Casserole

Serves 6 people—delicious served reheated the next day

1 pork loin joint to serve 6

10 fl oz of red wine and 30 fl oz water

1/2 packet (or 40g) of dried sage and onion stuffing mix

A selection of winter vegetables (3 large x carrots, 1 x swede, 3 x parsnip, 1 x medium turnip)

2 medium size onions

Freshly ground salt and pepper

2 packets of pork gravy mix

A little olive oil

Dried sage

2 bay leaves

Method:

Wash the joint of pork and place in a large saucepan. Whisk the two packets of gravy mix with the wine and water in a jug and pour over the pork. Add two bay leaves. Simmer, covering with a lid, for 90 minutes and until the meat is tender. Place the meat on a platter to cool and then cut into 6 slices. Keep the cooking liquid but remove the bay leaves.

Slice and dice the onions and saute them in a little olive oil for ten minutes, until they go slightly brown and put to one side. Dice the vegetables into 2-3cm pieces and place in a large saucepan. Add the liquid from the pork - the red wine and the water - to the vegetables and season with salt, pepper and dried sage. Add half a packet of dried sage and onion stuffing mix. Stir well and bring to the boil, add the onions, then simmer gently **STIRRING FREQUENTLY SO THE STUFFING DOESN'T STICK TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SAUCEPAN**. The vegetables should still be whole and slightly 'al dente' - about an hour. Add additional water if the gravy becomes too thick.

To serve: If using small earthenware, single portion dishes - place one slice of pork in the bottom and one very generous ladle of vegetables/gravy over the top. Pop in the oven for 30 minutes to finish cooking; if you are going to cool and freeze some of the portions then cover those with silver foil.

Best either a) reheated the next day in the oven, 200°C 30-40 minutes until bubbling OR b) frozen, defrosted and then re-heated. Serve with green peas and a side of mash, or with sliced potatoes (below). Alternatively, add a dumpling to each dish as a substitute for a potato side dish.

Sliced potato dish - cut some small potatoes lengthways, part-boil them, baste with olive oil and season with freshly ground pepper, sea salt and a sprinkling of mixed herbs. Cook in the oven alongside the Pork and Stuffing Casserole.

Note: If freezing do this in individual portions and don't forget to defrost thoroughly before re-heating

4. a) The Quick and Easy

Canapé

(background photo)

Make sure you always keep a packet of garlic bread slices in the freezer. No need to defrost them - simply lay them on a baking tray. Grate a tasty cheddar cheese over the top, slice some tomatoes (halve cherry tomatoes, or thinly slice larger ones). Sprinkle some dried mixed herbs on the top, then season with black pepper. Bake in the oven, 190°C until the cheese bubbles and the crust is crisp.

It's perfect finger food AND quick to assemble!

4. b) Tomato and Bacon Ciabatta Slice

Serves: 8 as a supper dish, or cut up into slices to give around 20 slices as a canapé

3 x 400g tins of plum tomatoes (chop them roughly in the juice, cutting off the stems)

500g passata (your supermarket will stock a variety, I use one with basil added to it)

Two large ciabatta breads

Eight rashers of back bacon (smoked or unsmoked)

Five or six cloves of garlic (or to taste) finely chopped

Dried mixed herbs (one teaspoon)

2 fresh bay leaves and 2 sprigs of rosemary, finely chopped

One large red onion, finely chopped

Grated 'tasty' cheddar cheese

Shaves of Parmesan cheese to finish

Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

A dessertspoon of olive oil

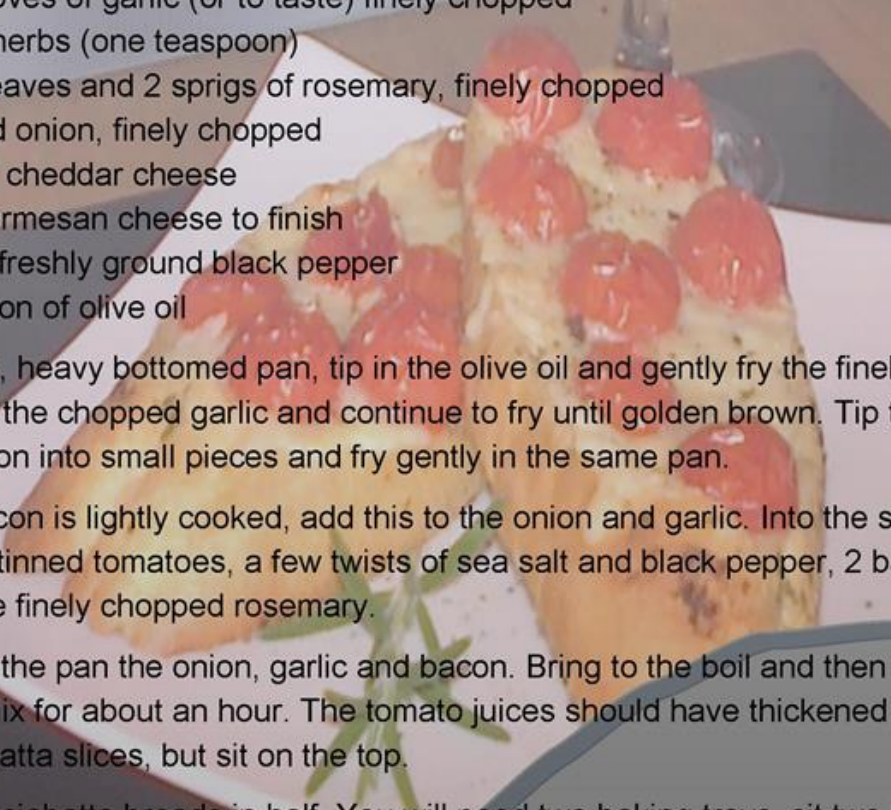
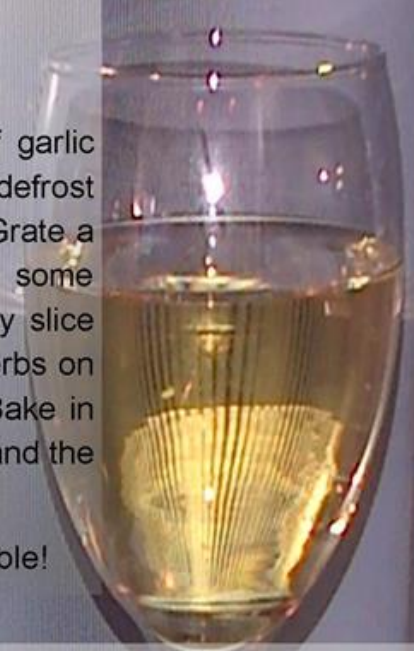
Using a large, heavy bottomed pan, tip in the olive oil and gently fry the finely chopped onion for a few minutes; add the chopped garlic and continue to fry until golden brown. Tip the mixture into a dish, then chop the bacon into small pieces and fry gently in the same pan.

When the bacon is lightly cooked, add this to the onion and garlic. Into the same pan tip the passata, the chopped tinned tomatoes, a few twists of sea salt and black pepper, 2 bay leaves, the dried mixed herbs and the finely chopped rosemary.

Tip back into the pan the onion, garlic and bacon. Bring to the boil and then simmer over a low heat to reduce this mix for about an hour. The tomato juices should have thickened so that the mixture will not soak the ciabatta slices, but sit on the top.

Slice the two ciabatta breads in half. You will need two baking trays, sit two halves alongside each other. Spoon the tomato mixture over the top, distributing it equally between the four slices of ciabatta. Layer generously with grated cheddar cheese and put in the oven at 190°C for about 40 minutes, until golden brown on the top. Lay a few Parmesan shavings over the top whilst hot.

Slice as required. If serving as a supper dish add a fresh green salad. If serving as a hearty canapé, slice and serve on a small napkin. This is also delicious served cold, the next day.





5. Easy Apple Muffins with a touch of spice - or not!

Ingredients:

2oz margarine

2oz caster sugar

1 egg

4 oz plain flour

Pinch of salt

1 teaspoon baking powder

½ teaspoon cinnamon

3fl oz milk and water (half and half)

1 medium apple - peeled, cored and finely chopped

Either a) 1 level dessertspoon of caster sugar + ¼ teaspoon of cinnamon or b) a sprinkling of granulated sugar for the topping

Cream the margarine and caster sugar, then beat in the egg. Sift together the flour, baking powder, cinnamon and salt and add to the mixture. Gradually add small amounts of water and milk to the mix until everything has been combined. Fold in the apple and spoon into buttered, individual muffin tins/moulds. Mix together a) 1 level dessertspoon of caster sugar and the cinnamon and sprinkle over the top of b) shake a little granulated sugar over the top to give a 'crunch'.

Bake at 220°C for 15 minutes. Cook until golden brown. Make large quantities as these freeze well. Serve: no need ... they disappear!



6. Lemon & Pear Bread and Butter Pudding with white wine & honey sauce (with variations)

4 firm pears
White wine
1 tablespoon honey

Prepare this the day before you are serving it for the best results.

Place the four, peeled pears in a small, but deep pan. Cover with white wine and add the honey.

Simmer/poach until softer but still firm. Place the pears in a dish to cool, then halve and take out the core and stalk. Cover and refrigerate. Turn up the heat on the liquor remaining in the pan, add some thinly sliced lemon rind (only the outer yellow part, try to avoid the white pithy part as that is bitter). When the liquid has reduced by half, cool and refrigerate.

On the day:

8 slices of white, crust-less bread
A few slithers of thinly sliced rind of the lemon
2 eggs
3 level tablespoons of caster sugar
1 pint of milk
A little brown sugar

Lay the halved pears in an ovenproof dish. Butter the crust-less bread lightly and cut into 2 inch pieces, layer over the pears. Beat the eggs and milk, add the caster sugar and pour the mixture over the pears and bread. Sprinkle the lemon rind and brown sugar on the top. Cook at 190°C for 30-45 minutes, until the mixture is firm to the touch, but springy and the top is golden brown.

Serve: hot, or cold. Drizzle over the white wine and honey sauce. Indulge – add a spoonful of clotted cream, or a little drizzle of single or double cream, or a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

Ring the changes: make a marzipan and apricot version. Instead of pears, add tinned apricots to the dish and small balls of marzipan. Equally as delicious!

7. Old fashioned Windfall Apple Pie (with a twist)

Serves: 4-6, best eaten hot

Pastry: 4oz plain flour

1oz butter

1oz lard

Juice of half a medium-sized orange

Filling: Grated rind of 1 orange

1½lbs windfall* cooking apples, peeled and sliced

5fl oz of single cream

Juice of half a medium-sized orange

3oz caster sugar

*Peel, core, slice and blanch them in the autumn, then freeze in 'pie dish' size portions. Defrost thoroughly before use.

Method:

Heat oven to 200°C.

Rub together with your finger tips the flour, butter and lard until it resembles fine breadcrumbs. Use enough orange juice to bind the pastry together. Chill the pastry in the fridge whilst you prepare the filling.

Put the sliced apples into a 1½ pint pie dish. Add the grated orange rind. Pour on the cream and coat the apples. Add the sugar to the remaining orange juice and sprinkle over the apples.

Gently knead the pastry and roll out to a little larger than the pie dish so that you can cut a narrow strip to line the edges of the pie dish and still have a large enough circle to cover the pie. Wet the edge of the pie dish with a little water and press a thin strip of pastry around the entire dish. Dampen the top of the strip, lift the circle of pastry and lay over the pie dish. Press down the edges and trim, using the handle end of a large spoon press down to make a small pattern on the edge of the pastry and to help seal it.

With any remaining cuttings, form a ball and roll it out. Cut out some pastry leaves. Cut a whole in the centre of the pie and lay the leaves around the hole. Score each of them with a knife to give them the markings of a leaf. Place in the oven for 15 minutes, then reduce the temperature to 180°C and cook until golden brown – at least 10-15 minutes.

Serve: best served hot with a scoop of vanilla ice cream

S. Heavenly Crepes!

Crepe batter:

4oz. plain flour
Pinch of salt
Grated rind of half a lemon
1 egg
1/2 pint milk
1/2oz. butter, melted
Butter for frying

For orange butter sauce:

5-6 white sugar cubes (very important)
3oz. butter
2oz. caster sugar
2 large oranges
1 tbsp. juice of an orange
1 tbsp. cointreau
1 tbsps. Brandy
in the fridge

Serves: 4 people - make them the day before and keep

Sift the flour and the salt; mix in the grated lemon rind. Add the egg and beat into a smooth batter. Add the milk and melted butter, beating well. Heat a small knob of butter in a 7" frying pan until hot, pour off any surplus into a small dish. Pour in enough batter to cover the pan thinly and cook until golden brown. Turn using a palette knife, and brown the other side.

As the crepes are ready stack them on a large plate. Leave to cool, then wrap in cling film and place in the fridge.

To make the orange buttery sauce, rub the sugar cubes over the skin of the washed orange until each cube has absorbed the oil in the skin. Crush the cubes in a pestle and mortar. Beat the butter until soft, add the crushed sugar cubes and add in the caster sugar. Beat until soft and creamy, then add in the orange juice and Cointreau. Mix well, cover and pop into the fridge.

To assemble the dish (same, or next day): take one crepe and place a little of the orange butter sauce in the middle, fold into four and repeat, arranging the crepes in a shallow ovenproof dish. Melt the remaining orange butter in a small pan and pour over the crepes. Put the dish in the oven for about 20-30 minutes 180°C, turn down the temperature a little if the edges start to over-crisp. At the table, place the dish on a warming dish (the sort with tea lights), pour the brandy into a table-spoon or serving spoon and heat the bowl of the spoon with a long-stemmed match or lighter. Pour over the crepes in the dish and ignite the brandy.

Serve at once. Delicious served one crepe per person, with a scoop of good quality, vanilla ice cream.





This novel is not just about the owners, Hilary and Ben, but as The Restaurant @ The Mill thrives and comes alive with the conversations and emotions of people unconnected in their day-to-day lives, another five stories unfold. Only one thing is certain, life is an eternal struggle and that is the common thread, which ties us all together. Life, love, sadness and happiness...

The owners, the staff and the customers – each of the six individual stories reflect a different set of life and love problems. One thing ties them together, they all frequent the Mill.

Is happiness guaranteed? Not necessarily, but when love fails it simply means it's time to move on. Can young love survive when two people have been parted for most of their lives? Can a lonely man ever find the peace and true love he seeks? Will old wounds ever heal and can people learn to love again?

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