

Marion's Meals

Introduction

Marion, my mother-in-law, is in her "senior years", lives alone and is not able to get out of the house.

Marion's Meals is a series of recipes in a style of uncomplicated ready meals that are usually frozen but can also be eaten fresh.

Marion tried many ready meals from major supermarkets and home delivery companies but kept asking for "home cooking".

Marion's Meals now has an extensive catalogue of soups, meals, sides and a few sweet treats. Sauces and desserts may follow.

Of course, these recipes are not exclusively for Marion and many other folks have benefited from these meals!

Some folks just like the simplicity of the recipes and use them for their own family.

Main Principles

Marion's Meals are based on four main principles:

1. Meals must be quick and easy to make in batches, in a domestic kitchen.
2. Meals must use minimal, and common, Ingredients. Recipes are stripped to the basics.
3. Meals must be suitable for freezing.
4. Meals must be easy to reheat, serve and eat.

Other Requirements

The main principles are based on Marion's main requirements, but she has other requirements that we were also able to accommodate.

- The meals must not have strong flavours or have any level of heat from spices.
- Seasoning must be used very sparingly.
- The dishes must be easy to eat and digest for anyone that does not have a strong bite or a robust stomach.

This results in meals that may seem bland as they lack a bit of the flavour or the depth you would expect in main-stream recipes.

The meals are mostly "made from scratch" so you can add seasoning, herbs, and other flavours to the basic dishes to suit your own tastes.

I added a few other principles to apply when doing the cooking.

- I shall source local ingredients with many of the vegetables coming from my own garden.
- There are no specialist ingredients. They are available in a typical domestic store cupboard.
- I can buy everything I need from the local small supermarket.
- I feel no shame for using bought sauces or using other shortcuts.

I try to cook meals that are healthy and have a bit of variety. I am not a nutritionist so I might get that wrong. Of course, I also want to make meals that Marion will eat and enjoy.

I have cooked for Marion's needs and have not considered other people that may be vegetarian, vegan or have food allergies. You need to be aware of that if you use my recipes.

I am not a professional cook, but I have been amateur cooking for decades.

Why Cook for Freezing?

The original concept of Marion's Meals was targeted at an individual (me!) cooking meals to give to one person, Marion!

I wanted to fill the freezers so that I could offer Marion a choice of meals for each weekly delivery, with meals that I knew Marion would enjoy.

However, I did not want to be cooking every day – or even every week. This proved a fortunate approach during the times I was unable to cook. I could still arrange deliveries from meals I had in the freezers.

The recipes will focus on small batch cooking for freezing, usually from 4 to 12 portions per recipe.

Despite the focus on freezing meals, the recipes still work well for eating fresh.

Using the Recipes

Each recipe sheet is laid out the same way and includes:

- Ingredients
- Options
- Equipment Required
- Preparation
- Method
- Notes & Tips
- Portions
- Storing
- Heating & Serving
- Techniques and Principles

I have also tried to include photographs of the preparation, cooking, and finished dish.

Many recipes work just as well if you use slightly different ingredients or quantities. Some do not, particularly when it comes to the sweet treats and baking.

In some of these recipes I have added a Test Kitchen section where I try to break the recipe and show the results of straying from the original recipe.

There is more about Test Kitchen on the Marion's Meals website.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Susan Brown who unknowingly inspired me to write Marion's Meals and who helped me over the years with testing so many of the recipes.

Thanks also to "my maw" for giving me the help as a child to understand the benefits and methods for this style of cooking.

Thanks to Helen, Adam and Douglas for their suggestions, support, and motivation, to help me complete Marion's Meals.

Thanks finally to those that have bought a recipe book or who have donated to Marion's Meals. This helps me provide recipe books, free of charge, to carers, those working on a budget or those that just want to get into cooking for the first time.

Pass it Forward

Marion's Meals is not a business or a charity – It is simply an attempt to pass on my experience so that others may benefit.

You are encouraged to use any of these recipes for yourself or for any vulnerable people you look out for, free of royalties - (ha, ha – as if!) – just don't try to make any money from them!

I'm also happy for you to share these recipes, I may even be able to send folks a copy of the series in a snazzy binder or as a bound book.

Changes and Additions

I'm happy, even keen, to build on and share these recipes.

If you have any suggestions for additions to the series, please email me with the name of your suggested dish.

You are not required to, but it would help, if you also gave me the recipe - or at least an idea of the ingredients list.

Note, however, I may tweak your idea or recipe to suit the principles of Marion's Meals and your only reward for contributing is your name mentioned on the recipe sheet.

I have cooked every recipe in the series – many times – but I can't be sure I have found every error in the printed copy!

If you use the recipes and find a mistake in my write-up or you would like to share feedback on your results, please let me know so I can continually improve Marion's Meals.

Mailing List

If you are added to the mailing list, I will keep you informed about updates and changes.

Sign up at www.marionsmeals.com or email me at hello@marionsmeals.com.

Supporting Marion's Meals

These recipes are all available for use, free of charge, but if you like the concept or the recipes, you are invited to donate to the CGS Philanthropy Fund as a wee thank you.

This can be a one-off donation, or even just a pound or two, here and there. Of course, a regular small donation (via Standing Order) is the most efficient way to donate.

Donations are absolutely, 100%, voluntary and not required.

If you are willing and able to contribute to the charity fund, the best place is via the Marion's Meals website that has a link to GoFundMe.

Alternatively, email hello@marionsmeals.com and you will receive bank details for a direct donation or Standing Order.

At this time, 2022, Marion's Meals is not a registered charity so if you are not happy contributing, don't!

The CGS Philanthropy Fund was set up by a small group of ten friends that make contributions at every golf outing or poker game they attend. They have also arranged special charity matches to help support the fund.

The CGS Guys contributed and donated over £5,000 between 2011 and 2021.

The winner of the annual CGS Golf Championship selects the beneficiary for the year. This has included:

- Help For Heroes
- CHAS (Twice)
- SUDEP (Epilepsy)
- FMB Acute Endowment Fund
- Cancer Research Scotland (Twice)
- Alzheimer's Scotland
- Foetal Meds Ward, Victoria Hospital
- Teenage Cancer Trust

