



Spring Recipes

Many of the raw produce used in these recipes are at their best during the spring months. Please be responsible when foraging and leave some for wildlife.

Plant Identification is key.

Please enjoy.

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Wild Picks

Wild Garlic Pesto

Ingredients

200g wild garlic stems and leaves,
washed
50g hard cheese, grated
1 small garlic clove crushed
1 lemon, juiced plus extra for
seasoning
50g hazelnuts, toasted
100ml extra virgin olive oil or
rapeseed oil
pinch of sea salt
pinch of black pepper



Method

- Wash the wild garlic removing any soil or dirt, roughly chop or tear and put into a food processor. Blitz for a few seconds then add the garlic and hard cheese, blitz again.
- Place the hazelnuts in a dry frying pan and lightly toast until golden in colour always moving them around so not to burn. Allow to cool.
- Add the hazelnuts, lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper to the food processor then blitz to a smooth consistency.
- Check for seasoning adding more lemon juice, salt or pepper until happy with taste.



Not keen on wild garlic, you can replace it with basil, borage leaves or even rocket.

Best used straight away or store this in a sealed jar in a fridge for up to 5 days.

You can use other nuts like pine, almond or pecan.

To make this pesto vegan, replace the hard cheese with a vegan alternative.



Wild Garlic & Rosemary Hot Cross Buns



Ingredients

150ml whole milk
50g unsalted butter
75ml water
50g wild garlic leaves, stalks and flowers
20g rosemary
450g strong white bread flour
7g instant yeast
10g salt
1 large egg, beaten
120g mature cheddar, grated
40g hard cheese, grated
oil for greasing

For the cross

8tbsp flour
7 tbsp water
1tsp finely chopped wild garlic leaves
1tsp finely chopped parsley
1 small egg, beaten for brushing

Method

- In a saucepan, combine the milk, butter and water then over a low heat gently warm until the butter has melted. Take off the heat and allow to cool slightly.
- Finely chop the wild garlic and rosemary then add to the warm milk mixture stirring to combine.
- In a large bowl combine the dry ingredients, make a well in the centre then pour in the cooled milk mixture and the beaten egg. Bring together to form a rough dough. lightly dust a work surface with flour and knead the dough until it's soft and firm that springs back when poked with your finger. Place dough in a clean well oiled bowl, cover with a cloth or clingfilm and leave in a warm place until doubled in size. approx. 1-2 hours.
- After the dough has proved and doubled in size gently punch it down making it slightly flat, add in the cheeses, fold, then knead together for 5 minutes until fully incorporated. Divide and split the dough into 12 equal pieces, place on a baking tray cover and allow the dough to prove for another hour.
- Preheat the oven to 220C, 200 fan, gas mark 6. To make the paste for the cross add the flour, water, wild garlic and parsley together into a bowl, mix well and place inside a piping bag. Brush the buns with the beaten egg then pipe on the cross. Bake in the preheated oven for 20-25 minutes until golden brown. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely or serve warm.



Nettle, Rosemary & Roasted Garlic Bread

Ingredients

500g strong white bread flour
7g yeast
10g salt
10g white sugar
230ml tepid water
3tbsp extra virgin olive oil
100g young shoots of nettle leaves
1tbsp fresh rosemary
1/2tsp freshly ground black pepper
1tsp dried oregano
1 bulb of garlic
extra olive oil for brushing
pinch sea salt flakes



Method

- To roast the garlic heat the oven to 220C, 200C fan, gas mark 6. Wrap the bulb of garlic in foil and bake for 20 minutes until soft and roasted. Take the garlic out the foil and squeeze the garlic out of the bulb to be left with a garlic puree. Leave to cool.
- In a large bowl, combine the water, yeast and sugar then allow to stand for 10 minutes until foamy. Bring a small saucepan of water to a steady boil and blanch the nettle leaves for a few minutes, drain, finely chop and set a side.



- Combine the flour, salt and 3tbsp of olive oil to the yeast mixture bringing it together to form a dough. If it seems too wet then add more flour and vice versa if it's dry add in water a little bit at a time. Lightly dust a work surface with flour and knead the dough for about 10 minutes.
- Incorporate the nettle leaves, rosemary, oregano, black pepper and roasted garlic into the dough kneading for a further 5 minutes. Place the dough into a well oiled bowl, cover and leave in a warm place to prove for 1-2 hours.

Wild Picks

- Once the dough has at least doubled in size gently punch it down and then shape the dough into a rounded loaf. Using a sharp knife make a criss-cross on the top of the dough. Dust a baking tray with flour, place the dough on the tray, cover and leave to rise until doubled in size. approx. 1 hour.
- Preheat the oven to 220C, 200C fan, gas mark 6. Once the dough has risen brush the top with olive oil, sprinkle over the sea salt and some freshly chopped rosemary.
- Bake in the oven for 25-30 minutes until golden brown, crisp and hollow when knocked from the underside.
- Allow the bread to cool completely or serve warm allowing the bread to cool for at least 10 minutes before cutting into it. This bread goes great with a good olive oil, freshly ground pepper and balsamic vinegar.



Wild Picks

Dandelion Root Coffee

Preparing the Dandelion root

- Start by finding some dandelion and digging up the roots. If you have this growing in your garden then great, digging up the countryside is not ideal and if your on private land you will need to get the owners permission first to do this.
- When you have collected a sufficient amount of dandelion root brush off any excess mud, then wash in cold water ensuring that they are clean and completely free of dirt. Chop this into rough 1cm cubes.
- Place on a baking tray and roast in a preheated oven at 200C, 180 fan, gas mark 5 for around 45 minutes until fully roasted.
- Once out of the oven and cooled, grind with a pestle and mortar or coffee grinder to a smooth powder. Store in a air tight container.

Ingredients—makes 1 cup

1-2tsp ground dandelion root
250ml boiling water
milk to serve
honey to taste



Method

- Place the ground dandelion root in a coffee plunger and add the boiling water.
- Leave to infuse for around 10 minutes, pour into your desired mug.
- Serve with milk and honey.

This style of coffee is caffeine free, you could try adding some regular ground coffee for that caffeine hit. I use a ratio of 2/3 dandelion root to 1/3 ground coffee.

Wild Picks

Wild Venison Pie

Ingredients

500g wild venison, cut into chunks
50g plain flour
oil, I used wild garlic infused olive oil
8 shallots, peeled and halved
1 onion, sliced
2 carrots, peeled and finely diced
1 stick celery, finely diced,
8 stalks swiss chard, roughly chopped
1 turnip, peeled and finely diced
200g mushrooms, sliced
4 crushed garlic cloves
12 wild garlic leaves
sprig of rosemary and thyme
handful fresh oregano , 2 bay leaves
750ml good quality beef stock
salt and pepper
rough puff pastry, page 8
1 egg, beaten



Method

- In a bowl add the plain flour salt and pepper, mix together then add in the venison to coat the meat.
- Heat 2 tbsp oil in a large saucepan until lightly smoking then fry off the meat in batches to seal, then remove on to a plate. Add more oil if the pan becomes dry.
- Add 1tbsp oil to the same pan on a medium heat then fry off the onion, shallots, carrots and celery until soft and slightly browned.
- Add the swiss chard stalks, turnip, mushrooms and bay leaves and continue to fry for a further 5 minutes. Chop together the wild garlic leaves and oregano adding these to the pan along with the rosemary, thyme and garlic. Return the meat to the pan along with any juices.
- Fry all ingredients in the pan for 2 minutes before adding in the beef stock, a generous pinch of salt and some freshly ground black pepper. Bring to a boil and simmer gently for around 30 minutes. Turn off the heat and allow to cool while you prepare the pastry.
- Preheat the oven to 200C fan. Roll out the pastry to 5mm thick. Using a 20cm round pie dish, place the meat filling into the base. Layer the pastry over the top of the pie dish trimming off the edges with a knife. Egg wash the top of the pie and crack some black pepper over the top. Cut a slit in the middle of the pie to allow steam to escape.
- Bake in the oven for 25—35 minutes until crisp, remove from oven and allow to sit for 5 minutes. Serve the pie with roasted blue heritage vitanoire potatoes and steamed kale.



Rough Puff Pastry



Ingredients

- 350g plain flour
- 85g lard or vegetable fat , cold
- 85g unsalted butter , cold
- 180ml tepid water

Method

- Add flour to a large bowl. Cut the butter and lard into cubes then add this to the flour. Pour in half the water and using a table knife. Mix together adding more water if needed to form a dough. Do not work the dough as the chunks of butter and lard are needed to form the layers.
- Flour a work surface then roll the dough out to 20cm. Fold the top half down then the bottom half over the top. Rotate 90 degrees and roll the dough again then folding as before.
- Place in the fridge for at least 30 minutes before using.