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opening extract from

Yummy Stuff: Ros Asquith's Teen Cookbook

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serves 1

Boiled egg & soldiers (v)



- 2 free-range eggs
- 2 slices of bread
- butter

What to do

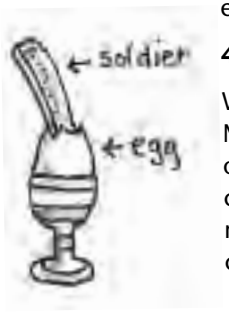
1 Half fill a small saucepan with water and bring to the boil. Place the eggs in the water using a wooden spoon (you can use any old spoon, of course, but a metal one gets too hot to handle) and simmer. Leave the eggs for 4 minutes for a soft egg (set a timer to get it just right), or 5 minutes for a medium egg. (My ideal egg is 4 and a half minutes).

If you leave the egg longer, it'll be a hard-boiled egg. You won't be able to dip the soldiers in it, but it'll be good for a picnic.

2 While they're cooking, put some bread in the toaster or under the grill and, when it's ready, butter it. Cut the toast into strips to make the soldiers.

3 When the eggs are cooked, remove them from the saucepan with the spoon and put them into an egg cup. Remove the top of the eggs with a spoon.

My preferred method is bashing them with the spoon and peeling off the little bits of shell...



4 Add soldiers and get dipping!

Wholemeal bread is miles better for you. Most people start liking it from about the age of fifteen. Before then, they'd rather die, clinging to sliced white stuff called bread but mainly made of polystyrene and toenail clippings.

serves 1

Cheesy omelette (v)



- 1 tsp olive oil
- 2 large free-range eggs
- 1 tbsp chopped chives
- 50g grated cheddar cheese
- salt and black pepper

You can buy it grated, but it's much cheaper to do it yourself. You only need to use the bigger holes in the grater, not the tiny ones that scrape your knuckles off.

What to do

1 Mix the eggs in a small bowl, stir in the chives and add a pinch of salt and pepper.

2 Heat the oil over a medium heat in a small frying pan.

3 Pour the egg mixture into the frying pan and lower the heat.

4 Sprinkle the cheese over the middle of the omelette. When the omelette is cooked (which happens pretty quickly, so keep an eye on it) place the frying pan under the grill until the cheese melts, being careful not to put the handle under the heat. Fold one half of the omelette over the other half and serve immediately, otherwise it'll have the consistency of a bicycle tyre.

You can also make this without putting it under the grill, by simply stirring in the cheese along with the eggs.

Before eating, add a little salt and pepper (then have a taste to make sure it's salty enough).

serves 1

Garlic bruschetta

topped with tomato, feta and basil (v)



- unsliced fresh loaf of bread
- 2 garlic cloves
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 6 ripe tomatoes
- 60g feta cheese
- 10g fresh basil leaves, chopped
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- salt and black pepper

What to do

1. Cut 4 slices of bread and toast it in the oven until brown and crisp. Cut the garlic clove in half (to protect your fingers do not remove garlic peel). Rub the bread immediately with the cut garlic clove, brush with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and freshly ground pepper.
2. Chop the tomatoes into bite-sized pieces, crumble the feta over the tomatoes and sprinkle with the basil leaves. Mix the olive oil and balsamic vinegar, pour over the tomatoes and toss with two spoons.
3. Top the bread with the mixture and serve.

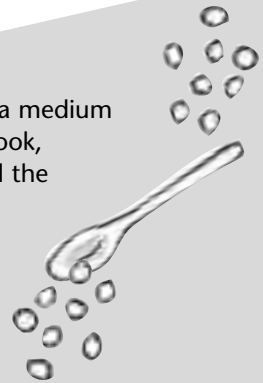
serves 1

Pea and potato soup (v)

This lovely potato dish is equally delicious with leeks instead of peas.

- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 600g Désirée potatoes, peeled, cubed
- 380g frozen peas
- 1 litre vegetable stock
- salt and black pepper, to taste
- 2 tsp single cream

What to do



1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook, stirring often, for 2–3 minutes or until the onion softens slightly. Add the potatoes, peas and stock. Increase to a high heat and bring to the boil. Reduce heat to medium and simmer, partially covered, for 10 minutes or until the potatoes are tender. Set aside for 10 minutes to cool slightly.
2. Transfer a third of the soup to a food processor and process until smooth. Place in a heatproof bowl and repeat with the remaining soup. Return all the soup to the pan and reheat over a medium-high heat, stirring for 3–4 minutes, or until hot. Taste and season with salt and pepper.
3. Ladle the soup into serving bowls. Top each with a teaspoon of cream and sprinkle with pepper.

Serve with some delicious home-made bread. See page 16.

serves 4

Thai salmon fishcakes

with dipping sauce

You'll wonder why you ever bought those frozen ones after trying these.

For the salmon fillets:

- **400g salmon fillets, finely chopped**
- **100g cod fillet, finely chopped**
- **1 tsp Thai green curry paste***
- **1 egg**
- **2 tbsp Thai fish sauce**
- **1 tbsp caster sugar**
- **2 tbsp cornflour**
- **1 tbsp lime**
- **2 tbsp coriander, finely chopped**
- **1 spring onion, finely chopped**
- **½ tsp salt and ½ tsp black pepper**
- **2 tbsp groundnut oil**

Buy this from a shop or see recipe on page 38.

For the sweet chilli, ginger and cucumber dipping sauce:

- **4 medium chillies, seeds removed and finely chopped**
- **100g caster sugar**
- **100ml water**
- **1 tsp grated ginger**
- **¼ cucumber**

If salmon is too pricey, this'll still taste good using just cod. Or you can use hake, or haddock. Naturally, these will then be Thai cod, hake or haddock fishcakes, but maybe no one will notice.

(Or, if you like, make a fish shape, or a wobbly blob. It's the taste that counts.)

What to do

Start with the salmon fillets...

1. Combine all the ingredients. Heat the oil in a frying pan and, using a tablespoon, place a spoon of the mix into the pan, making a nice round shape.
2. Fry for 2–3 minutes, turn over with a spatula and cook for a further 2–3 minutes. You should be able to fit 4–5 fishcakes in the frying pan. Remove onto a plate covered with a piece of kitchen roll.

Now for the dipping sauce...

3. Cut the cucumber into quarters – lengthways – and slice the middle off each piece. Then finely slice lengthways and set aside.
4. Combine the caster sugar, water and ginger and mix until the sugar has dissolved. Mix in the chillies and then add the cucumber to complete the dipping sauce.

If you've got any dipping sauce left over after you've scoffed all your fish cakes, this is great for dipping anything else into. Nachos, carrots – it'll even make celery interesting. Just.

serves 4

Homemade meatballs

with classic tomato sauce

For the meatballs:

- **500g extra lean minced beef**
- **70g salami, chopped into small pieces**
- **50g fresh white breadcrumbs**

  You can buy these, but it's easy to crumble the bread – just slice it, cut off the crust and rub it between your hands.

- **2 tbsp fresh parsley, finely chopped**
- **1 clove garlic, finely chopped**
- **salt and black pepper**
- **6 fresh basil leaves, torn**
- **plain flour**
- **2 tbsp oil**

You can use olive oil, or if you want a cheaper option, go for sunflower oil.

For the rest:

- **250g linguine**
- **classic Italian tomato sauce** (see recipe on page 56)
- **splash of white wine**

This is pasta in long, thin strips – you can use spaghetti instead if you prefer.

What to do

1. Mix all the meatball ingredients together and shape into walnut-sized balls. Walnuts still in their shells, that is, or, if you've never seen a walnut, think table-tennis balls. Roll the meatballs in the flour to lightly coat them and then fry in hot oil until golden, turning regularly.
2. Now prepare the tomato sauce. Sweat the chopped onion and garlic in the olive oil until soft but not brown. Add the white wine and simmer for a minute, before adding the chopped tomatoes, tomato puree and oregano. Simmer for 1 hour over a low heat, stirring every now and then. Season to taste.
3. Add the meatballs to the tomato sauce and bake in the oven for 10 minutes at 170ºC.
4. While the meatballs are cooking, boil the pasta as per the instructions on the packet. Drain it well and ladle the meatballs and sauce on top.

If you cook it too long it goes soft and slimy. If you get it right, it's a little bit chewy, or what the Italians call 'al dente'. Delicioso!

