

Best Friends Dinner

The grown up dinner helping children with a lot on their plate



Recipe Suggestions

Do you fancy yourself head chef in the kitchen, or is it looking a strong possibility that your guests may end up with beans on toast for dinner? Maybe you have a secret recipe for that special family dish up your sleeve. To whet your appetite here are some of The Place2Be team's favourites...

Soups, Salads and Sides



Butternut Squash and Sweet Potato Soup by Sophie from Admin

This thick, rich soup with a spicy kick is excellent for warming up on a chilly day, and very easy to make.

Serves 8 as a starter, or 4 as a main course

- 1 large red onion
- 3 cloves garlic
- 3 fresh red chillies (or more if you prefer)
- Fresh coriander
- 1 butternut squash
- 6 sweet potatoes
- 2 tablespoons crème fraiche
- Vegetable stock (cubes or powder)
- Light olive oil
- Salt
- Pepper
- Ground nutmeg



1. Chop the red onion and chillies, and crush the garlic – slowly fry in a large pan, adding salt and black pepper to taste
2. Peel and chop the sweet potatoes and butternut squash into small to medium pieces, add to the pan
3. Make a pint of vegetable stock, add to the pan
4. After about 20 minutes, when the vegetables have softened, blend until smooth (can be popped in the blender but a hand whizzer is easier)
5. Stir in crème fraiche, half a teaspoon of ground nutmeg, and chopped fresh coriander

Also courtesy of Sophie... Warm Rainbow Salad with Tiger Prawns

Sophie says: "This is a delicious salad I created out of my favourite foods; easy to prepare, a really healthy and surprisingly filling dish. The combination of ingredients seems random but the flavours go together amazingly well and it really looks beautiful with the rainbow of colours."

Serves 4 as a main course, or up to 10 as a starter:

For the salad ~

- 1 avocado
- 1 mango
- 2 bags rocket
- 1 packet pomegranate seeds
- Half packet new potatoes
- 2 large carrots
- Large handful broad beans
- Large handful French green beans



For the tiger prawns ~

- 2 cloves garlic
- Light olive oil
- Butter
- Fresh tiger prawns



For the dressing ~

- White wine vinegar
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Salt, Sugar, Black pepper to taste
- Juice of half a lime
- Capers



To serve ~

- Crusty bread

1. Chop the potatoes, carrots, mango and avocado into small bite-sized chunks (or discs for the carrots if they are slim) and chop the green beans in half
2. Put the potatoes and the carrots on to boil – after 5 minutes add the broad beans and the green beans for another 5 minutes (or steam if you prefer – this requires more time)
3. Put the bread in the oven on a really low heat, just to warm it up slightly
4. Whilst the veg is cooking, melt a chunk of butter in a drop of light olive oil in a frying pan, crush the garlic and lightly fry for 2 minutes, then add the prawns and make sure they have turned pink all the way through and there are no grey bits, but don't over cook them! This should only take a few minutes
5. When the potato and carrots pieces and the beans have cooked to a tender but fairly crunchy texture (depends on the size of the chunks) – drain the pieces in a colander
6. Mix in a large serving bowl together with the avocado and mango pieces, and the rocket, and the prawns (make sure you get all the garlic from the frying pan mixed in there. Add most of the pomegranate seeds to the mix, and then sprinkle a few on top
7. The dressing – 1 part vinegar to 2 or 3 parts olive oil, add half tsp salt/pepper/sugar to taste, and the juice of half a lime, and some capers – either mix into the salad or serve in a small jug on the side
8. Serve with crusty bread, warm from the oven.

Winnie from HR's Irish Soda Bread

This traditional Irish speciality is best eaten fresh, but will keep for a couple of days in an airtight container – handy if you want to prepare some of your menu in advance. Delicious sliced thinly and buttered to your personal preference, served with salmon and lemon as a starter, or on its own as a side.

- 8 oz wholemeal flour
- 1oz pinhead oatmeal
- 4oz plain flour
- 1 level tspn baking soda
- ½ tspn table salt
- 1 carton buttermilk



1. Heat oven to 170/180° and set middle shelf
2. Mix all dry ingredients
3. Add buttermilk and mix together
4. Shape into a round and mark in cross shape (as if dividing into quarters but without cutting right through)
5. Dust with some more wholemeal flour or pinhead oatmeal
6. Place on baking tray and bake in oven for 30 – 40 min.
7. Leave to cool and serve

Main Courses

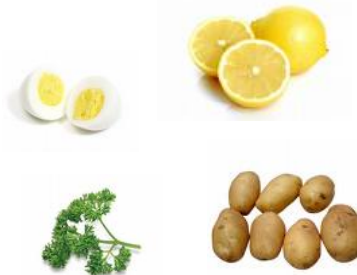


COO Catherine's Luxury Fish Pie

This fish pie is fairly quick to prepare (less than 30 minutes) but takes 1 to 2 hours to cook, making it a perfect dish to pop in the oven while you sort out last minute preparations, such as getting yourself ready or setting the table.

- 900g/2lb baking potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
- 150ml/¼ pint single cream
- 55g/2oz butter, plus extra for greasing
- Salt and white pepper
- Pinch freshly grated nutmeg
- 225g/8oz skinless, boneless haddock fillet
- 450g/1lb salmon, cut from the tail piece, skinless and boneless
- Squeeze lemon juice
- 4 hard-boiled eggs, shells removed, quartered

- **For the parsley sauce ~**
- 85g/3oz butter
- Large bunch of parsley, finely chopped
- 30g/1oz plain flour
- 570ml/1 pint milk
- Splash of single cream, to taste



1. Cook the potatoes in boiling salted water until soft.
2. Drain well and mash. Add the cream and butter, then season with salt and pepper and nutmeg. Mix well until smooth and creamy. Taste, adding more seasoning if required, then set to one side.

3. For the parsley sauce, heat the butter in a heavy-based pan over a very low heat then stir in the parsley. Cook for about ten minutes.



4. Add the flour and stir well. Cook, stirring regularly, for about three minutes. Do not let the mixture brown.

5. In another pan, bring the milk to the boil. Pour this into the "roux" (the butter and flour mixture) a little at a time, whisking or beating after each addition until completely smooth. Whisk in single cream, to taste. Bring the sauce to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer over a low heat for 5-6 minutes.

6. While the sauce is cooking, pre-heat the oven to 200C/Gas 6 and generously butter a deep ovenproof dish.

7. Cut the haddock and salmon into serving pieces, lay in dish, season lightly, squeeze over a little lemon juice.

8. Pour the hot parsley sauce over the top, place the quartered eggs evenly over the sauce and spoon over the mashed potatoes.

9. Bake for 35-40 minutes, until the top is crisp and brown. Serve at once.

Easy Cheese Soufflé from Winnie in HR

This can be made as a main course or served in ramekins as a starter – serve to your guests as soon as it leaves the oven!

- 1oz butter
- 1oz cornflour
- 3oz extra strong cheese (grated)
- ¼ pint milk
- 3 medium eggs (separate yolks and whites into 2 different containers)
- 2 pint deep oven-proof dish or ramekins



1. Pre-heat oven to 200/220°C

2. Slowly melt butter in pot

3. Add cornflour to make a paste



4. Slowly add the milk a little at a time until integrated into mix, stirring slowly all the time

5. Heat until thickens – still stirring – don't allow to boil

6. Add cheese and stir until melted, taste and season as required and remove from the heat to cool

7. Take egg whites and beat until stiff

8. Take egg yolks, beat till smooth and stir into the cheese sauce mixture

9. Using a metal spoon, carefully fold egg white mixture into the main mix

10. Pour into deep, oven-proof dish and bake in middle of oven for 30 mins

Desserts



Olivia from Fundraising's Chocolate Biscuit Crunch

This delicious chocolate dessert can be made a few days in advance – perfect if you think you'll be rushed off your feet on the day of your Best Friends Dinner.

- 400g dark chocolate
- 2 spoonfuls of honey
- 250g butter
- 350g digestive biscuits
- Small glass of brandy if liked
- Few handfuls of raisins and/or chopped pecans if liked



1. Melt together the chocolate, butter and honey in a saucepan, stirring continuously.
2. Remove from the heat.
3. Break up biscuits into small pieces (about 2cm across) and stir into the melted chocolate mixture, with the nuts, raisins and brandy if using.
4. Spoon into a 9" springform cake tin - or into a plastic bag lined bowl to improvise!
5. Refrigerate for a minimum of 3 hours.

Lemon Delight ~ a family recipe passed down by our COO Catherine's granny

A creamy top pudding with lemon curd on the bottom, best served with whipped cream or Greek yoghurt

- 2 oz butter
- 1 teacup caster sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 oz self-raising flour
- Rind & juice 2 lemons
- ½ pt of milk



1. Beat butter & sugar.
2. Add grated rind and juice of lemons, then egg yolks, flour & milk. Beat well.
3. Fold in stiffly beaten whites.
4. Put in pie dish and place in tin with cold water to come ½ way up (bain marie in fancy speak!)
5. Bake in oven on moderate heat for 45 minutes - 1 hour.

Aimee from Fundraising's Banoffee Pie

This is a simple recipe for a creamy, toffee banana dessert which requires no skill in the kitchen, is quick to make, and tastes yummy. More assembly rather than cooking, it's perfect for those novices among us!

- 300g digestive biscuits – or try chocolate digestives, ginger biscuits, “hob nobs” or cinnamon biscuits
- 60g butter
- 397g tin of caramel – or make your own
- 3 large bananas – experiment and add raspberries or sliced strawberries too!
- 350ml whipping cream
- 1 tbsp icing sugar
- 100g milk or dark chocolate



1. Put the biscuits in a plastic food bag and crush into small pieces using a rolling pin
2. Melt the butter in a saucepan, on a low heat
2. Combine the melted butter with the biscuits and press the mixture into a pie or tart dish, or even a large Tupperware tub
3. Pour the caramel evenly over the biscuit base and put in the fridge to set, while you prepare the bananas and cream
4. Thinly slice the bananas and keep to one side
5. Whip the cream and icing sugar together, until it forms soft peaks. Use a very cold stainless steel bowl and a very cold whisk or fork to get this just right – it shouldn't take more than 5 minutes. You might find it easier to use an electric whisk, but be careful not to over whip or you will end up with a funny appearance and consistency
6. Remove the base from the fridge and arrange a layer or two of banana slices over the caramel. Spread the whipped cream over the bananas and grate chocolate on top for decoration. Pop it back into the fridge if you won't be serving immediately.

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