

THE GIFT OF WASTE

Stories & recipes from
10 North London kitchens



Camden

BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH



Hackney

Haringey
LONDON

ISLINGTON



#GIFTOFWASTE

WELCOME

At Hubbub we make environmental matters matter by tapping into things people are passionate about, like food. We love food, and we think it's crazy that each month the average UK family throws away £60 worth of it. That's why our campaigns, like the 'Gift of Waste', show you how easy it is to make the most of your food and the food around us, saving you money and having a bit of fun along the way.

The Gift of Waste shares the knowledge and skills from 10 North London kitchens so you can discover different techniques for preserving food, including fermenting, jam making and pickling.

We hope you enjoy, tuck in!

HUBBUB

INTRODUCTION

CULINARY
Anthropologist

From ‘three tin curry’ to nettle soup, this book shares perspectives, tips and tricks on reducing food waste. Rather than employ a celebrity chef, or home economist, to tell us how to stop wasting food we decided instead to investigate what people are already doing. So this book offers snapshots of ten North Londoners’ lives and peeks into their kitchens.



100 WAYS TO REDUCE WASTE

People’s approaches are strikingly diverse. While some concentrate on limiting how much they buy or cook, others purposefully buy or cook in bulk to generate useful leftovers. For some using the freshest raw ingredients, in some cases grown or foraged themselves, is seen as key to good cooking; for others clever use of fridge, freezer and store cupboard are considered essential for preserving food and being prepared. While some prioritise supporting producers and retailers who keep waste to a minimum, for example using less packaging or selling ‘wonky’ vegetables, others focus on creative culinary solutions for kitchen scraps, or encouraging children to enjoy a wide repertoire of foods. Sometimes saving money is the impetus, other times saving the planet, and often both.

The approaches can seem contradictory, but we have included them all because this is the reality of people’s lives. We do not believe there is one right way to think about or go about reducing food waste. For some it’s about not wasting the abundance hidden in plain sight such as the nettles, rosehips and sloes in London parks. For others it’s about mastering particular techniques, such as making pastry, soup or chutney, so that any vegetable can be used up. And for others it’s about cooking without using more precious water or fossil fuels than absolutely necessary.

Waste reduction strategies depend on circumstances and preferences. One day taking a little extra time to use up scraps in a stock could be the answer, another it could be simply remembering to look in the fridge before going shopping. At another stage of life, having a week's worth of frozen suppers in stock might make better sense, or learning how to pickle. Meat-lovers might explore cooking with under-used cuts and bones; veg-heads could experiment with parts usually discarded. This book contains tips for all of this and more.

THE GIFT OF WASTE

The people interviewed for this book have one thing in common: a love of food and cooking. None see minimising food waste as a chore; all combine their waste reduction strategies with their other interests and passions.

Sam enjoys the creative challenge provided by her multi-purpose pastries, and therefore gets through any vegetable left in the fridge. Lasse wants to pack as much flavour into his cooking as possible, so happily makes stocks from bones and scraps. For Tetiana, bread is culturally significant, so her culinary repertoire effortlessly encompasses it. Carmen's allotment is a site of exercise and socialising, while simultaneously crucial for her annual food supply; transforming its gluts into preserves is both hobby and duty.

For Sarah eating mostly vegetables and making the most out of them suits her beliefs about both healthy eating and a healthy planet. Mikako, Mehrunnisa and Urvashi enjoy cooking a variety of cuisines, but it is their family culinary heritage which has generated their particular style of waste reduction, whether based on offal, herbs or pulses. Mehrunnisa's support for her local independent shops fits her food politics, makes her feel more rooted in her neighbourhood and allows her to buy exactly what she wants - without packaging and with bones. Tessa's belief in the body's seasonal nutritional needs dovetails with her deep respect and enjoyment for locally grown and foraged produce. Finally, Daphné's concern for conserving water and energy led her to local food growing projects which also give her much pleasure, both on site with other volunteers and in her creative little kitchen.

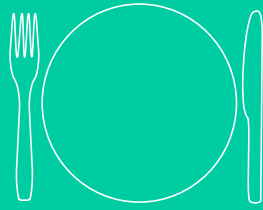
This is not to say our contributors only make an effort where it suits them. Rather they have developed ways of combining strategies for reducing food waste with other things they enjoy and care about. Many feel very strongly about food waste, often due to a personal, family or national memory of scarcity. Whether it's out of respect to ancestors who did not have enough, the people who grew it, the soil and water which generated it, the animals which died to provide it or people currently suffering from hunger, all contributors place a high value on food as a precious global resource.

A NOTE ON RECIPES

Though time and money available vary considerably for our contributors, they all enjoy cooking. Adept at improvising with whatever's in stock, they often cook by feeling, smelling and tasting, rather than following measures, times and temperatures. So the recipes provided here should be seen as guidelines. We have assumed you know to wash your produce first, peel your onions and garlic, remember to turn on the oven and keep tasting and seasoning as you go. None of our cooks would expect you to follow their recipes to a T. Heed their advice and improvise with what you have.

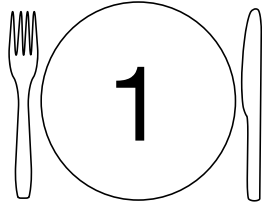
On a personal note, writing this book has changed my cooking practices. Without even thinking about it I've found myself quickly making a pan-full of croutons out of stale bread for a salad, saving scraps for a stock, questioning my shopping list, reorganising my fridge and inventing new ways with leftovers. Later I realised this had all been subconsciously inspired by my fellow North London cooks. I hope reading the book has a similar effect on you too.

Anna Colquhoun
November 2015
www.culinaryanthropologist.org



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A KITCHEN WITH A VIEW

URVASHI ROE



Urvashi's kitchen is spotless. Everything is in its place, and there's a place for everything. Urvashi has learned that keeping an appropriately stocked and well organised kitchen is the key to minimising food waste. She almost never buys more than she needs.

Most striking are the open shelves of huge glass jars: nuts, seeds, lentils, dried peas and beans, couscous, quinoa, rice and more. The top shelf holds pulses which need soaking before use; the bottom shelf is quick-cooking ingredients that can be thrown into a soup or stew on the go to provide texture and protein, like red lentils. Below them another shelf boasts an impressive array of condiments including salts, spices and oils, preserved lemons, Worcester sauce, pomegranate molasses and sriracha chilli sauce.

On the other side of the cooker the wall cupboards all have glass doors, allowing you to see the neat rows of tins inside: baked beans, chopped tomatoes, chickpeas and coconut milk. "You've got to see it - to know that it's there, to remember to cook it and to stop you going out and buying more when you already have some." This is Urvashi's strategy for not buying more than her family can get through. "There's a real tendency for people here to over-buy, especially with 3-for-2 offers. Having more local

URVASHI'S 6 TIPS TO AVOID OVER-BUYING:

1. Keep jars and tins visible on open shelves or in cupboards with glass doors. Know what you have!
2. Keep a small fridge and freezer and eat what's there before buying more.
3. Buy foods with 'best before' rather than 'use by' dates.
4. Keep a good stock of pulses and grains which can go with any veg.
5. Learn some basic cooking skills and improvise rather than following recipes or rules slavishl.
6. Encourage your children to love food and cooking!

markets would help, so that people bought little and often.” Urvashi tries to buy foods with ‘best before’ rather than ‘use by’ dates, since the former is only a guideline and therefore makes storing food much more flexible.

The fridge and freezer are both small by modern standards, another of Urvashi’s strategies for controlling how much food enters the house. Inside they are immaculate. Rather than a logjam of unidentifiable and ancient packets, the freezer holds a handful of shop-bought bags of peas, sweetcorn and spinach, plus labelled bags of leftover rice, sprouted mung beans, cooked pulses and washed and chopped coriander, ready to be thrown straight into a curry which can be on the table in 15 minutes. “I prepare big batches and freeze portions, then don’t restock the freezer until we’ve eaten the last bag.”



Urvashi’s stocks of pulses and grains are perfect for combining with whatever vegetables she’s picked up in the shops or harvested from her allotment. Rather than following recipes religiously she uses them as inspiration and has learnt to improvise with what she’s got, using her neat spice box (cumin, coriander, mustard seeds, turmeric, chilli, salt) to enliven any pulse or vegetable, just as her mother taught her.

Despite having appeared on the *Great British Bake Off* herself, Urvashi thinks think TV cookery shows and celebrity chefs don’t always help. “People go out and buy a tonne of things for a particular recipe they’ve seen, rather than adapting the dish to what they have. The result is yet more half-used jars and packets accumulating at the back of the cupboard and fridge.”



Urvashi’s family, originally from Gujarat in India, moved to London from Tanzania just before the rise of Idi Amin in neighbouring Uganda. Her father arrived with just £50 in his pocket. So Urvashi was brought up to save everything and waste nothing. For example Friday night is pizza night. Urvashi quickly makes dough in the standing mixer while her girls get ready for school, and then lets it rise slowly in a cool spot all day. In the evening they get out the week’s leftovers and use them up as pizza toppings, clearing the fridge before going to the market on Saturday morning.



THREE TIN CURRY

Combined with spices from her well-stocked spice box and whatever vegetables are waiting in the fridge or freezer, Urvashi's stash of tins come into their own in a wide range of quick and easy weeknight curries. There is no end to the variations, so experiment! Urvashi also recommends: coconut milk + black eyed peas / sweetcorn, and chopped tomatoes + chickpeas / baked beans / black beans.

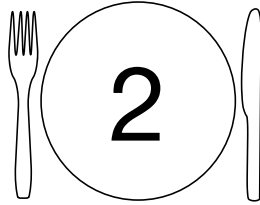
2-3 tbsps sunflower oil
1 tsp black mustard seeds
1 tsp cumin seeds
400ml tin of coconut milk
1 tsp salt or to taste
1 tsp mild red chilli powder
2 tps ground cumin
½ tsp turmeric powder
400g tin of chickpeas
415g tin of baked beans
Juice of half a lemon
2-3 coriander sprigs,
chopped

Optional:

2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 inch ginger, crushed
4 cubes frozen spinach, or
other frozen veg / fresh veg,
e.g. finely diced potatoes or
shredded greens

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan or wok. Ideally use one with a lid so you can keep the fluids from evaporating while simmering. After a few minutes on a medium heat the oil should be hot enough. Test it by adding a few mustard seeds. If they sizzle and pop the oil is ready.
2. Add mustard and cumin seeds in quick succession. Let them sizzle and pop for a few minutes then add coconut milk. Take care as it may splutter.
3. Add salt, chilli powder, cumin and turmeric and stir to combine. If using, add garlic, ginger and any frozen or firm vegetables such as potatoes now. Cover and simmer until vegetables are almost cooked (five to 10 minutes).
4. Now add drained chickpeas, baked beans and tender vegetables such as peas or shredded chard, stir well, cover and leave to simmer for around five minutes until everything is thoroughly heated.
5. Finally stir in lemon juice and fresh coriander and serve with whatever you have - rice, couscous, a thick slice of toast, pitta breads or naans. Or eat it like a stew, with crunchy croutons and a drizzle of yoghurt.

*For more recipes and ideas visit Urvashi's blogs:
www.botanickitchen.wordpress.com, www.gujaratigirl.wordpress.com.*



BREAD AT THE HEAD

TETIANA MATVIICHUK



In Ukraine, Tetiana’s homeland, bread is sacred. “In Soviet times bread was everything. It is so important to our culture that it is taboo to throw it away. We would never do that, even with a small piece.” This of course means devising a hundred things to do with leftover and stale bread, practices which Tetiana brought with her to London.

Arriving eight years ago Tetiana was shocked by food and culture in London. While she loved the huge diversity of new ingredients, she was surprised at how rich the diet was, especially the large quantities of prime off-the-bone meat and near absence of offal. She had been brought up on liver paté, chicken bone broth and pig’s trotter jelly, all of which she now makes for her young daughter. Most shocking however was the waste of paper and plastic. In Ukraine she’d never seen even a sheet of paper not reused or recycled, and people always went shopping equipped with their own cloth bags.

With its huge expanses of fertile soil, Ukraine has been known as the “bread basket” of Europe, supplying wheat far and wide. Ukrainian breads range from everyday white and rye breads to elaborate festive breads for weddings, Easter and Christmas. Bread is symbolic of friendship, luck, eternity and prosperity, and the subject of numerous proverbs, such as “it’s a problem to have no teeth, but worse no bread”.

As they say in Ukraine, “bread doesn’t fall from the sky” ... so make the most of it.

However bread is also associated with Ukraine’s most tragic event - the 1932-1933 famine which killed millions, caused by Stalin’s policy to export huge quantities of wheat from Ukraine, while banning food imports. In rural areas where peasants were forced to give up their grain there was mass starvation. Tetiana’s great grandmother learnt to throw sacks

of grain over her haystacks to avoid it being confiscated, then painstakingly picked out the grains to make her bread.

“Ukraine has always had such fantastic agriculture you wouldn’t believe people could go hungry! The famine created a kind of national genetic fear of starvation. So we never waste food, especially bread.”

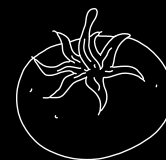
4 TIPS TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR STALE BREAD

BREADCRUMBS

Blitz in a processor. Store in a plastic bag in the fridge for a week or freezer for longer. Use to coat chicken goujons, top gratins, bulk out meatballs or stuff vegetables, or fried as a topping for pasta - “poor man’s Parmesan”.

SUMMERY SALAD

Tear into pieces and mix with chopped tomatoes, peppers, red onion and herbs, drizzle with vinegar and olive oil and leave for around half an hour for the bread to soak up the juices.



HEARTY SOUP

Layer slices in a casserole with a mix of fried onions, bacon, garlic and cabbage, adding in grated cheese as you go. Finish with cheese and pour over stock to cover. Cover and simmer for an hour until everything is very soft.

CLASSIC PUDDING

Lay buttered slices in a buttered dish, scattered with dried fruit. Whisk together a few eggs, a couple of spoonfuls of sugar and large mug of milk, then pour over to almost completely submerge the bread. Rest for half an hour then sprinkle with sugar and bake at 170°C for around 45 minutes until the custard is set.



WAYS WITH OLD BREAD

Even far from Ukraine, Tetiana would never waste bread. Here are a couple of her suggestions for what to do with bread past its peak. As they say in Ukraine, “when the bread has finished, warm the grinky”.

CROUTONS - SUHARIKI

Slightly stale bread
Sunflower or olive oil
Salt & pepper

Optional:

Dried herbs, e.g. thyme, oregano
Fresh herbs, e.g. dill, rosemary, finely chopped
Chilli flakes or other spices
Garlic, finely chopped

1. Before bread is too hard to cut, slice or tear it into crouton-sized pieces. In a bowl toss the cubes of bread with a good drizzle of oil, salt and pepper and herbs, spices or garlic.
2. Heat a frying pan, add the bread and fry over medium heat for a few minutes, tossing frequently, until the bread is crisp and starting to colour. Alternatively, spread the bread over a baking tray and bake in a 180°C oven for around 10 minutes, tossing half-way through.
3. Spread the croutons over a plate lined with kitchen paper to cool completely, then store in an air-tight container. Use sprinkled on soups or tossed into salads for extra flavour, body and crunch.

MILKY FRIED BREAD - GRINKY

Stale white bread slices
Milk
Butter
Eggs (optional)

1. Pour milk into a shallow bowl and dip in each slice of bread in turn, turning each piece over once so both sides meet the milk. How long you leave the bread in the milk depends on how old it is. If the bread is still soft it will be a matter of seconds, if it is hard it will need a few minutes to absorb the milk and soften.
2. Heat a good knob of butter in a frying pan until it foams. Lay in the bread slices and fry for a few minutes on each side until crisped and browned.
3. For a filling breakfast, crack an egg on top of each slice then cover the pan with a lid and continue cooking until the egg is just set. Serve hot.



POTATO PANCAKES

KARTOPLYANYKY

Tetiana also has an extensive repertoire of things to do with leftover boiled or mashed potatoes. These potato pancakes are a family staple. The quantities are highly flexible as the pancakes can be thick and firm, or softer and thinner. The best way to learn what works for you is to have a go!

A bowlful of cooked potato
1 egg
Some plain yoghurt (or milk)
Some plain flour
Salt and pepper
Sunflower oil for frying

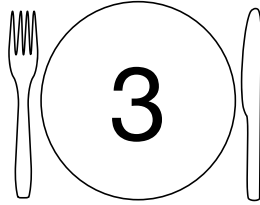
1. Mash the potato with the egg, yoghurt, flour, flavourings and seasonings until you have a soft dough. Shape into croquettes or flat patties. Tetiana makes hers about 6cm wide and 1cm deep, like burgers.
2. Fry in sunflower oil for several minutes on each side until crisp and golden. Serve drizzled with sour cream if you like.

Optional:

Fried onion
Chopped herbs
Flaked cooked or tinned fish

VARIATION: STUFFED KARTOPLYANYKY

1. Make the potato dough as described and keep it on the firm side.
2. Use the potato dough to encase a spoonful of leftover cooked vegetables or meat such as mince. Carefully form a patty around the filling so that it cannot escape.
3. Fry in the same way until piping hot throughout and nicely browned.



HERBS FOREVER

MEHRUNNISA YUSUF



When Mehrunnisa moved to London as a student in 2001 she was shocked at how young people cooked, or rather didn't. After initiation into the art of pot noodle microwaving, she reverted to her Pakistani and Polish culinary heritage, and her love of herbs. Knowing that herbs in small plastic packets are expensive, and spoil quickly, Mehrunnisa buys large bundles at local Turkish shops and has developed a range of tricks for getting the most out of them.

From her Polish grandmother Mehrunnisa has retained a love of dill, and with her Pakistani upbringing comes coriander and spring onions. All are kept in the freezer, washed, chopped and ready to be thrown into salads, omelettes, curries and rice dishes. Mehrunnisa has learnt from her mother that parsley, among other herbs, keeps extremely well in the fridge washed, dried, wrapped in kitchen paper and stored in a bag or box. Parsley and coriander stalks are never discarded. "The stalks have loads of flavour so I use them in my chicken stock; coriander root is particularly good for making herb pastes."

Basil is whizzed with oil and frozen in small tubs, each of which will later be mixed with grated cheese and crushed nuts for a speedy pesto. Mint is kept fresh in a glass of water on a cold windowsill - a trick which also works for broccoli and asparagus - and when on its last legs simply submerged in boiling water for a reviving tea. And hardy herbs like sage and rosemary are thrown into the freezer whole when time is running out to use them before they shrivel.

"I am militant about using local shops. In supermarkets everything is wrapped in plastic - a source of waste itself - and this means you end up buying more than you need, or produce in bad condition." Mehrunnisa was brought up to shop by touching, sniffing and questioning the seller. She never learnt to read packets or obey 'best before dates'. Instead her grandmothers taught her to trust her nose. "The way people shop here is troubling. Above all else people go for what they think is convenient, and the result is often waste."

Being able to talk directly to her greengrocer and butcher allows Mehrunnisa to ask about

provenance and make special requests. “I always ask the butcher for the bones, so for example I’ll get a tray of chicken thighs and ask for the bones in a separate bag, ready to use or freeze.” Mehrunnisa makes chicken stock so regularly she doesn’t find it a chore. Raw bones and giblets, or leftovers from a roast, are covered in water and simmered for an hour or as long as she has. For a simple stock she may only add a sprig of thyme or parsley stalk and half an onion. For an Asian style chicken stock - called yakhani back home - a few coriander stalks, garlic cloves, peppercorns, fresh ginger slices and a piece of cassia bark are added to the pot, each with their Ayurvedic health properties.

Mehrunnisa was taught to strip every last shred of meat from a roast chicken carcass by her Polish grandmother, who survived a World War II labour camp and simply had no concept of food waste. Mehrunnisa uses the shredded meat in chicken soup and toasted cheese sandwiches, or “flying saucers” as she knew them as a child. “You can put anything in a flying saucer - scraps of cheese, leftover curry, mashed potato. They were my grandmother’s Boxing Day tradition, stuffed with leftover roast chicken from Christmas day.”

TAIL ENDS AND NEW BEGINNINGS

Mehrunnisa is a big fan of using the ends of one meal as the start of the next:

- Water used to boil potatoes, dried beans or pasta, if not too heavily salted, is perfect for making soup, bringing both flavour and body.
- Leftover pasta, already mixed with its sauce, forms the basis of a fantastic frittata: mix with beaten eggs, fry in a dash of oil and when the base has set finish the top under a grill.

For more ideas she recommends Tamar Adler’s book, “An Everlasting Meal”.

www.tamareadler.com

SPICY HERB PASTE

Mehrunnisa always has a tub of this Asian style paste in her fridge or freezer. If you don't have quite everything in her list, use what you have, and vary the quantity of chilli to your taste. The salt here is quite high, as you will only use a couple of tablespoons of paste each time you cook, but reduce it if preferred.

2 banana shallots
2 inch knob of ginger
3 fat garlic cloves
2 lemongrass stalks
25g fresh red or green chillies
75g coriander leaves, stalks & roots
1 tbsp coriander seeds
1 tbsp coarse/flaky salt
1 tsp turmeric
2 tbsps honey
Juice of a lemon
2 tbsps sunflower oil

1. Peel and trim fresh ingredients as needed. Toast coriander seeds in a small dry frying pan for a few minutes until a shade darker and aromatic.
2. Place all ingredients except sunflower oil in a food processor. Pulse it to break the ingredients down, then process for at least a minute to achieve an almost smooth paste. Now trickle in oil whilst processing some more.
3. Halve the paste to store some in a jar for immediate use and the remainder in the freezer for the future. It will keep for several days in the fridge or several months in the freezer.
4. To use: Fry for a few minutes to take the edge off the raw shallot and garlic, then add chicken stock or coconut milk and whatever vegetables or leftover meat you have for a quick and easy soup or curry. For extra body add noodles, or serve with rice.



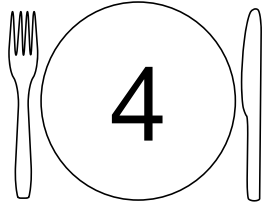
CHICKEN & SWEETCORN SOUP

Regularly roasting a whole chicken, or chicken legs, means a constant supply of chicken stock and chicken scraps, themselves the beginnings of new meals, like this easy soup.

(Serves 2)

1 tbsp olive oil
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
1 tbsp cornflour
600ml chicken stock
100g tinned sweet corn
1 egg
1 tbsp lemon juice
c.100g leftover chicken, shredded
1 tbsp finely chopped parsley
Salt & pepper

1. Heat oil in a deep pan. Add onion and garlic and sweat gently for a few minutes to soften, without letting them colour.
2. Blend cornflour with a little of the stock in a mug to make slurry. Add the rest of the stock to the pot and bring to a simmer. Now ladle some of the hot stock into the mug and stir it in, before adding the cornflour mixture to the soup to thicken it. 'Tempering' the cornflour with stock like this prevents lumps.
3. Add sweetcorn and bring soup to the boil, stirring continuously. Simmer for five to seven minutes then lower the heat.
4. Beat together egg and lemon juice and then slowly trickle into the soup, stirring constantly. This will enrich the soup, as is done for Greek 'avgolemono'.
5. Season with salt and pepper, then ladle into bowls and garnish with shredded chicken and parsley. Eat with buttered toast.



THE GIFT OF A GLUT

CARMEN LANGE



Carmen knows how to spot a bargain and get the most out of it. Growing up in a poor household in Wales, Carmen learnt early how to make the most out of sparse ingredients. The virtues and skills of frugality have stayed with her ever since and proved useful when times have been tough.

While some criticise supermarkets' 3-for-2 deals, Carmen goes out of her way to make the most of them. "I know I'm not alone in saying that I wouldn't survive in London were it not for the discounts and promotions on offer." Carmen's freezer is stocked with food bought on special offer. When lemons are cheap, she buys a box load and preserves them for the year. When olive oil is discounted she buys several litres to make rosemary and chilli oils, perfect for roasting winter veg and drizzling on almost anything.

While Carmen learnt to cook from her Swiss mother, she learnt to grow fruit and vegetables from her German father, who came to Wales having been a prisoner of war and fed the family entirely from his two allotments. Suffering from a rare and debilitating condition, Carmen took on an allotment in Enfield to challenge herself to get better. Between operations she dug half a metre squared each day by hand, perched on a small stool. Now the soil is rich, boosted by spent coffee grounds from a local café, and produces everything Carmen needs for the year: onions, garlic, celery, tomatoes, radishes, lettuces, courgettes, chard, potatoes, beetroot, beans, cherries, apples, damsons and more.

Having an allotment means dealing with gluts; relying on one means ensuring those gluts can cover the 'hungry gap' between March and June when little is ready to be picked. So Carmen is a prolific preserver; her shelves groan with pickles, jams, jellies, chutneys and liqueurs made with allotment surpluses. Old cookbooks by Sonia Allison, Madhur Jaffrey and Elizabeth David have provided inspiration, as have her Italian allotment neighbours, who make passata from their tomatoes each year, and even their own wine.

Food waste makes Carmen mad. "In this country people are so blasé about food. It's a gift from the planet; throwing it away is looking a gift horse in the mouth! We need to remember this planet is all we've got."

SIMPLE COURGETTE PICKLE

See page 34 for how to sterilise your jars. It is safest to use new lids, or old ones in good condition which have been boiled for 10 minutes. One tip is to fill hot jars with piping hot preserves, seal immediately and turn the jars upside down for 10 minutes - the hot preserve sterilises the lids' insides.

Small courgettes, peeled if you like, and cut into quarters or sixths lengthways

40g salt per 1kg of veg

Malt, cider or white wine vinegar

Sugar or honey to taste

Spices (optional)

Sterilised jars and lids (see page 34)

1. Toss courgettes and salt in a bowl and leave somewhere cool for several hours. The salt will draw out excess water, essential for the pickle to last.
2. Meanwhile bring a saucepan of vinegar to the boil and sweeten it to taste with sugar or honey. You could add spices too, but Carmen keeps hers plain so she can use the courgettes in a variety of dishes.
3. Rinse courgettes in several changes of fresh water and drain well. Carefully pack them into hot sterilised jars then immediately pour over hot vinegar to cover. Seal immediately. Store somewhere cool and dark and they should last a year. Carmen loves them in cheese sandwiches.





SWEET-SOUR LEMONS OR LIMES

These preserved lemons or limes are based on Moroccan and Indian recipes. They are lacto-fermented, like the sauerkraut on page 33.

Lemons or limes (unwaxed)
1 tsp fine salt per lemon/
lime
Sugar to taste
Spices (optional, eg clove,
pepper, cardamom, mace,
cinnamon, bay, coriander)
Large sterilised jars and
lids* (see page 34)

**These are best made with
clip-top preserving jars
since the lemons and limes
ferment and the rubber seal
allows carbon dioxide to
escape.*

1. Cut most of the fruit into four wedges, stopping short of the stem end so the pieces hold together. (If using small jars cut fully into quarters.)
2. Grind salt with spices and add a little sugar to taste. Rub the mix all over the cut surfaces of the fruit and as you do pack them into jars. Squish them down to get the juices flowing, then top up with the juice of the reserved fruit so that everything is covered in salty citrus juice.
3. Close the jar and leave somewhere warm. If using screw-top lids, close loosely rather than tighten the lid so gas can escape. They should start fizzing within a week. After a month they should smell pleasantly fermented and the rinds will be tender and ready to use raw or cooked.
4. As long as no mould appears this preserve will last indefinitely. Carmen uses preserved lemons and limes in tagines, a winter favourite.

SLOE & DAMSON LIQUEURS

In autumn Carmen loves to pick damsons and sloes to make liqueurs, which are ready just in time for Christmas. Ingeniously, she uses the leftover fruit to then make a bonus jelly, perfect for cakes.

Large clean jar
Sloes or damsons, stalks removed
Sugar
A few whole raw almonds
Gin or vodka

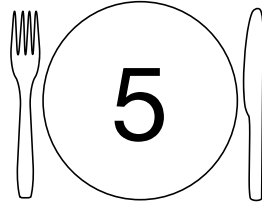
1. Half fill jar with fruit. Carmen layers the fruit with sprinkles of sugar, and a few almonds to boost the fruit stones' almondy flavour.
2. Pour over alcohol to cover the fruit by several inches, close the jar and set aside for three months or more. Every now and then tip the jar upside down to encourage the sugar to dissolve.
3. Strain through a sieve lined with muslin and pour into a clean bottle. The liqueur will last indefinitely. Serve over ice, neat or with tonic.

BONUS JELLY

The strained fruit
Sugar
Sterilised jars and lids (see page 34)

1. Place fruit in a saucepan and cover with water by an inch. Bring to a boil and simmer until fruit is really soft. You can help by squishing it with a wooden spoon. Strain through a jelly bag, or a double layer of muslin tied up to a hook above a bowl. Let it drip overnight.
2. Measure the strained liquid and for every pint (570ml) count a pound (450g) of sugar. Heat juice and sugar in a very large pot (a preserving pan is ideal) until sugar has dissolved, then crank up the heat and boil to setting point. Watch out because it will boil right up. Test by pouring a teaspoon of syrup onto a chilled saucer and letting it cool for a couple of minutes. Push your finger across - it should wrinkle up. If not, boil a little longer and test again.
3. Pour hot syrup into hot sterilised jars almost to the brim and seal immediately. The jelly should last a year if stored somewhere cool and dark.





HIDDEN COSTS

DAPHNÉ DUVAL



Daphné doesn't stop learning. Despite having done a PhD in physics and research in biotech, she is still studying, this time nutrition and public health. "I used to decide what to eat based purely on my health concerns, but now I'm also interested in the impact of my food on the environment, all the way from the field to my kitchen. People don't realise how much water and energy goes into producing, distributing and preparing food."

Daphné's tiny shared kitchen was made by her boyfriend entirely out of salvaged materials from a junk yard, like the rest of their quirky converted living space on the edge of an industrial estate. Here nothing is wasted, for both economic and ethical reasons. "I think we already grow enough food to feed the world in 2050. We don't need more genetically modified crops or harsh chemical pesticides. We need to better use and distribute what we already have." For Daphné this means starting at home.

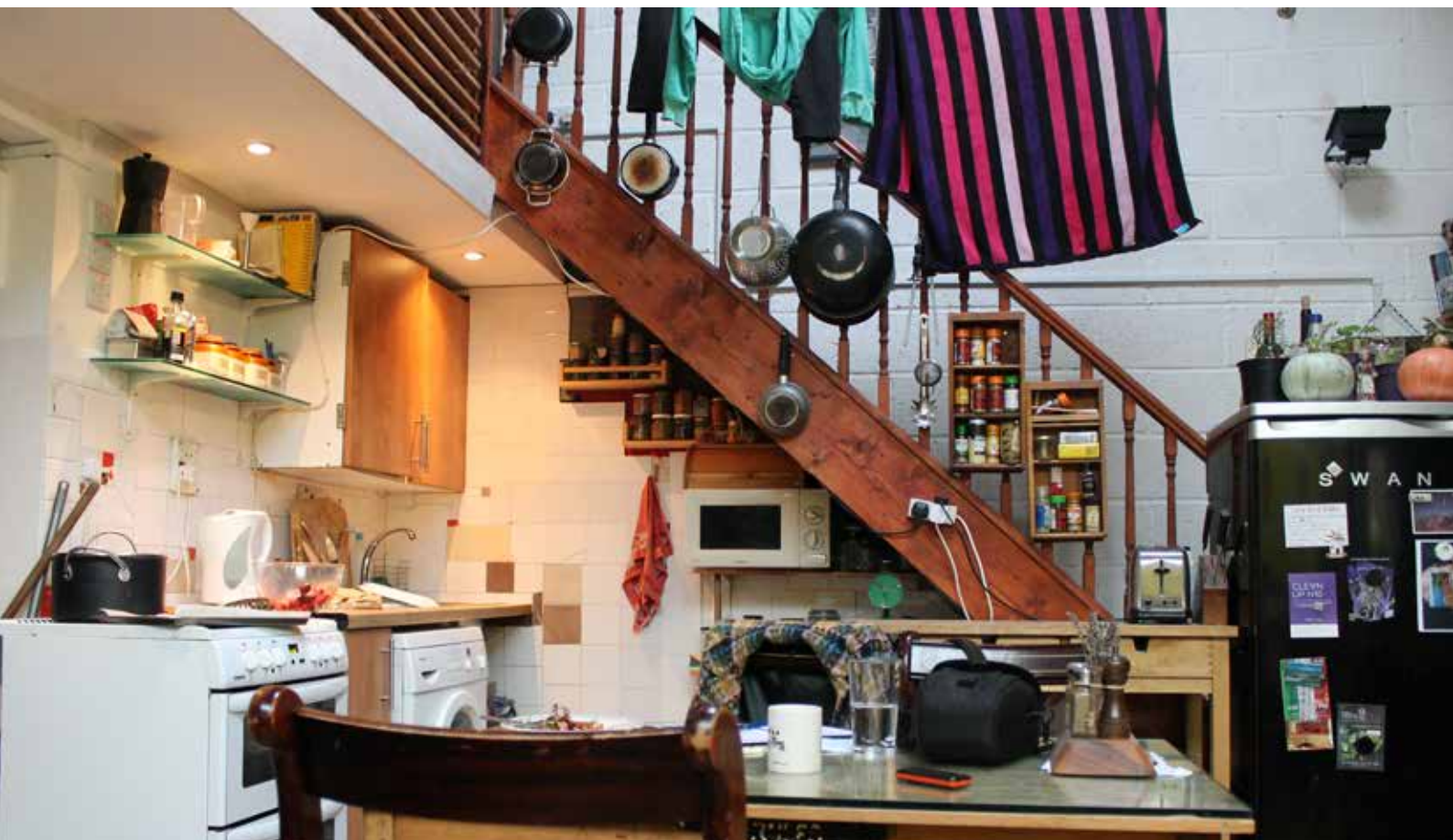
To begin with Daphné has decided not to eat meat, preferring instead foods which took less energy and water to produce. She tries to buy pulses and vegetables which were grown locally and in season, or transported with minimal carbon footprint, and avoids packaging where possible. Once a week she collects a veg box from Growing Communities, a social enterprise in Hackney which aims to offer an alternative to the global food system by growing and trading food locally.

Back home, ingredients are stored and prepared in ways which minimise water and energy consumption: used water is saved for the garden, the oven is only turned on when it can be filled with several things, stews are made in big batches then saved in portions, vegetables are steamed over minimal water, which then ends up in a soup, and there are only two electrical appliances - kettle and immersion blender.

None of this makes Daphné's cooking boring, restricted or sombre. In fact the opposite is true. Her approach to food means she must be constantly creative, using up whatever comes in her vegetable box or is left in her one cupboard, combining flavours from places

she has lived and studied - her native France, Spain and India - all on a tiny budget. She attributes her ability to innovate and make-do to her mother, who put three meals on the table each day while working full-time as a teacher.

Daphné's 'juicer lentil burgers' are a good example of her innovative approach: while working at a local café Daphne noticed that every day huge quantities of carrot and apple pulp from the juice extractor were thrown away and imagined the same must happen in lots of homes. Her recipe gives them a second life.





JUICER LENTIL BURGERS

These burgers use up carrot and apple pulp from a juice extractor. Instead you can use raw grated carrots and apples. Make sure to cook the lentils to the point of collapse so they will bind together into burgers. Leftover mashed potato and sticky rice also work well. Makes six burgers.

(Makes 6)

150g lentils
2 tbsps olive oil
1 onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
Ground cumin, to taste
2 or 3 carrots, pulp or grated
2 apples, pulp or grated
Parsley, chopped
1 egg, beaten
Salt & pepper
Extra virgin olive oil

Optional extra spices:

chilli, ginger, mustard seeds, turmeric, nutmeg, etc

Optional extra cooked

veg: peas, potatoes, mushrooms, celery, cabbage, etc, chopped

1. Rinse lentils and simmer in lightly salted water for around 20 minutes until starting to fall apart. Drain and cool.
2. Meanwhile sauté onion in oil for five minutes. Add garlic, cumin and any other spices and sauté another few minutes. Add carrots and apples and cook on medium-high heat for 10-15 minutes to drive out excess water.
3. Add any other leftover vegetables you are using up, and parsley, reduce heat and cook another five or so minutes, stirring to combine. Let cool.
4. Mix cooled vegetables, lentils and egg well in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper. The final consistency should be sticky. If it isn't, whizz briefly with a stick blender. If it is too wet, add a touch of cornflour or a handful of breadcrumbs. Let cool in the fridge for half an hour to firm up.
5. Shape the mixture into burgers and place on a lined oven tray, brushed with oil on both sides.
6. Bake in an oven heated to 180°C for about 15 minutes, or carefully fry them for about five minutes on each side.
7. They are delicious served warm with one of Daphné's colourful salads.



COLOURFUL FRIDAY SALADS

Daphné cycles over to Growing Communities every Saturday to collect her veg box. This means that come Friday evening she needs to have finished off the last of the previous week's box, most easily done with a big mixed salad. Daphné recommends making combinations of both textures and colours. "I insist on the colours; it really is an important factor in the choice of ingredients!"

PICK AND CHOOSE FROM...

Salad leaves: lettuce, chard, spinach, mizuna, mustard leaves, miner's lettuce, curly endive, sorrel, carrot tops, celery leaves.

Herbs: chives, parsley, basil, mint, chervil.

Raw vegetables: tomatoes, red onions, mushrooms, celery, courgettes, cabbage, bell peppers.

Fruit: apples, oranges, figs, grapes, dates.

Raw roots: carrots, beetroots, swede, parsnips, turnips, kohlrabi, black radishes, daikon, celeriac.

Nuts and seeds: walnuts, hazelnuts, pine nuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds.

Cooked leftovers: broccoli, cauliflower, rice, lentils, chickpeas, potatoes.

1. Wash and spin dry leaves. Tear or roughly chop herbs. Trim and slice raw vegetables and fruit as you like, keeping the pieces bite-sized. Peel root vegetables if needed and coarsely grate. Finally lightly toast nuts and seeds in a dry frying pan until fragrant.
2. Toss everything together in a big bowl with both hands, using enough dressing to lightly coat everything and trying not to crush the leaves. Taste and season with more salt and pepper if needed.

MUSTARD DRESSING:

2 tsps wholegrain mustard

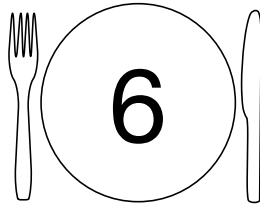
3 tbsps vinegar (balsamic/wine/cider) or lemon juice

6 tbsps extra virgin oil (olive/rapeseed), or to taste
a pinch of salt

1 garlic clove, crushed (optional)

1 tsp honey (optional)

Shake everything together vigorously in a jam jar, or whisk in a jug.



RESTAURANT SECRETS

LASSE PETERSEN



Since his career change from musician to chef, Lasse Petersen has been on a steep learning curve in the professional kitchens of London. While some of the food waste he has seen in restaurants has been shocking, he has also learnt a range of tricks for getting the most out ingredients. After all, wasted food is profit down the drain. For a creative chef kitchen scraps pose a fun challenge: how to use them to create extra flavour in a dish, or as the stimulus for a brand new recipe.

Growing up in Denmark, Lasse remembers pestering his father everyday to find out what was for dinner. “Something beginning with R” was often the response, which got him and his siblings excited, since a Danish word for venison begins with R. But usually the answer was “rester” - leftovers. So using up leftovers in professional kitchens came naturally to Lasse. At the restaurant where he works as sous chef, just like back home, a “family meal” is made out of leftovers each day for the staff.

But kitchen scraps find their way onto the paying diner’s plate too, often in marvellously inventive ways. Lasse noticed that the restaurant’s barman used a lot of watermelon flesh in cocktails, but the rinds were thrown away. Researching East European recipes he found the solution - water-melon rind jam - now a favourite on the menu, served with Caerphilly cheese, an apple and celery jelly and a black sourdough bread made with squid ink. “It’s a beautiful pink coloured sweet-sour marmalade



whose flavour reminds me of cookie dough. I think it's amazing."

Like many, Lasse's restaurant makes its stocks. These not only use up scraps, but also add depth of flavour to their cooking. The restaurant buys smaller animals and fish whole, and larger ones in sections on the bone. These are butchered, providing carcasses for the stock pot. Lasse recommends doing similar at home. "Next time you roast some meat, keep the bones afterwards, or ask your butcher for raw bones. Usually they'll sell you a bag for next to nothing. Everyone loves chicken fillets, but they come on bones, so ask for that too! Home-made stock is the secret to good food; it tastes so much better than water or a stock cube."

TIPS FOR MAKING STOCK AT HOME

BEING PREPARED:

Get yourself an old ice cream tub and keep it in the fridge. That outer onion layer and root you were going to throw - chuck it in there. The carrot peel - that too. The celery stick you were about to bin because it wasn't quite worthy of being dipped into hummus - in it goes. Herb stalks, leek tops, celeriac trimmings, floppy carrots, stringy squash pulp, fennel tops, herbs on their last legs, mushroom stalks, tomato skins - all good, just make sure they're clean. Then before long you have a large box of stock vegetables. Just avoid potatoes, and the brassica family (cabbages, broccoli etc).

Save up raw and roast meat and fish bones in bags in the freezer until you have a decent amount. All meat bones and carcasses are good, just avoid the liver. White fish bones and heads are perfect, just remove gills and guts. Oily fish bones (salmon and mackerel for example) will make your house smell, but are also fine.

MAKING STOCK:

For a darker, richer meat stock roast raw bones first. Spread over a tray and roast at 200°C until they are golden brown in places, but not black - burnt bones ruin a stock. For a paler, clearer stock, skip this step.

Roughly chop vegetables and fry briefly in oil to enhance their flavour. Again, this step can be skipped.

Place meat or fish bones (if using) and vegetables in the biggest pot you have and cover with cold water. If you have them, throw in a couple of bay leaves and a few peppercorns. Slowly bring to a boil then simmer gently for half an hour for fish stock, an hour or so for vegetable stock, or a couple or more hours for meat.

Strain the stock through a sieve. For a really clear broth, line the sieve with muslin. Let it cool then store in the fridge for a few days or in the freezer. If space is limited, return the strained stock to the pot and boil hard to reduce its volume by three-quarters or more until rich and dark and able to fit in a small tub.

Some people skim the fat off the top of their stock but Lasse doesn't as it has so much flavour.

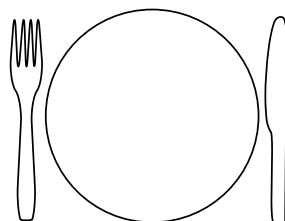
ADDITIONS TO TRY:

Lasse recommends lemon rinds in fish stock for a citrusy edge and Parmesan rinds in vegetable stock for extra savoury depth. Stock is also a great way to use up old wine - add a glass or two of white wine to fish, vegetable and chicken stocks, and red wine to meat stocks. You can also experiment with spices according to your taste: mustard seeds, coriander seeds, cloves, cardamom pods, fennel seeds, star anise, allspice berries etc. For Asian style stocks throw in garlic cloves and fresh ginger.

USING YOUR STOCK:

Season your stock as you use it, not before. Since stocks are often boiled and reduced, seasoning too early can result in an overly salty stock.

Stock will transform any soup or stew. It also enhances risottos and pasta sauces, and is the basis for a good gravy for your Sunday roast or bangers and mash. For an easy soup, simply heat up and add noodles and fresh herbs. Or see the recipe for chicken and sweetcorn soup on page 15.



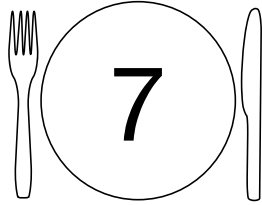
A close-up photograph of watermelon rind jam ingredients. The image shows a dark-colored bowl or pan filled with chopped watermelon rind (the green outer skin and the white/pink inner flesh) and several thin, circular slices of lime. The text 'WATERMELON RIND JAM' is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

WATERMELON RIND JAM

Serve this with a tangy cheese, as Lasse does, or simply enjoy on your morning toast. As for the red watermelon flesh, try blitzing with vodka and a dash of lime juice and sugar syrup for a watermelon martini, or cut into chunks for a refreshing salad topped with crumbled Feta, black olives, torn mint and a generous drizzle of olive oil.

500g watermelon rind
200g sugar
Juice of 4 limes

1. Use a vegetable peeler to pare off the very outer dark green skin of the watermelon and discard this. Chop the rind flesh (which will vary in colour from pale green through white to pink) into pieces and mix in a bowl with the sugar and lime juice. (To get most juice out of your limes, roll them firmly across the table first.) Cover and leave out overnight.
2. The next day you should find the sugar has pulled out lots of juice and dissolved into it. Transfer the mixture to a large saucepan and slowly bring to a boil, ensuring any last sugar crystals dissolve.
3. Boil, stirring occasionally, until the mixture reduces to a jam-like consistency.
4. Use a stick blender to blend the mix as smooth as you like, then transfer to a container and store in the fridge.



GOT IT WRAPPED

SAM WILLIAMS



Sam is a busy woman. To make family suppers as easy as possible, with minimal waste, she has learnt to make a range of simple pastries which can be used to wrap up whatever she has in stock.

What with her full-time job in finance, a family to feed, karate classes, choir practice and volunteering for Casserole Club, Sam has little time to plan weeknight meals. So instead of devoting time and effort to organising a big weekly supermarket shop, she now prefers to pick up a few vegetables on the way home from work, knowing she can combine them with some home-made pastry to make a quiche, samosas or empanadas.

Having abandoned her big weekly shop Sam finds she now wastes less food. All she needs is a processor to make light work of pastry-making, and some herbs, spices and condiments in stock to flavour her pies and pasties. Sometimes she makes extra pastry and wraps it in cling film for another day. Pastry keeps in the fridge for a couple of days, or freezer for a couple of months. A small batch of frozen pastry can defrost in the fridge while she's at work during the day.

Sam's tendency to stuff and wrap extends beyond pastry too. Wheat tortillas are kept in stock for making easy quesadillas stuffed with tinned tuna and sweetcorn, leftover pasta sauce, or grated cheese ends dolloped with tomato ketchup. Mushrooms and tomatoes get stuffed and topped with breadcrumbs made from leftover bread. And her family are huge pancake enthusiasts. "We don't believe in saving them just for Pancake Day! I like to serve them up with a bunch of fillings on the table so the girls can make their own." Pancakes can be savoury or sweet, and are an easy way to use up leftover savoury food, or fresh fruit that needs eating, perhaps combined with chocolate spread from the cupboard or ice cream from the freezer.



VEGATABLE SAMOSAS

One of Sam's favourites, these samosas are a great way to use up leftover cooked vegetables. Sam likes to use potatoes, carrots and peas, but almost any vegetable will work. If starting with raw veg, cook them first. Firm and starchy veg like potatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots and beans can be simply boiled then diced. Watery vegetables, like courgettes, are better chopped and fried in a little oil. Frying will drive off their excess water and prevent soggy samosas.

(Makes 8)

400g cooked vegetables
2 tbsps vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, crushed
2½cm fresh ginger, grated
1 tsp ground cumin
½ tsp chilli powder
½ tsp garam masala
1 tsp lime juice
Extra oil for frying

SAMOSA PASTRY:

150g plain flour
45g butter, diced
4 tbsps warm milk
Extra flour for rolling

1. Chop vegetables into dice if they are not already.
2. Heat oil and fry onion, garlic, ginger and spices for three minutes, then add cooked vegetables and lime juice and cook two more minutes. Let cool.
3. Make pastry by rubbing butter into flour until it looks like breadcrumbs (or use a food processor). Add milk and mix to form a dough.
4. Split dough into four balls. Take a ball and roll out on a lightly floured surface into a circle around 17cm in diameter. Cut in half and add 1/8 of filling to each semi-circle. Brush edges with water, fold over into triangles and seal edges. Repeat to make eight samosas.
5. Heat 2½cm of oil in a wide pan to 190°C. (Use a thermometer, or test by adding a cube of bread - it should brown in 30 seconds.) Fry samosas in batches for 3-4 minutes, turning once.
6. Drain on kitchen paper and serve hot.



EASY SHORTCRUST PASTRY

“It took me a long time to realise that the reason I was so hopeless at pastry was because my hands are too hot, which turns the pastry into concrete. I now make it in the processor and it’s great.”

This pastry can be used for sweet and savoury tarts and pies, and for quiches and pasties. Sam recommends using recipes as guides and substituting ingredients with what you have in stock already, or fancy trying out. Her quiche recipe is easily adaptable for using up all kinds of leftover cooked veg.

SAVOURY PASTRY:

200g plain flour
100g salted butter
1 egg, lightly beaten

SWEET PASTRY:

200g plain flour
100g unsalted butter
25g ground almonds
25g icing sugar
1 egg, lightly beaten

1. Blitz the flour and butter (and almonds and icing sugar if using) in a food processor until the mix resembles fine breadcrumbs, then add the egg a little at a time until the mixture just holds together.
2. Tip it out of the processor and squeeze together to form a block of dough.
3. Wrap in cling film and leave in the fridge for at least half an hour before using.



1 batch savoury pastry
3 eggs
225ml milk
150g cheddar, grated
Salt and pepper

Your choice of veg:

Sliced tomatoes
Chunks of roast squash
Lightly steamed broccoli etc.

TO BLIND BAKE THE PASTRY SHELL

Roll out the pastry on a lightly floured surface and use it to line a flan dish or tart tin. Press gently into shape and trim away the excess with a knife. Chill for 20 minutes. Then cover with baking paper, fill with ceramic baking beans (or dry rice or beans kept for the purpose) and bake at 190°C for 15 minutes. For an extra crispy base, remove the paper and beans and bake for a further five minutes. Leave to cool.

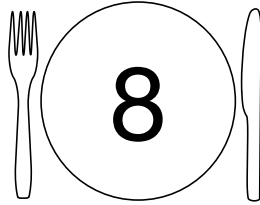
TO MAKE THE QUICHE

Beat together the eggs, milk and cheese and season with salt and pepper. Add this to your blind baked pastry shell along with the vegetable of your choice. Bake at 180°C for around 30 minutes until the quiche is just firm and golden.

CASSEROLE CLUB

Casserole Club connects those who love to cook with those in need of a hot meal. As a member, once a week Sam cooks an extra portion of dinner once a week for a woman living nearby who has multiple sclerosis and cannot easily cook for herself. “I really enjoy it! She’s become one of the family. I go round with our girls and we stay for an hour or so, playing board games together.”

www.casseroleclub.com



THE WHOLE VEGETABLE

SARAH BENTLEY



For Sarah, carrot tops, beetroot leaves, broccoli stems and cabbage cores are not waste scraps, but starring ingredients. Sarah is passionate about eating vegetables, both for her family’s health, and for the health of the planet.

“We’ve been brainwashed into thinking protein only comes from meat and calcium only from dairy, but actually plants are full of the nutrients we need.” For Sarah, eating more veg and less animal products is not only better for our bodies, but also for the environment since animal farming is linked to so many ecological problems, not least climate change. It’s also cheaper and easier. “After all, you can grow kale in your window-box in London, but you can’t keep a cow!”

Founder of Made in Hackney, Sarah is on a mission to raise awareness of the links between human and planetary health and to teach cooking skills to help people get the most out of their veg. Tips include using up carrot tops, kale, nettles, nasturtium and other leaves in quick pesto sauces (blanch them first if tough), and keeping a box in the fridge to collect veg scraps to use up in a soup or stew: “If you chop anything finely enough you can whack it in a stew or curry: cauliflower stems and leaves, green ends of leeks, chard and kale stems, broccoli stalks...”

Fermented pickles, made regularly by husband Abdulkareem Lafene, are a family favourite, even adored by baby Rowan. Cabbages can be hard to get through and often languish in the fridge until limp and unappealing. Sauerkraut is a great way to use them up. Sarah also gets the most out of her fruit by using both zest and juice of (unwaxed or well-scrubbed) oranges and lemons, and saving the rinds to make tea. Blackened bananas and over-ripe strawberries are stashed away in the freezer to blitz with soaked cashews for instant vegan ice creams.



VEG END SAUERKRAUT

This is a favourite at Made in Hackney, requiring no energy other than your own muscle power! The salty conditions encourage 'lactic acid bacteria' to get going. They produce lactic acid, which helps preserve the vegetables and tastes great, and carbon dioxide, which displaces the air in the jar above the vegetables, also helping preserve them.

Classic sauerkraut is made simply with white cabbage. Sarah's twist is to include vegetable scraps saved up during the week. This recipe is great for using up leftover broccoli and cauliflower stalks, carrot tops and cabbage cores. And, as a lactofermented pickle, it aids digestive health too. Once you've made a few ferments Sarah suggests experimenting by adding fennel seeds, turmeric, ginger and/or mustard seeds.

A clip-top preserving jar is ideal as it allows the carbon dioxide to escape past the rubber seal. However a large screw-top jar will also work, as will a scrupulously clean plastic food box with a good lid.

1 large red or white cabbage
(or half and half)
Mix of vegetable ends
15g of salt per 1kg vegetables
(pure salt without anti-
caking agents is best)
1 litre jar, sterilised (see
page 34)

1. Remove an outer leaf from the cabbage, wash well and set aside.
2. Very finely slice or grate all the cabbage and vegetable ends, or splice them on the grate setting in a food processor. Weigh the veg now.
3. Place the veg in a very large bowl and sprinkle with the correct quantity of salt for the weight of your veg. Mix well and then massage strongly with both hands for a good 10 minutes until the vegetables are limp and have given off a lot of liquid. You need to really go for it!
4. Pack veg and juice as tightly as possible into your sterilised jar, leaving at least a 5cm gap at the top to allow for the juice to rise as it ferments. Use the cabbage leaf you set aside earlier to cover the vegetables. The liquid needs to cover all the vegetables



VEG END SAUERKRAUT

Continued

HOW TO STERILISE YOUR JARS

Remove rubber ring and wash the glass jar and lid well. Place in a cold oven and turn on to 130°C. Once it has reached temperature set the timer for 15 minutes, then turn off and allow the jar to cool undisturbed. Meanwhile boil the rubber ring seal for 10 minutes. Alternatively place everything in a big pot of water, heat up and boil for 10 minutes, then lift out and let steam-dry on kitchen paper.

- so air cannot reach them. If not add a little lightly salted water.
5. Close the jar and leave it on top of a paper towel (in case it leaks) somewhere not too cold or hot - room temperature is fine - to ferment. After a couple of days you should start to see small bubbles of gas rising in the jar. Note that if using a screw-top lid you will need to 'burp' the sauerkraut every couple of days by opening then resealing the lid.
 6. Smell and taste the sauerkraut after one week. It should smell sour, like sauerkraut. If it tastes tangy to your liking, it's ready. If not, carry on fermenting for another week or two. If mould appears on top this means either the fermentation did not get going, or the top layer of vegetables became exposed to air. To avoid this keep checking the veg are submerged and if necessary pour over a little lightly salted water to cover them.
 7. Once ready keep your sauerkraut in the fridge to slow the fermentation and use over the next few weeks as a salad.



FANCY BEETROOT LEAVES

If you're lucky enough to get beetroots with their leaves on (or you grow your own), keep the leaves! Separate them from their roots and store separately in the fridge, otherwise they keep sucking water out of the beetroot. Treat them like spinach: wash well then steam or wilt with a dash of oil. Small leaves can be eaten raw and are a delicious and pretty addition to a salad.

Bunch of beetroot leaves including stems

Generous handful of broken cashew nuts

Drizzle of olive oil

Half a lemon

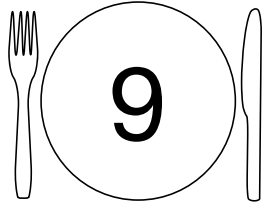
Chilli flakes

1. Steam the whole beetroot leaves for five minutes until stems are tender, then tip them onto a plate.
2. Toast the cashew pieces in a small dry frying pan over medium heat, tossing them frequently, until golden brown.
3. Tumble the cashew pieces over leaves, then drizzle with olive oil and finish with a light squeeze of lemon. If desired sprinkle over some chilli flakes.

MADE IN HACKNEY

Made in Hackney offers a range of food growing and cooking courses and classes at their eco community kitchen in Stoke Newington, including preserving and fermentation classes. They aim to promote healthy and affordable food which is good for both people and planet. To this end they use local, seasonal, organic and plant-based food.

www.madeinhackney.org



OFFALLY GOOD

MIKAKO SUETAKO



Art student Mikako grew up in Japan where cooking and eating are serious matters, accorded huge respect. “Mottainai” is a specific reprimand reserved for wasting food. So Mikako was brought up to eat every last grain of rice in her bowl, and to value the whole body of animals and fish that died for her. “Eating the heart and other organs in the most important thing to do. It was the animal’s life; we shouldn’t waste it.”

Arriving in London Mikako was surprised to find offal so hard to find. At home she was used to window displays full of organs and delighted in dishes such as deep-fried chicken cartilage, chicken heart kebabs, grilled beef heart, pork tripe stew, boiled trotters, squid intestines, steamed fish liver and salted fish eggs, to name a few. There are even restaurants specialising in offal. These aren’t seen as foods for the desperately poor, or rare adventures for the brave, but rather normal fare, enjoyed by both adults and children. “Where do all the organs go here?” she wonders.

The Japanese concept of mottainai - regret for food wastage - is ancient, but Mikako thinks it gained particular significance during World War II when there were food shortages. “Even though now there is more than enough, people still remember, and think waste is a terrible shame. So we always finish what’s in front of us.” Mikako was shocked to find that in London people regularly leave food on their plates, especially in restaurants where portions are much bigger than in Japan. She learnt from her mother to carefully cook only what will be eaten, which means getting to know your family’s appetites, and what a handful of rice looks like when cooked.

When too much is accidentally cooked, it is swiftly transferred to fridge or freezer ready to complete a bento box for someone’s packed lunch. Mikako has brought this practice to London, along with her nifty little portable spoon, fork and chopsticks set. She finds the habit of buying snack food on the go, or eating lunch in the street, odd. “In Japan we always sit for a meal, so I like to take a proper lunch into college.” On the other hand she loves the freedom, flexibility and speed of London life, especially its vibrant art world.





STEWED CHICKEN ORGANS

This 'motsu' dish can be made with most organs. Liver is most popular in Japan, but ovary (especially popular among children), oviduct and heart are often used as well. It goes well with rice and a cold beer.

500g chicken organs (liver, heart, ovary, oviduct, gizzard etc), washed well
3cm fresh ginger, thinly sliced
3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
80ml soy sauce
30-40g sugar
40ml cooking sake (rice wine)

Optional:

1 leek, halved lengthways and grilled

1. If using ovary and oviduct, separate them first and boil the oviduct to skim off the scum. Do not cook the oviduct too long as it hardens. Drain and cut into 3cm pieces.
2. If using gizzards, cut them each into 4-6 pieces as it can be chewy.
3. Place all ingredients except leek in a medium pot. If seasonings are not covering the organs, add a little more of each.
4. Cook for 10-15 minutes over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Don't overcook as some organs will toughen.
5. As soon as the organs are cooked through, it is ready to serve. For a thicker sauce, remove organs with a slotted spoon then boil the sauce to reduce it before adding the organs back in.
6. Serve hot or warm. It goes particularly well with grilled leek.



DEEP-FRIED CHICKEN CARTILAGE & GIZZARDS

Mikako says cartilage ('nankotsu') and gizzard ('sunagimo') have a lovely crunchy texture which is even more amazing when deep fried. In Japan children especially love it. The cartilage used is the narrow triangular breast 'bone' of the bird, which in Japan is sold separately.

(Serves 2)

c.250g chicken cartilage or
halved gizzards, well washed
2 garlic cloves, finely
chopped
2cm ginger, finely chopped
Salt and pepper
Sunflower oil
Potato starch
Lemon wedges
Ketchup
Mayonnaise
Mustard

1. Place cartridge or gizzards in a bowl. Add garlic, ginger and a dash of salt and pepper. Rub all over and leave to marinate for at least 10 minutes.
2. Fill a small deep saucepan about one third full with sunflower oil and slowly heat to 180°C. Use a thermometer and keep an eye on it so the oil does not over-heat.
3. Coat the cartridge or gizzards in potato starch and deep fry, in batches if needed, for a few minutes until lightly browned. Lift out onto kitchen paper with a slotted spoon and serve immediately. These are delicious with a squeeze of lemon, ketchup or a mixture of mayo and mustard.

Note: Mikako recommends saving the oil for deep-frying something else, such as sweet potatoes, carrots or pumpkin. Once the oil has been used two or three times you may want to discard it. Most recycling depots accept cooking oil.

STORING PRODUCE TO LAST LONGER

Mikako is impressed by the traditional vegetable knowledge of older people in Japan. Here are some tips, from Japan and elsewhere.

LETTUCE

Wash in luke warm water (c.50°C) for longer life. Tear the leaves with your hands, rather than cutting with a knife.

POTATOES

Store at cool room temperature in the dark, with an apple. The apple emits a gas which some say helps prevent sprouting.

CABBAGE

Remove the core from the bottom and replace with kitchen paper soaked in water. Store in a plastic bag in the fridge, base down.

AUBERGINES

In winter leave out of the fridge and in summer store in warmest part of the fridge. Do not wrap in a bag, let them breathe.

SQUASHES & ONIONS

Leave out at room temperature, somewhere dry.

BUNCHED CARROTS & BEETROOTS

Remove their leaves (and use them, see page 35) before storing in the fridge, as the leaves keep sucking the water out of their roots.

BROCCOLI & ASPARAGUS

Cut a small portion off the base and stand in water like a bunch of flowers. Store in the fridge or somewhere cool.

HERBS

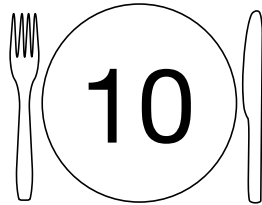
Remove rubber bands, wash in cool water then spin dry and layer in a plastic box or bag with kitchen paper and store in the fridge.

TOMATOES

To keep their flavour and texture, leave them out of the fridge, out of direct sunlight, and take care not to bruise them.

BANANAS

Keep out of the fridge to avoid them going black.



NATURE'S CURES

TESSA CHRISTIAN



Tessa can't walk past a patch of nettles or spray of rose hips without thinking of their health benefits and considering picking them for the pot. Ignored by most Londoners, these wild edibles are like gold to Tessa, who has transformed her life and diet since volunteering at Spitalfields City Farm.

Previously “the hardest, sassiest waitress in Shoreditch”, Tessa now spends several days a month growing vegetables collaboratively with other Londoners and teaching cooking classes. She first popped in to the farm six years ago to buy some spinach, got the growing bug and hasn't looked back since.

“Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food,” says Tessa, quoting Hippocrates. “Working outside the penny dropped; we're out of sync with the seasons.” In spring Tessa eats the new wild leaves packed with nutrients, like nettles, chickweed, cleavers, sorrel and dandelion. In winter she tops up on vitamin C with her home-made rosehip cordial. She believes it's these free foods, found all over London, which have helped her recover from health problems and maintain her youthful looks. “Even the toughest ex-prisoners on my estate like my nettle soup!”

Volunteering at Spitalfields City Farm has also introduced Tessa to a diverse group of fellow gardeners who have taught her to appreciate a broad range of wild and cultivated greens and get the most out of them. For example, from Bengali and Caribbean cooks she has learnt to strip every last shred of kale leaf from its stem, then peel away the stem's tough outer layer to reveal the sweet, tender flesh within.

4 TIPS FOR FORAGING

1. Avoid areas which may be heavily polluted by fumes or sprays.
2. Stick to public parks and private gardens where you have permission.
3. Only pick plants and berries you have positively identified - don't guess!
4. Don't uproot a whole plant or strip a bush bare - share!

Flowers, herbs and other wild greens fill every corner and verge at the farm - no space is wasted. These attract bees and other vital insects and provide Tessa with salad leaves and edible blooms to garnish them - peppery orange nasturtiums and bright yellow rocket flowers. She believes the leaves in season are those your body needs and likes to eat them as fresh as possible, seasoned simply with a home-made mix of ground rock salt and seeds - linseeds, poppy, sesame, pumpkin, nigella or fenugreek.

“Cooking doesn’t have to be laborious,” says Tessa. “Now that we have shops on every corner, running water, electricity and all manner of gadgets, people really have no excuse not to cook.”





ROSEHIP CORDIAL

Tessa says any red rosehips will work for this but the best are actually those turning brown and shrivelled, found in autumn and winter, since they give the cordial a rich fruity caramel flavour. She tries to stretch out her batch to last the winter, but sometimes can't resist drinking it sooner as it tastes so good. Try diluting it simply with water, drizzling neat over ice cream, or mixing with prosecco for a special occasion.

c.500g rosehips
Caster sugar to taste
Glass bottles (small vinegar bottles with metal screw-caps are good)

Note: Tessa likes to add minimal sugar to her cordial - just enough to sweeten to her taste. Most recipes call for more or less half the weight of the strained liquid to ensure the cordial will last several months without spoiling.

1. Wash the rosehips but don't bother topping and tailing. Use a mezzaluna or food processor to chop them up really well.
2. Place chopped hips in a saucepan and cover by an inch of water. Bring to a boil and simmer 20 minutes, then strain through a sieve. Return the pulp to the saucepan, cover with more water and repeat the process. Do this a third time if you think they have more to give.
3. Meanwhile wash bottles and lids well then place on a tray, separately, and load into a cold oven. Turn the oven to 120°C and let the bottles heat up. This will sterilise them.
4. Finally strain all the liquid through a jelly bag or sieve lined with a double layer of muslin to remove the hips' tiny hairs. Return the liquid to a clean pan, heat and add sugar to taste. Boil until the liquid thickens slightly into a syrup then carefully pour into hot sterilised bottles almost to the top and seal.



NETTLE SOUP

Pick only the young, tender, bright green nettle tops. These are best in spring, but Tessa - known by some as the Nettle Queen of Hoxton - suggests keeping a nettle patch going almost all year by regularly cutting it back to encourage new growth.

Nettles have long been known for their high nutritional value, packed with a range of vitamins and iron. Tessa is amazed by how many people pass them by in London parks, unaware of their culinary and medicinal uses.

Large bagful of nettle tops
A large floury potato, eg
King Edward
A couple of garlic cloves
Salt and pepper

Optional:

Herbs, eg sorrel, parsley or
lovage (not mint)
A little cream

1. Using rubber gloves wash the nettles well in a couple of changes of water.
2. Roughly chop the potato and garlic and place in a saucepan with water to cover by a good inch. Bring to the boil and then simmer, covered, until the potato is on the point of collapse.
3. Throw in the nettles, and herbs too if using, and stir them in to let them wilt. Remove from the heat.
4. Blend the soup until smooth then season to taste with salt and pepper. Reheat gently if needed and serve with a swirl of cream if you like.

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