

BBC

goodfood Middle East ★ Christmas collection

*All the recipes you'll
need to make this festive
season a magical one*



Make a fabulous festive feast to remember

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SEASON'S GREETINGS

From a sumptuous selection of beautifully decorated cakes to traditional British mince pies, you'll find plenty of ideas to make your festive meals special. So, join us and celebrate the season in style.

MARKS & SPENCER

LONDON

Dubai: Dubai Festival City Mall, The Dubai Mall, Mall of the Emirates, City Centre Deira, City Centre Mirdif, Wafi Mall, Al Churair Mall, Ibn Battuta Mall **Abu Dhabi:** Yas Mall, Fotouh Al Khair Centre, Marina Mall, Dalma Mall **Al Ain:** Bawadi Mall **Ras Al Khaimah:** Manar Mall

 **goodfood**
Middle East
Christmas collection

Your go-to-guide for all things festive food, the BBC Good Food Middle East Christmas Collection is here to make the holidays painless and nightmare-free in the kitchen.

Starting with extra-special breakfast ideas for enjoying on Christmas morning, to a beautiful selection of stunning starters that are sure to set the scene for a fantastic festive lunch, you'll find all the recipes you need for throughout the 'big day' here.

Worried about perfecting the turkey? Fear not, inside we've prepared five different mouthwatering options to ensure you not only have an incredible, traditional centerpiece for the Christmas table, but one that's tender, juicy and bursting with flavour.

You'll also find a range of vegetarian meals, which will impress even your meat-eating guests on Christmas Day – not forgetting a choice of tasty stuffing and sauces (no festive meal is complete without them).

From the perfect pudding, to special sweets and edible treats – we've got you covered. Enjoy your festive cooking this month.

Wishing you and your family the happiest of holidays!


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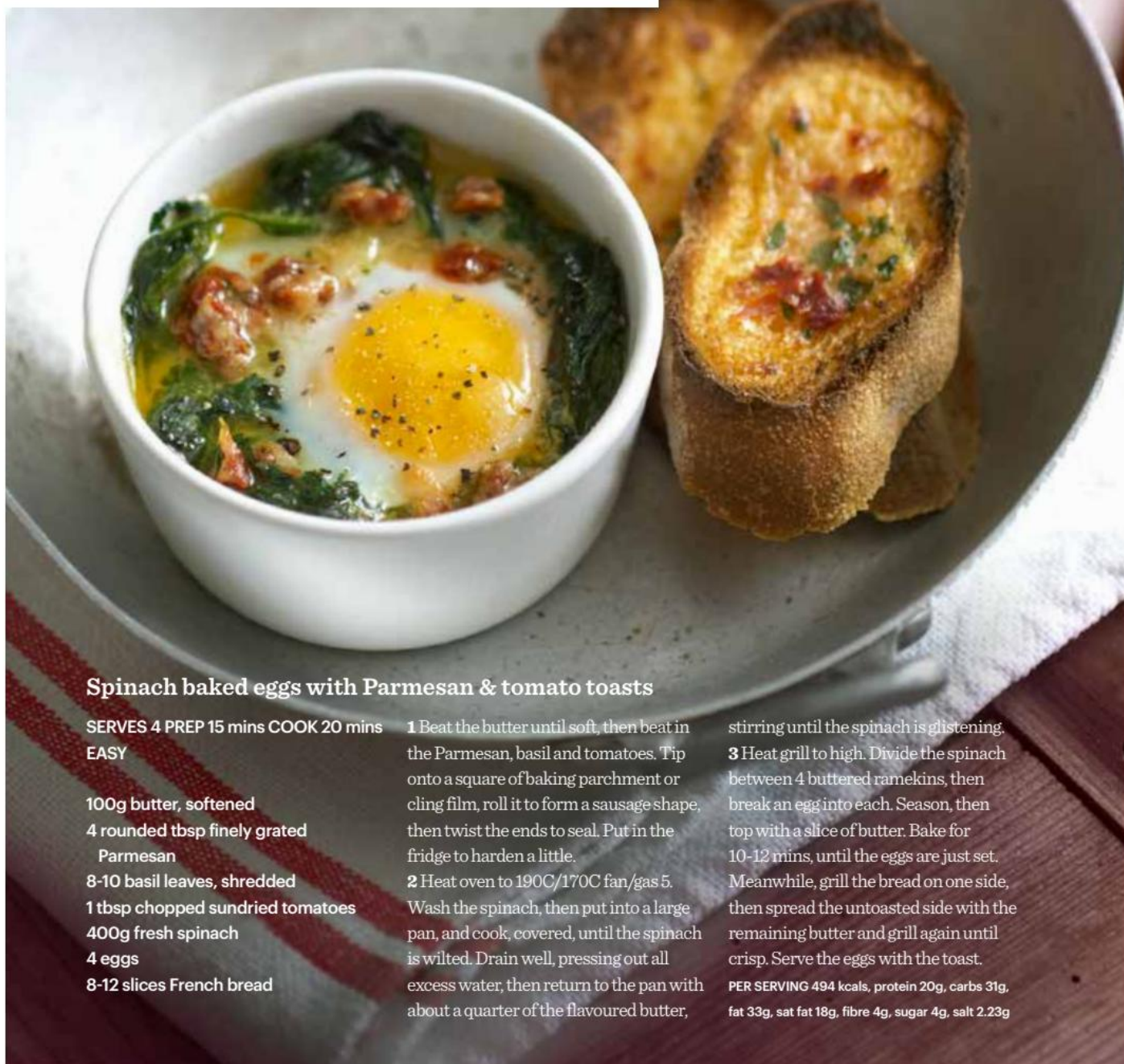
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Christmas puddings

Everything you need for a celebration

On Christmas morning

Start the day with these extra-special breakfast ideas



Spinach baked eggs with Parmesan & tomato toasts

SERVES 4 PREP 15 mins COOK 20 mins
EASY

100g butter, softened
4 rounded tbsp finely grated
Parmesan
8-10 basil leaves, shredded
1 tbsp chopped sundried tomatoes
400g fresh spinach
4 eggs
8-12 slices French bread

1 Beat the butter until soft, then beat in the Parmesan, basil and tomatoes. Tip onto a square of baking parchment or cling film, roll it to form a sausage shape, then twist the ends to seal. Put in the fridge to harden a little.

2 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Wash the spinach, then put into a large pan, and cook, covered, until the spinach is wilted. Drain well, pressing out all excess water, then return to the pan with about a quarter of the flavoured butter,

stirring until the spinach is glistening.

3 Heat grill to high. Divide the spinach between 4 buttered ramekins, then break an egg into each. Season, then top with a slice of butter. Bake for 10-12 mins, until the eggs are just set. Meanwhile, grill the bread on one side, then spread the untoasted side with the remaining butter and grill again until crisp. Serve the eggs with the toast.

PER SERVING 494 kcals, protein 20g, carbs 31g, fat 33g, sat fat 18g, fibre 4g, sugar 4g, salt 2.23g



One-pan English breakfast

SERVES 4 **PREP 5 mins** **COOK 15 mins**
EASY □

4 good-quality pork chipolatas
4 rashers smoked back bacon
140g button mushrooms
6 eggs, beaten
8 cherry tomatoes, halved
handful grated cheese (optional)
1 tbsp snipped chives

1 Heat the grill to high. Heat a medium non-stick frying pan, add the chipolatas and fry for 3 mins. Add the bacon, turning occasionally, until it starts to crisp, about 5 mins more. Tip in the mushrooms and continue to cook for a

further 3-5 mins. Drain any excess fat and move the ingredients so they are evenly spread out.

2 Season the eggs, then add to the pan, swirling to fill the spaces. Gently move with a fork for 2 mins over a low-medium heat until beginning to set. Scatter over the tomatoes, cheese, if using, and chives, then grill for 2 mins until set. Cut into wedges to serve.

PER SERVING 349 kcals, protein 25g, carbs 4g, fat 26g, sat fat 8g, fibre 1g, sugar 2g, salt 2.27g

Make it veggie

For a vegetarian version, swap the chipolatas for veggie sausages, omit the bacon and add more mushrooms.

*On the table
in 20 mins*





If you prefer, replace the smoked salmon with chopped, grilled smoked bacon

Creamy smoked salmon muffins

SERVES 1 Easily multiplied
PREP 5 mins **COOK** 5 mins **EASY**

1 English muffin
knob of unsalted butter, plus extra for buttering
2 eggs
1 tbsp milk
25g smoked salmon trimmings
1 tsp freshly snipped chives

1 Heat grill to hot. Split and toast the muffin until golden. Spread with the butter and keep warm.

2 Meanwhile, lightly beat the eggs and milk together in a bowl and season with freshly ground black pepper. Melt the butter in a pan and when foaming pour in the eggs. Cook over a low heat, pulling the cooked egg from the edges of the pan into the centre until the egg begins to set. Stir in the smoked salmon and chives and cook for a further 1-2 mins. Pile on top of the toasted, buttered muffins halves and serve.

PER SERVING 502 kcals, protein 26g, carbs 34g, fat 30g, sat fat 13g, fibre 1g, sugar none, salt 2.39g



Apricot pancakes with honey butter

MAKES 12-16 **PREP** 10 mins

COOK 10 mins **EASY**

FOR THE BUTTER

100g butter, softened

2 tbsp clear honey

FOR THE PANCAKES

140g self-raising flour

pinch bicarbonate of soda

25g caster sugar

1 egg

150ml milk

handful ready-to-eat dried apricots,
finely chopped

oil, for frying

1 For the honey butter, beat the butter with the honey and spoon onto a large piece of cling film. Squeeze into a sausage shape, then wrap tightly and chill until

ready to use. Will keep in the fridge for up to a month.

2 Sift the flour, bicarbonate of soda and a small pinch of salt into a bowl, then stir through the sugar and make a well in the centre. Beat together the egg and milk, then gradually pour into the well, stirring slowly, to avoid creating lumps. Stir in the chopped apricots.

3 Heat a non-stick frying pan over a low heat and add a little oil. Drop in 4 tablespoonfuls of batter and cook for 1 min or until the surface of each pancake is covered in bubbles. Flip with a palette knife or fish slice, then cook for a further 1 min. Repeat with the remaining batter. Serve warm or leave to cool, then toast and spread with the honey butter to serve.

PER SERVING 406 kcals, protein 7g, carbs 45g, fat 23g, sat fat 14g fibre 2g, sugar 19g, salt 1.23g





Smoked salmon kedgeree

**SERVES 8 PREP 15 mins COOK 40 mins
MORE EFFORT**

300g basmati rice
8 eggs
400g pack sliced smoked salmon
FOR THE SAUCE
knob of butter
450g red onions, sliced
8 garlic cloves, sliced
large knob fresh ginger, peeled and chopped
1 tsp each fennel and cumin seeds
6 cardamom pods
4 bay leaves
1 tbsp tomato purée
1 heaped tsp curry powder

large bunch coriander, leaves reserved, stalks chopped
1 litre chicken stock
284ml pot double cream

1 To make the sauce, heat the butter and then tip in the onions, garlic, ginger, spices and bay. Fry over a medium heat for 8-10 mins until the onions colour. Stir in the purée, curry powder and coriander stalks, then cook for a few mins. Pour in the stock and cream, season, stir well, then bring to the boil. Gently simmer for 15 mins until reduced by half. Strain through a sieve into a container. Will keep covered in the fridge for two days.
2 Rinse the rice in several changes of water, then put in a pan with enough cold

water to cover it by 1.5cm. Cover the pan, then place over a high heat. Bring to a fast boil, stir, return the lid, turn heat to minimum, then leave the pan for 2 mins. Turn the heat off; leave for a further 10 mins. If you're making ahead, cool quickly, then refrigerate.

3 When you're ready to serve, poach the eggs, then set aside. Roughly chop the salmon and coriander leaves. Reheat the rice until piping hot. Heat the sauce until simmering, then stir in the rice. Stir through the salmon and most of the coriander. Spoon into bowls, top with an egg and scatter with the remaining chopped coriander.

PER SERVING 508 kcals, protein 26g, carbs 37g, fat 30g, sat fat 14g, fibre 1g, sugar 4g, salt 3.3g



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Stunning starters

Set the scene for a fantastic Christmas lunch with one of our delicious starters

Simple seafood platter

SERVES 4 PREP 10 mins NO COOK
EASY

about 800g mixed seafood, such as cooked, whole prawns, smoked salmon and gravadlax
lemon wedges and brown bread,
to serve

FOR THE DILL & MUSTARD MAYONNAISE

juice 1 lemon
1 tbsp Dijon mustard
150ml good-quality mayonnaise
small bunch dill, finely chopped

1 For the mayonnaise, whisk the lemon juice with the mustard, then mix into the mayonnaise with the dill. This can be prepared up to a day ahead and chilled.

2 Lay out the seafood on a platter with the lemon wedges and a bowl of the mayonnaise in the middle so everyone can help themselves. Serve with plenty of fresh brown bread.

PER SERVING (no bread) 448 kcals, protein 38g, carbs 1g, fat 32g, sat fat 6g, fibre none, sugar 1g, salt 2.89g





Grilled goat's cheese with cranberry dressing

SERVES 6 PREP 15 mins COOK 5 mins

EASY

2 red-skinned apples
 3 tbsp lemon juice
 3 x 100g Capricorn goat's cheeses,
 halved horizontally
 2 tbsp cranberry sauce
 2 tbsp olive oil
 1 tsp clear honey
 25g pecans
 2 chicory heads, separated into leaves
 handful radish sprouts (available from
 larger supermarkets) or watercress

1 Quarter, core, then thinly slice the apple into a bowl with the lemon juice and 1 tbsp water. Toss well, as this stops the apples going brown.

2 Heat grill to high, then line your grill

rack with foil. Put the cheeses rind-side down on the foil, then set aside while you make the dressing.

3 Drain 2 tbsp of the juice from the apple bowl into another small bowl and discard the rest. Add the cranberry sauce, oil and honey with some seasoning, and whisk to form a dressing. Grill the cheeses for 4 mins, then scatter the nuts on and around the cheeses and return to the grill to cook for a few mins more – taking care that the nuts don't burn.

4 Divide the apple, chicory and radish sprouts or watercress between 6 plates, then carefully top with the hot melted goat's cheese. Scatter over the nuts, spoon over the dressing and serve straightaway.

PER SERVING 200 kcals, protein 8g, carbs 10g, fat 15g, sat fat 6g, fibre 1g, sugar 9g, salt 0.61g





the yellow butter that has risen to the top into another bowl and discard the milky liquid. Leave the butter to cool slightly, then mix in the thyme and peppercorns. Pour the mixture over the parfait and leave to set in the fridge. Serve with plenty of toast, sliced gherkins and chutney. Will keep for 2 days in the fridge.

PER SERVING 535 kcals, protein 18g, carbs 2g, fat 50g, sat fat 31g, fibre none, sugar 1g, salt 1.11g

Or why not try...

Apricot Stilton pots

MAKES 3 PREP 10-15 mins EASY

300g vegetarian Stilton
100g softened butter
40g chopped walnuts
25g dried apricots, chopped

- 1 Crumble or grate the Stilton into a small bowl. Beat the softened butter until creamy, then stir in the stilton.
- 2 Pack into three 150ml ramekins and smooth the tops. Mix the walnuts and apricots and press on top of the cheese. Wrap in cling film and chill for up to a week or freeze for up to 2 months.

Velvety duck pâté

SERVES 6 with leftovers PREP 30 mins
plus setting COOK 15 mins
MORE EFFORT □ ?

600g duck or chicken livers, or a mix of both
250g pack butter, diced and softened
2 shallots, finely sliced
1 garlic clove, sliced
splash each brandy and port
1 tbsp tomato purée
FOR THE TOPPING
100g butter
1 tbsp thyme leaves
1 tsp cracked black peppercorns
toast, gherkins and chutney, to serve

- 1 Cut away and discard any large sinews from the livers, then set the livers aside.

Heat a third of the butter in a large frying pan, then fry the shallots and garlic for 3-4 mins until soft. Turn up the heat, add the livers, then fry until just browned on all sides. Add the brandy and port, boil down as quickly as possible. Take the pan off the heat and cool completely.

- 2 Season the livers generously, then tip the contents of the pan into a food processor with the tomato purée and remaining butter, and blitz until smooth. Push the mixture through a fine sieve into a bowl, taste for seasoning, then tip into a serving dish, banging the dish down on the tabletop to smooth out the surface. Place in the fridge to set.

- 3 Once the mixture has set, make the topping. Gently melt the butter in a small pan or in a bowl in the microwave, then leave for 1 min to settle and separate. Pour





Smoked salmon & avocado ramekins

SERVES 8 PREP 20 mins NO COOK EASY

sunflower oil, for greasing
 300g and 150g pack thinly sliced
 smoked salmon
 100g pack mild goat's cheese, broken
 into small pieces
 3 tbsp snipped chives
 3 large ripe avocados, peeled, stoned
 and finely chopped
 3 tbsp lemon juice
 sweet chilli sauce, for drizzling
 salad leaves and homemade or bought
 vinaigrette, to serve

1 Lightly oil 8 small ramekins. Line with
 cling film, then the salmon (either 1 large

or 2 smaller slices), allowing plenty of
 overhang down the sides.

2 Gently mix together the cheese, chives
 and avocado with the lemon juice and
 plenty of seasoning. Spoon into the
 salmon-lined ramekins, press down, fold
 over the overlapping salmon, then cling
 film to seal in the mixture. Can be made
 the night before, but if making on the day
 they should be chilled for at least 4 hrs.

3 On the day, gently lift out of the
 ramekins using the cling film, then
 remove the film. Place on plates with
 some baby salad leaves tossed in a little
 vinaigrette. Drizzle with sweet chilli
 sauce allowing some to go on the plate.
 Serve on their own or with toast
 triangles.

PER SERVING 330 kcals, protein 18g, carbs 16g, fat
 22g, sat fat 5g, fibre 3g, sugar 10g, salt 3.67g





Crab, avocado & herby hollandaise tarts

SERVES 8 **PREP 25 mins** **COOK 15 mins**
MORE EFFORT †

8 slices white bread (medium sliced
white works best)

50g butter, melted

2 ripe avocados

juice ½ lemon

100g bag wild rocket

400g white crabmeat

FOR THE HERBY HOLLANDAISE

4 tbsp white wine vinegar

½ tsp peppercorns

1 fresh bay leaf

4 egg yolks

250g pack unsalted butter

small handful chervil or tarragon,

roughly chopped

juice ½ lemon

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Punch out a circle from the centre of each slice of bread using a 10cm round cutter and roll flat with a rolling pin. Brush the circles with the melted butter on each side, then press into 8 individual tart tins. Lift onto 2 baking sheets and bake for 10 mins or until tinged with gold at the edges. Carefully flip the cases out from the tins so they are upside down on the trays, then put back into the oven for 5 mins or until crisp and dry. Leave to cool. Can be kept in an airtight tin for up to 3 days.

2 To start the sauce, put the vinegar, peppercorns and bay leaf into a small pan and bring to the boil. Simmer for about 5 mins or until reduced to about 1 tbsp. Take off the heat, then strain out bay leaf and peppercorns. Will keep covered in the fridge for up to a week.

3 Halve the avocados, then stone and

peel. Thinly slice the avocado, put into a bowl and gently toss with a squeeze of lemon juice. Can be kept covered in the fridge for up to 2 hrs before serving. When ready to serve, put the avocado and a little rocket into each case, then top with crabmeat. Tip the vinegar reduction into a tall, narrow jug, then add the egg yolks. Melt the butter in a pan over a medium heat (don't boil), then add to the jug. Put a stick blender right to the bottom of the jug, turn on and draw very slowly up through the butter. The sauce will thicken as the yolks and butter meld together. Add the herbs, season, then add a dash of lemon juice to bring out the herby flavour and cut through the butteriness. Spoon the hollandaise generously over each tartlet so it oozes over the crab. Serve at once.

PER SERVING 484 kcals, protein 15g, carbs 14g, fat 42g, sat fat 21g, fibre 2g, sugar 1g, salt 1.06g

The creamy sauce is a perfect match for the light crabmeat





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The perfect turkey lunch

Choose from any of these recipes for a stunning, traditional centrepiece for your Christmas table



Roast turkey with chestnut stuffing





Roast turkey with chestnut stuffing

SERVES 8 with leftovers **PREP** 20 mins

COOK approx 3½-4 hrs plus resting

MORE EFFORT □ uncooked stuffing only ▽ □

FOR THE STUFFING

150ml Madeira or white wine

20g pack dried porcini mushrooms

2 onions, halved and sliced

25g butter, plus extra for greasing

15g pack thyme, use the leaves and reserve the stalks

2 x 454g packs Cumberland sausages, skins removed

200g pack whole cooked chestnuts

zest 1 lemon (halve and reserve the rest to use for the turkey)

15g pack flat-leaf parsley, chopped

85g fresh breadcrumbs

10 rashers streaky bacon

FOR THE TURKEY

1 onion, quartered

4.5-5.6kg bronze turkey, giblets removed (to use in stock)

85g soft butter

1 whole nutmeg

10 rashers streaky bacon

125ml glass Madeira or white wine

watercress sprigs, to garnish

1 First make the stuffing. Pour the Madeira or wine into a bowl, then crumble in the mushrooms. Fry the onions in the butter for 10 mins, until golden. Cool, then mix with the thyme leaves, the mushrooms and their soaking liquid, and all remaining ingredients, apart from 8 of the chestnuts and the bacon. Season well.

2 Set aside half of the stuffing. Line a greased 500g loaf tin with bacon (A). Pack the rest of the stuffing into the tin, then bring the rashers round over the top and secure in place with cocktail sticks. Use the reserved chestnuts to fill the spaces where the bacon meets. Chill until ready to cook. This will keep in the fridge uncooked for 2 days or can be frozen for

up to a month.

3 Prepare the turkey. The night before, put the onion quarters, reserved lemon halves and thyme stalks in the cavity between the legs. Pack the reserved stuffing into the neck end of the turkey (B). Secure the neck skin with skewers and tie the legs together. Weigh the turkey. Calculate the cooking time at 40 mins per kilo, plus 20 mins.

4 Put a large sheet of extra-wide foil in a large roasting tin and put the turkey on top. Smear the breast with the butter, then grate over half of the nutmeg and season well. Cover with bacon (C), then pour over the glass of Madeira or wine. Seal the foil well to make a parcel. Chill overnight.

5 On the day, take the turkey out of the fridge 1 hr before roasting. Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Put the turkey in the oven, then, 90 mins before the end of cooking, remove the foil and bacon, and drain off the juices from the tin to use in the gravy. Return to the oven to finish cooking. To test whether the turkey is cooked, push a skewer into the thickest part of the thigh – the juices should run clear. If they are pinkish, cook for 15 mins more, then test again.

6 Transfer the turkey to a platter, cover with foil, then a couple of tea towels, and allow to rest for at least 30 mins before carving. Meanwhile, cook the stuffing loaf for 30 mins and reheat the bacon. Garnish with watercress and serve the stuffing loaf separately.

PER SERVING (10) 871 kcal, protein 86g, carbs 24g, fat 46g, sat fat 17g, fibre 2g, sugar 7g, salt 3.01g

Tip Cooking the stuffing separately in a loaf tin as well as inside the turkey means there's plenty to go round. The stuffing is really good cold in turkey sandwiches too.



Prepare the turkey the night before, then chill until you're ready to cook



Turkey crown with chorizo stuffing

SERVES 8 PREP 30 mins
COOK 1 hr 20 mins MORE EFFORT □

approx 2kg boned turkey crown
 1 tsp smoked paprika
 25g butter, softened
FOR THE STUFFING
 2 tbsp mild olive oil
 1 large onion, finely chopped
 2 celery sticks, finely chopped
 6 rashers streaky bacon, chopped
 100g good-quality chorizo
 (not sliced), peeled and cut
 into small chunks
 85g good-quality breadcrumbs
 20g pack flat-leaf parsley, roughly
 chopped

1 To make the stuffing, heat the oil in a large non-stick pan, then add the onion and celery. Cover and cook very gently for 15 mins or until soft. Tip into a bowl. Add the bacon to the pan, turn up the heat and fry for 2 mins. Add the chorizo and fry until both are crisp and have released their oils. Tip onto the onion mix. Stir in the breadcrumbs and parsley, season generously, then stir until everything is mixed. Can be made up to 2 days ahead.

2 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Put the crown skin-side down on a board, with widest end away from you, then pull the skin away from the flesh along the cleavage in the middle where the two fillets meet. You want to make a pocket, running along the length of the meat.
3 Pack the stuffing into the space between the skin and the meat. Roll the two sides of the crown in towards the middle, then pull the skin at the top over and secure it with a skewer. Do the same at the bottom, then skewer in the middle too, to secure. Turn over – it should look like a slightly heart-shaped, completely wrapped joint at this stage. Weigh the turkey now to work out cooking time – 20 mins per lb or 40 mins per kg.
4 Put the turkey stuffing-side up in a large roasting tin. Beat the paprika into the butter, season, then brush some over the bird. Cover with a loose tent of foil, then roast, brushing with butter every so often. You will have some butter left, but keep it for the gravy. When done, lift the golden crown onto a board, carefully pull out the skewers, then leave to rest.
PER SERVING 481 kcals, protein 59g, carbs 11g, fat 21g, sat fat 8g, fibre 1g, sugar 2g, salt 1.20g

Herb-battered turkey

SERVES 6 PREP 30 mins COOK 2 hrs EASY †

4 garlic cloves, crushed
 2 handfuls parsley leaves, finely chopped
 100g butter, softened
 3kg turkey crown
 1.5kg new potatoes, halved if large,
 quartered if huge

FOR THE SAUCE

2 tbsp plain flour
 3 tbsp chunky cranberry sauce
 splash port
 600ml chicken stock
 1 tbsp soy sauce (optional)

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Tip the garlic, parsley and butter together in a bowl, season generously with black pepper and a pinch of salt, then beat with a wooden spoon or squish through your fingers until everything is combined. The butter can be prepared up to a day ahead and chilled or made two weeks ahead and frozen. Soften before using.

2 Place the turkey crown on a board with the thick part of the breast facing away from you. Use your hands to make two pockets between the skin and the meat, then smear the flavoured butter beneath the skin and all over the breast and work it down so that the breast is completely covered.

3 Tip the new potatoes into a large roasting tray. Sit the turkey on top, skin side up, then roast for 30 mins. Remove from the oven, sit the turkey on a board and give the potatoes a good shake. Then place the turkey back in the tin, spoon over some of the buttery juices and continue to cook for another 40-50 mins until the turkey is dark golden. Transfer the turkey to a board to rest, loosely covered in foil, then continue to cook the potatoes for 20 mins to brown. Use a slotted spoon to scoop the potatoes into a serving dish, reserving the buttery juices in the pan. Put the potatoes to one side and keep warm.

4 To make the cranberry gravy, place the roasting pan on a lowish heat and stir in the flour. Let everything sizzle and brown, then add the cranberry sauce and a splash of port. Sizzle everything for a few mins until really sticky, then stir in the stock, bring to the boil and cook until thickened or to your liking, seasoning to taste. If the gravy is on the pale side or a bit too sweet, stir in a splash of soy sauce.

PER SERVING 837 kcals, protein 91g, carbs 49g, fat 30g, sat fat 14g, fibre 3g, sugar 7g, salt 1.24g



Cook your potatoes and turkey together



Herb-buttered turkey

Citrus & thyme turkey

SERVES 8-10 PREP 1 hr COOK 3½ hrs

MORE EFFORT 

FOR THE STUFFING

200g white bread

1 large onion, quartered

2 garlic cloves

large handful fresh parsley

450g sausagemeat

2 Cox's apples, cored, peeled and finely chopped

3 celery sticks, strings removed and diced

100g pack walnut pieces, chopped

1 tsp curry powder

1 large egg

zest 1 lemon and juice of ½

20 rashers rindless streaky bacon

FOR THE TURKEY

2 x 20g bunches thyme or lemon thyme

1 orange

1 lemon

8 tbsp olive oil

4.5-5.6kg turkey, thawed if frozen, giblets removed

4 bay leaves

4 carrots, halved lengthways and cut into chunks

1 large onion, roughly chopped

50g butter, softened

FOR THE VEGETABLES

10 small red onions, peeled and quartered lengthways, but still attached at the root

2 onion squash or 2 small butternut squash (total weight about 500g), cut into thin wedges and peeled

1 For the stuffing, whizz the bread in a food processor to make crumbs. Tip into a large bowl. Put the onion, garlic and parsley in the processor and whizz until finely chopped. Add the onion mix to the breadcrumbs with all the other stuffing ingredients except the bacon. Season generously and mix it all together with your hands until combined.

2 Set aside about one third of the stuffing for the turkey and divide the rest into 20 pieces. Mould each piece into a little finger-sized sausage, then wrap each one in a rasher of bacon. Put the

sausages into a shallow ovenproof dish, ready for roasting (see step 10).

3 For the turkey, chop the leafy tops of the thyme but not the hard, woody branch ends. Finely grate the orange and lemon zest into a small bowl and mix with the chopped thyme, olive oil and seasoning. Mash the mix into the oil with the back of a metal spoon (or use a pestle and mortar) to release its flavour. Set aside to infuse.

4 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5.

Put the reserved third of stuffing into the neck end of the turkey and push it towards the breast. Don't overfill, as the stuffing will expand during cooking. Secure the neck end flap with a small metal skewer. Weigh the stuffed turkey and calculate the cooking time – allow 18 mins per 450g.

5 Season the turkey generously with salt and pepper inside and out. Halve the orange and lemon and put in the cavity (squeezing the fruit as it goes in) with the thyme branches and two of the bay leaves. Tie the turkey legs together to give the bird a good shape.

6 Put the chopped carrots and onion and remaining bay leaves into a large roasting tin. Sit the turkey on top of the vegetables, smear the butter over the skin and cover with a loose tent of foil. Roast the turkey for the calculated time, basting with the pan juices every hour.

7 Meanwhile, tip the red onions and squash into a shallow roasting tray and toss in half of the thyme oil, making sure you get it right into the cuts in the onions. Set the tray aside.

8 Half an hour before the end of the turkey's cooking time, remove the foil and leave the bird to brown. After 15 mins, drizzle the turkey with the remaining thyme oil.

9 To test if the turkey is cooked, insert a skewer into the thickest part of a thigh – the juices should run clear. If they are still pink, cook for a further 20-30 mins and test again. Remove the turkey from the oven and turn the oven up to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Transfer the turkey to a serving platter, cover tightly with foil and leave to rest while you finish off the vegetables and trimmings.

10 Put the red onions and squash in the oven and roast for 30-40 mins. At the same time, roast the bacon-wrapped sausages for 30 mins. Serve with your choice of other veg starting on p80.

PER SERVING (10) 933 kcals, protein 84g, carbs 28g, fat 55g, sat fat 17g, fibre 5g, sugar 13g, salt 2.72g







5 ways with turkey



Crisp garlic potatoes

Peel and quarter 1.5kg potatoes. Boil for 7 mins, drain well. Return to the pan with 1 tbsp polenta and shake to fluff up the edges. Heat 5 tbsp olive oil in large roasting tin. Tip in the potatoes and cloves from 1 garlic bulb. Roast for 45-50 mins.

Moist turkey crown with chestnut truffle stuffing

SERVES 4-6 **PREP** 20 mins plus brining

COOK 1 hr 10 mins **EASY** †

1.5kg turkey crown
50g butter, softened
1 shallot, finely chopped
200g wild mushrooms, finely chopped
50ml Madeira wine
100g cooked chestnuts, finely chopped
bunch thyme sprigs

3 tbsp truffle oil

FOR THE BRINE

3 litres cold water
140g salt
5 tbsp clear honey or brown sugar
6 thyme sprigs

FOR THE GRAVY

1 shallot, finely chopped
1 tbsp flour
100ml Madeira wine
400ml chicken stock

1 For the brine, heat 200ml water, salt, honey or sugar and 2 thyme sprigs in a small pan. Once the salt has dissolved, stir together with remaining water. Put the turkey in a bowl and pour over the brine. Cover and chill for 4-8 hrs.

2 Fry the shallot in a knob of butter for 2 mins until softened. Add mushrooms, fry for 5 mins until golden. Pour over the Madeira, add the chestnuts and leaves from 1 thyme sprig. Cook for 10 mins until the liquid has evaporated. Drizzle with truffle oil, cool, then mix in the remaining butter.

3 Remove the turkey from the brine and discard the liquid. Use kitchen paper to gently pat the meat until dry all over. Use your fingers or a spoon to gently ease under the skin of the bird, making a pocket between its flesh and skin. Smear the truffle butter all over the flesh, following the contours of the breast. Brush a little more butter over the skin, then place in a roasting tin. Can chill at

this stage up to 1 day ahead.

4 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Roast for 1 hr (about 40 mins per kg). Halfway through cooking, baste with the juices and loosely cover with foil if the skin is browning. Check the turkey is done by piercing the thickest part with a skewer – the juices should run clear. Remove from the tin and leave to rest, covered loosely with foil, for 10 mins.

5 Meanwhile, make the gravy. Pour away any excess fat from the tin, then place over a medium heat. Cook the shallot for 2 mins, stirring often. Once softened, sprinkle over the flour and mix. Slowly pour in the Madeira, scraping up any caramelised bits. Bring to the boil and simmer until reduced by half, then pour in the stock. Simmer for 5-10 mins until lightly thickened. Strain before serving. Serve with crisp garlic potatoes, below.

PER SERVING (6) 449 kcal, protein 55g, carbs 11g, fat 18g, sat fat 5g, fibre 1g, sugar 4g, salt 1.67g

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Vegetarian main meals

Impress even your meat-eating guests with these spectacular vegetarian main dishes for Christmas Day



Butternut squash, sage & honeycomb cannelloni

SERVES 5 **PREP 40 mins** **COOK 1 hr 10 mins** **MORE EFFORT**

1kg butternut squash (after peeling and deseeding) – 400g diced into 1cm chunks, 600g cut into bigger chunks
4 tbsp olive oil

2 onions, finely chopped
15 large sage leaves, finely chopped, plus a few extra for sprinkling
4 garlic cloves, crushed
2 x 250g tubs ricotta
pinch of sugar (optional)
85g walnuts, chopped, plus a few halves for sprinkling
500g tub mascarpone

300ml full-fat milk
good grating of fresh nutmeg
85g grated vegetarian Italian-style hard cheese, plus a little extra for sprinkling
500g cannelloni tubes (dried not fresh)

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Toss the diced squash on a baking tray with 2 tbsp of the oil. Roast in the oven for 20-25 mins until the squash is tender and browning. Put the bigger chunks in a microwave-proof bowl with about 200ml water. Cover with cling film, pierce a couple of times, and microwave on High for 10-14 mins until really soft. Drain off the water and leave to cool.

2 Meanwhile, put the remaining oil in a frying pan with the onions, sage and garlic, and cook gently until softened. Set aside to cool.

3 Mash the microwaved squash, or whizz in a food processor, then mix with the ricotta until smooth. Season well and taste – it may need a little sugar to bring out the sweetness of the squash. Stir in the onion mixture and walnuts, then gently stir in the roasted squash, being careful not to break it up. Spoon into a disposable piping bag and snip off the end to a width that will just fit inside 1 of your cannelloni tubes.

4 Whisk the mascarpone with the milk, a grating of nutmeg, the Parmesan and plenty of seasoning (especially salt) until smooth. Spread just over half the sauce into a big ovenproof dish.

5 Prepare the pasta in small batches (because it's easier to fill the tubes when warm). Bring a large saucepan of salted water to the boil. Add a few tubes at a time and boil for 2 mins, stirring occasionally so they don't stick. Lift out with a slotted spoon and cool under cold water just until you can handle them. Use scissors to snip each tube in half, pipe the squash filling into each tube and stand upright, snuggled together, in your dish. Keep repeating the process until all the ingredients are used up.

6 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6 (if it's not already on). Drizzle the remaining mascarpone sauce all over the pasta tubes, scatter with extra sage leaves, a few more walnuts and some Parmesan. Bake for 30 mins until the top is crisp, the sauce bubbling and the pasta is soft.

PER SERVING 1346 kcal, fat 88g, sat fat 48g, carbs 95g, sugars 20g, fibre 10g, protein 40g, salt 0.7g



Melty mushroom Wellingtons

SERVES 4 **PREP 30** mins

COOK 50 mins **MORE EFFORT**

when assembled, before baking

- 4 large field mushrooms
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, chopped
- about 400g spinach leaves a dusting of flour
- 1 tbsp picked thyme leaves
- 500g block all-butter puff pastry
- 140g vegetarian Stilton, sliced
- 1 egg, beaten

1 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Remove the stalks from the mushrooms. Heat half the oil in a large frying pan and sizzle the mushrooms for 3-4 mins on each side until golden and cooked through – add a drop more oil if needed. Lift the mushrooms out onto kitchen paper to drain.

2 Place the same pan back on the heat with the rest of the oil. Fry the garlic for a moment, add the spinach to the pan, then cook for 2-3 mins over a high heat until completely wilted. Season with salt

and pepper, then tip the spinach into a large sieve to drain thoroughly.

3 On a lightly floured surface scattered with the thyme leaves, roll the pastry out to the thickness of a £1 coin. Using a saucer and a larger-size plate, cut out 4 circles about 5cm wider than the mushrooms (for the bottoms) and 4 circles about 10cm wider (for the tops), re-rolling the trimmings if you need to.

4 Place the 4 smaller circles on a baking tray and top each with a quarter of the spinach, making sure the pile of spinach isn't wider than the mushrooms. Top the spinach with a slice of cheese, then a mushroom, smooth-side up, and top the mushroom with another slice of cheese. Brush the border to each circle with egg, then gently stretch the larger circle over the mushroom, trying not to trap any air, then press the edges together with a fork. Trim the edges with a knife if you want, then brush each generously with egg. Bake for 40 mins until golden. Leave to cool for a few mins before serving.

PER SERVING 790 kcal, fat 59g, sat fat 32g, carbs 47g, sugars 4g, fibre 6g, protein 22g, salt 1.8g

This smart all-in-one main is perfect for entertaining on chilly winter evenings




After sealing the pastry in Step 3, you can cover and chill the pie overnight, or freeze for 1 month. Defrost before glazing and baking



Squash & sage pithivier

SERVES 1 PREP 20 mins

COOK 10 mins EASY 

- ¼ 500g pack puff pastry
- flour, for dusting
- 1 tsp wholegrain mustard
- 4 tbsp mascarpone
- 1 tbsp breadcrumbs, fresh or dried
- 6 sage leaves, chopped, plus few extra to decorate
- 1 garlic clove, finely grated to a paste
- ½ the top end of a butternut squash (about 250g), thinly sliced into rounds
- 1 egg, beaten

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Roughly halve the pastry, but make 1 half a tiny bit bigger. Roll the slightly smaller half out on a floured surface to a circle about 15cm in diameter. Spread over the mustard, leaving about a 2cm gap around the edge. Mix the mascarpone, breadcrumbs, chopped sage and garlic together and season.

2 Arrange a few squash slices, overlapping, to cover the mustard. Spread with some of the mascarpone mixture. Repeat, making slightly smaller circles with the squash each time, and spreading mascarpone between each layer until the top is just 1 slice of squash and you have made a rough dome shape on the pastry.

3 Thinly roll out remaining pastry. Use to cover the squash dome, gently pressing down on the veg to push out as much air as you can. Press the pastry edges to seal. Brush with beaten egg, then poke a tiny steam hole in the top and gently score patterns over the surface. Dip a few sage leaves in the remaining egg and stick on top. Transfer to a baking sheet and bake for 35-40 mins until a skewer poked through the steam hole goes through the veg easily.

PER SERVING 1022 kcals, fat 72g, sat fat 37g, carbs 76g, sugars 16g, fibre 7g, protein 21g, salt 2.1g



Christmas galette

SERVES 6 PREP 40 mins COOK 50 mins
MORE EFFORT

- ½ small butternut squash, peeled, halved lengthways, deseeded and cut into slices
- 125ml olive oil
- 100g pack shelled pistachios
- 100g pack sunflower or pumpkin seeds
- 100g vacuum-packed chestnuts
- zest and juice 1 lemon
- 1 tbsp maple syrup
- small pack thyme, leaves only
- 1 red onion, finely sliced
- 1 red chilli, deseeded and sliced
- 200g vegetarian feta, crumbled
- FOR THE PESTO**
- 75g cashews or skinned almonds, soaked overnight (optional)
- 2 large handfuls winter greens, roughly chopped (we used kale)
- small pack sage, leaves picked

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Spread the squash out on a baking tray in a single layer, drizzle with 2 tsp oil, season and roast in the oven for 30 mins until soft and golden.

2 While the squash is cooking, make the galette crust. Put the pistachios and seeds on a baking tray and roast in the hot oven alongside the squash for 5 mins. Remove the tray of nuts and seeds (leaving the squash to carry on roasting) and tip them into a food processor with the chestnuts, 3 tbsp oil, the lemon zest, maple syrup and thyme, and season well. Blitz until you have a fine crumbly paste that comes together when you squeeze it. If it is too crumbly, add a touch more oil until it comes together into a solid piece when you scrunch it in your hands.

3 Lay a sheet of baking parchment on your work surface then tip out the paste and shape it into a circle with your hands. Place another sheet of baking parchment on top and use a rolling pin to roll it out into a pizza-sized circle about 0.5cm thick. Put it on a baking tray, take off the top sheet of paper, prick the dough with a fork and pop it into the oven with the squash for 15-20 mins

until golden around the edges. Take it out and let it cool a little. If the squash is ready before the crust, take it out and set it aside.

4 Meanwhile, fry the red onion on a low-medium heat in 2 tsp oil with a pinch of salt and 2 tsp lemon juice for 10 mins until deep violet, sweet and just starting to colour. Put all the pesto ingredients, 4 tbsp oil and the remaining lemon juice in a blender with a good amount of seasoning and blitz

until you have a smooth whipped deep-green paste. (You may need to add more oil or water.)

5 Once the galette base has cooled a little and you are ready to serve, put the pesto in a saucepan on a low heat, cook for 2 mins to warm through and spread the warm pesto over the base, then scatter over the onion, squash, chilli and feta. Serve immediately.

PER SERVING 628 kcals, fat 50g, sat fat 11g, carbs 24g, sugars 9g, fibre 7g, protein 17g, salt 1.3g





for vegetarians



Golden-glazed carrot, mushroom & hazelnut tart

SERVES 1 easily increased to serve more **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 50 mins
EASY

- 3 carrots, peeled and cut in half lengthways, or about 10 baby carrots left whole
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp maple syrup
- 15 x 12cm rectangle of all-butter puff pastry from a 320g roll
- 1 banana shallot, or 2 normal shallots, very finely diced
- small knob of butter
- 140g chestnut mushrooms, very finely chopped
- 1 tbsp chopped roasted hazelnuts, plus a little extra to garnish
- 3 tbsps low-fat cream cheese

a few tarragon leaves, chopped, plus a few leaves to garnish

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Pop the carrots in a pan of boiling water and cook for 4-5 mins until tender. Spread the carrots out in one layer on a baking tray. Carefully toss with olive oil, seasoning and half the maple syrup. Bake for 20 mins, turning once.

2 Next, place the pastry rectangle on a baking parchment-lined baking sheet. Score a 1cm border. Prick the centre area with a fork and put in the oven for 12 mins with the carrots.

3 Fry the shallot in butter until totally soft, then stir through the mushrooms. Fry for several mins until mushrooms are tender and the mixture is dry. Spread out

on a plate to cool. Whizz a third of the mushroom mixture with the nuts, cream cheese, tarragon and seasoning, so you have a coarse texture. Tip into a bowl and stir through the remaining mushroom mix.

4 Remove the pastry base from the oven and gently press down the centre area with the back of a spoon. Spread the mushroom mix inside and lay the glazed carrots on top. You may need to tuck the ends round to t the carrots in. Drizzle over the remaining maple syrup and bake for a further 12-15 mins until the pastry is golden. Sprinkle with a few tarragon leaves and some more chopped nuts to serve.

PER SERVING 702 kcals, protein 14g, carbs 56g, fat 47g, sat fat 22g, fibre 11g, sugar 29g, salt 1.4g

Tip Make the mushroom mixture ahead of time and store in the fridge, or assemble the tart up to the middle of step 4, just before you drizzle with more maple syrup, and chill for up to a day.

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A choice of sauces

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Madeira gravy

SERVES 8 TAKES 10 mins EASY

▣ stock only ?

200ml Madeira
3 tbsp plain flour
600ml turkey or chicken stock, fresh or made with cubes
2 tbsp wholegrain mustard
200ml turkey juices, skimmed of all fat (make up with stock if you don't have enough; add it all if you have more)


Gradually mix the Madeira into the flour until smooth. Heat the stock in a pan, then pour in the flour mixture and mustard, stirring until thickened. Chill until ready to serve, covering the surface with cling film to stop a skin forming. On the day, reheat in a pan with the turkey juices until bubbling.

PER SERVING 75 kcals, protein 5g, carbs 8g, fat 1g, sat fat none, fibre 1g, sugar 3g, salt 0.67g



Really simple cranberry sauce

SERVES 8 PREP 5 mins


COOK 5-10 mins EASY 

100g light muscovado sugar
100ml orange juice, fresh or from a carton
250g pack fresh or frozen cranberries

Tip the sugar and orange juice into a pan, then bring to the boil. Stir in the cranberries, then simmer until tender but still holding their shape – this will take about 5 mins if using frozen cranberries or 8-10 mins if using fresh. The sauce will thicken as it cools. Will keep in the fridge for 1 week. On the day, bring to room temperature before serving.

PER SERVING 56 kcal, protein none, carbs 15g,
fat none, sat fat none, fibre 1g, sugar 15g, salt 0.01g

Creamy bread & onion sauce

SERVES 8 PREP 5 mins COOK 45 mins
EASY  before adding cream & bread

2 onions, chopped
2 bay leaves
85g butter
600ml milk
5 cloves
good grating of nutmeg
142ml pot double cream
140g crustless, soft, open-textured white bread, cubed

1 In a covered, non-stick pan, gently fry the onions and bay leaves in the butter for 10 mins, until soft. Add the milk and cloves and simmer for 30 mins, stirring now and then.

2 Take out the bay and cloves, then blitz in a food processor until smooth. This will keep for 2 days in the fridge.

3 On the day, tip the cream into a pan, add the onion sauce, then mix well. Add the bread and stir until soft but still textured. Add milk to thin if necessary. Season and serve warm.

PER SERVING 256 kcal, protein 5g, carbs 15g,
fat 20g, sat fat 12g, fibre 1g, sugar 6g, salt 0.48g

Cranberry & red wine sauce

SERVES 8 PREP 5 mins COOK 20 mins EASY 🟢

250g cranberries, fresh or frozen
175g golden caster sugar
zest and juice 1 small orange
5 tbsp red wine

1 Put the cranberries in a pan with 5 tbsp water. Bring to the boil, cover and cook for 10 mins (less if using frozen fruit), until the skins just start to pop. Tip in the sugar, zest and juice and wine, then cook, stirring, until the sugar has dissolved.

2 Let the mixture slowly bubble for 5-8 mins until thickened.

PER SERVING 100 kcals, protein 0g, carbs 25g, fat 0g, sat fat 0g, fibre 1g, sugar 23g, salt 0.01g

Tip To make your own stock for gravy, brown the raw turkey giblets in 1 tbsp olive oil, then add 2 roughly chopped onions, a carrot and a bay leaf. Pour over 2 litres of water, then leave to simmer for 1 hr. Strain off the giblets and veg, then chill until needed. (You can do this the day before.) Or if you prefer, use the carcass left over from a roast chicken instead of the giblets – no need to brown it first – then freeze for up to 1 month.



Bread & shallot sauce

SERVES 8 PREP 15 mins COOK 35 mins EASY 🟢

1.2 litres full-fat milk
50g butter
8 shallots, peeled and left whole
1 garlic clove, peeled and left whole
2 bay leaves, each pierced with 2 cloves
grating nutmeg
350g white breadcrumbs
142ml pot double cream

1 Put the milk, butter, shallots, garlic, bay leaves and nutmeg into a pan. Bring to

Red wine gravy

SERVES 8 TAKES 20 mins EASY 🟢

4 carrots, cut into chunks and 2 onions, chopped, cooked with your turkey
300ml red wine
1 heaped tbsp redcurrant jelly
600ml turkey or chicken stock

Discard any fat from the turkey roasting tin. Stir the wine and jelly into the veg in the tin. Boil rapidly for 8-10 mins to reduce by half, scraping any sticky bits from the base. Pour in the stock, simmer for 10 mins until you have a dark gravy, season. Strain and serve.

PER SERVING 32 kcals, protein 1g, carbs 5g, fat 2g, sat fat 1g, fibre 1g, sugar 4g, salt 0.58g

the boil, then reduce the heat to minimum and leave to simmer, uncovered, for 30 mins.

2 Remove the studded bay leaves and tip the aromatic milk into a food processor with the breadcrumbs, cream and seasoning (you may need to do this in batches). Whizz until smooth. Tip the sauce back into the pan and cook over a low heat for 5 mins, stirring frequently, until thickened to a consistency that is both spoonable and pourable. Serve piping hot.

PER SERVING 383 kcals, protein 10g, carbs 42g, fat 20g, sat fat 12g, fibre 1g, sugar 0g, salt 1.19g

Bread & walnut sauce

SERVES 8 PREP 15 mins plus infusing COOK 40 mins EASY 🟢

1 litre full-fat milk
1 small onion, finely sliced
50g butter
generous grating nutmeg
3 bay leaves
2 garlic cloves, sliced
8 slices white bread, crusts removed
50g walnuts

1 Pour the milk into a pan, add the onion, butter, nutmeg, bay and garlic, then bring to the boil. Turn the heat to its lowest setting and infuse the milk for 30 mins. (If you have time, do this the day before, leave to cool, then chill overnight.)

2 To make the sauce, bring the milk back up to the boil and break the bread into chunks. Remove the bay leaves, then add the bread and most of the walnuts.

3 Blitz everything in a food processor or with a hand blender, then season to taste. Serve piping hot, scattered with the rest of the walnuts, one bay leaf and a little butter, if you like.

PER SERVING 246 kcals, protein 8g, carbs 21g, fat 15g, sat fat 7g, fibre 1g, sugar 7g, salt 0.62g

Cranberry & Champagne sauce

SERVES 8 PREP 5 mins COOK 20 mins MORE EFFORT 🟡

200g golden caster sugar
450g fresh or frozen cranberries
splash Champagne or sparkling white wine

Tip the sugar into a medium saucepan and place over a medium heat. Cook without stirring until the sugar has dissolved and turned into a bubbling, light-brown caramel. Throw in the cranberries and let them cook in the caramel, stirring until they start to burst, then simmer everything for about 10 mins until you have a thick, jammy sauce. Pour in the Champagne or wine, bring the sauce to the boil, then remove and pour into a bowl to cool completely.

PER SERVING 116 kcals, protein none, carbs 28g, fat none, sat fat none, fibre 2g, sugar 28g, salt 0.01g



Almond & bread sauce

SERVES 8 PREP 10 mins plus infusing
COOK 5 mins EASY

6 black peppercorns
1 onion, peeled and cut into quarters
600ml full-fat milk (you will need a drop more if making ahead)
2 garlic cloves
100g blanched almonds, roughly chopped
140g breadcrumbs
good knob of butter
drizzle extra virgin olive oil, plus extra to serve

1 Put the peppercorns, onion, milk and garlic into a pan, bring to the boil, then leave to infuse off the heat for 30 mins. Strain, fish out the peppercorns and return the milk, onion and garlic to the pan.

2 Tip in the almonds, then whizz with a stick blender in the pan until smooth. Stir in the breadcrumbs and heat for a few mins until just thickened. Stir in the butter and oil, allowing the butter to melt into the sauce. Season to taste. The sauce can be made up to 2 days ahead and kept chilled.

3 When ready to serve, add a splash more milk to the sauce if it's too thick, then reheat gently, stirring. Serve with a swirl more olive oil on the top.

PER SERVING 220 kcals, protein 7g, carbs 19g, fat 13g, sat fat 4g, fibre 2g, sugar 5g, salt 0.45g

Cranberry & currant sauce

SERVES 8 PREP 5 mins COOK 5 mins
EASY

2 tbsp sunflower or vegetable oil
1 red onion, thinly sliced
100g golden caster sugar
2 tbsp currants
finger-length cinnamon stick
300g frozen cranberries, defrosted
175ml white wine

1 Heat the oil in a saucepan, then add the onion and heat gently for 5 mins. Turn up the heat and stir for 2 mins to add a little colour, then tip in the sugar, currants and cinnamon stick. Stir over the heat until the sugar has dissolved and starts to turn golden.

2 Tip in the cranberries and wine, stir well and season, simmer for 5-7 mins until the berries have popped but not completely collapsed, and you have a thickish sauce. It will thicken as it stands. This can be made up to a day ahead.

PER SERVING 103 kcals, protein none, carbs 18g, fat 3g, sat fat none, fibre 1g, sugar 18g, salt 0.02g

Tip It's a good idea to make as many of your Christmas lunch 'extras' in advance – such as the bread and cranberry sauces – so plan ahead if possible.

Easy sherry gravy

SERVES 8 (makes about 300ml)
PREP 2 mins COOK 15 mins
EASY

juices from the turkey roasting tin
1 tbsp leftover paprika butter
1 tbsp plain flour
150ml fino sherry
500ml good chicken stock

Tip the juices from the tin into a jug and set aside. Mix the spicy butter and flour together, then add to the pan and cook for 2 mins until the flour smells biscuity. Tip in the sherry, whisking as you go, then boil until it has reduced by two-thirds. Now tip in the turkey juices and stock and reduce again by about half. Season and keep warm. Soak up any orangey fat that comes to the top using a few sheets of kitchen paper – this is just the fat from the chorizo and bacon.

PER SERVING 56 kcals, protein 3g, carbs 3g, fat 3g, sat fat 1g, fibre none, sugar 1g, salt 0.36g

GLORIOUS BUTTERS

Flavoured butters take minutes to make but they're so useful, and will add a new slant to favourite dishes. Stir the butter into veg, use to top meats or fish, add to soups and sauces for luxury and sheen, or spread on brown bread to serve with smoked salmon.

The possibilities are endless, but the basic technique is the same. Bring unsalted butter to room temperature (if you're in a hurry, cut into small pieces and leave while you prepare other ingredients – by the time you need it, the butter will be soft). Beat in all the ingredients, shape into a small log, then chill or freeze. Once cold, wrap in cling film. Slice off discs as you need them. Flavoured butters keep for a week in the fridge, or two months in the freezer.



BLUE CHEESE & SAGE BUTTER

Use 250g unsalted butter and mix in sea salt flakes and paprika, plus 75g crumbled Stilton or other strong blue cheese and 1-2 tbsp chopped sage. A super-tasty way to infuse steak or pork chops with a taste of Christmas, or even spread on toast for a late-night snack.



HERB BUTTER Mix 250g unsalted butter, a good pinch of sea salt flakes, plenty of coarsely ground black pepper, grated lemon zest, 1/2 garlic clove, crushed, and 3-4 tbsp chopped tarragon or parsley, or 1-2 tbsp chopped thyme, sage or rosemary (it's best to limit the mix to 2 herbs). Great with meats, fish and veg.

RED PEPPER & SMOKED PAPRIKA BUTTER

Chop 1 roasted red pepper from a jar, 2 tbsp thyme and 2 tsp smoked mild paprika and beat into 250g unsalted butter with sea salt and black pepper. Lovely with chicken, on an omelette, or use to perk up everyday meals over the festive period.



UMAMI BUTTER Combine 250g unsalted butter with a good pinch of sea salt flakes, 1 tsp umami paste, pepper or dust (from large supermarkets and delis). Umami seasonings – which give a rich, meaty flavour, reminiscent of mushrooms, Parmesan and soy sauce – vary, so taste carefully. Use on meats and veg to add savouriness.







Add a citrus zing to your Christmas turkey with this zesty, fresh stuffing

Apricot & pistachio stuffing

MAKES 12 balls **PREP 10 mins**
COOK 30 mins **EASY**

2 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
50g butter
2 large onions, chopped
50g pistachio nuts, chopped
100g ready-to-eat apricots, chopped
175g fresh white breadcrumbs
4 tbsp chopped parsley
zest 1 lemon
1 egg, beaten

1 Heat the oil and butter in a frying pan. Add the onions and fry for 5 mins until softened. Stir in the pistachios and fry until golden. Add the apricots, breadcrumbs, parsley and lemon zest. Mix in the egg and shape into 12 balls.
2 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Put the balls into a buttered baking dish, drizzle with a little oil and bake for 30 mins until golden.

PER SERVING 158 kcals, protein 4g, carbs 17g, fat 9g, sat fat 3g, fibre 1g, salt 0.38g



Stuffings & EXTRAS

The trimmings are one of the best parts of Christmas lunch, so choose some of these delicious ideas to serve alongside the turkey

Lemon & herb stuffing

SERVES 8 plus 250g to stuff the turkey
PREP 20 mins **COOK 50 mins** **EASY**

5 onions, finely chopped
4 tbsp sunflower oil
300g white bread, in chunks
25g pack curly parsley
15g pack sage, leaves only
1 tbsp thyme leaves
zest 3 lemons, juice of one
8 cocktail sausages
4 smoked, dry-cured streaky bacon rashers, halved across the middle

1 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Soften the onion in the oil for 10 mins with the pan covered. Put the bread and herbs into a food processor and pulse until you have herby breadcrumbs. Stir into the onions along with the lemon zest and juice, then season. Set aside 250g to stuff the turkey, then press the remainder into a well-buttered baking tin.

2 Wrap half a bacon rasher around each sausage. Score the stuffing into 8 rectangles, then sit a sausage on top of each. Cook for 20 mins, covered with foil. Uncover, then roast for 20 mins more or until the sausages and bacon are golden and the stuffing golden and sizzling.

PER SERVING 142 kcals, protein 5g, carbs 13g, fat 8g, sat fat 2g, fibre 1g, sugar 3g, salt 0.67g



Chicken liver & mushroom nests

MAKES 12 plus 250g to stuff the turkey **PREP** 20 mins **COOK** 1 hr 10 mins **EASY** □ □

3 tbsp sunflower oil
3 onions, finely chopped
250g pack chestnut mushrooms, chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
400g pack chicken livers, trimmed of any sinewy bits
3 tbsp brandy
140g white breadcrumbs
bunch flat-leaf parsley, chopped
handful walnuts, chopped
12 smoked, dry-cured streaky bacon rashers

1 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5.

Heat the oil in a large frying pan, then soften the onions for 10 mins with the pan covered. Turn up the heat, add the mushrooms and fry for about 10 mins until golden and all their liquid has evaporated. Stir in the garlic and cook for 1 min more. Tip everything onto a plate.

2 Pat the livers dry, then add a little more oil to the pan. Sizzle in batches for about 20 secs on each side until just golden but not cooked through. Set aside on a plate as you go. Tip in the brandy and let it reduce to 1 tbsp. Roughly chop the livers once cooled,

then mix with the oniony

mushrooms, brandy, bread and almost all the parsley and nuts.

3 To cook, wind the bacon rashers into the wells of a 12-hole bun tin, like little nests. Spoon in the stuffing (reserving 250g for your turkey), scatter with remaining nuts, then bake, covered with foil, for 20 mins. Uncover and cook for 25 mins more until the bacon is gold. Scatter with the remaining chopped parsley to serve.

PER SERVING 147 kcals, protein 10g, carbs 7g, fat 8g, sat fat 2g, fibre 1g, sugar 2g, salt 0.74g





Lemon & herb sausagemeat stuffing

SERVES 8-10 PREP 10 mins
COOK 40 mins EASY □ □

500g pack sausages or sausagemeat
1 lemon
25g butter
1 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, chopped
good handful of parsley, chopped
2 tsp chopped fresh thyme leaves
175g fresh white or brown breadcrumbs
16 rashers streaky bacon

1 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. If using sausages, cut the skins down the length and remove the meat. Break the sausagemeat up into a bowl. Finely grate the lemon zest into the bowl.

2 Heat the butter and oil in a pan, add the onion and fry until lightly browned. Tip into the bowl along with the herbs and breadcrumbs. Season then mix with your hands until it comes together. Shape into 16 patties, tie a rasher of bacon around each and roast for 40 mins.

PER SERVING 394 kcals, protein 16g, carbs 25g, fat 27g, sat fat 10g, fibre 2g, sugar 4g, salt 2.65g

Apricot & hazelnut stuffing

MAKES enough to stuff the turkey or approx 16 balls **PREP 15 mins**
COOK in the turkey or separately for 30 mins **EASY** □ □

2 large onions, chopped
50g butter
50g hazelnuts, roughly chopped
140g ready-to-eat dried apricots, chopped
175g fresh white breadcrumbs
20g pack parsley, chopped
zest 1 lemon
1 egg, beaten
olive oil, for drizzling

1 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Fry the onions in the butter. Stir in the nuts and fry until golden. Remove from the heat, add the apricots, breadcrumbs, parsley and lemon zest. Mix in the egg and season. Shape into balls or use half to stuff the neck end of the turkey.

2 Put the balls in a buttered baking dish, then drizzle with oil. Bake for 30 mins until golden.

PER SERVING 124 kcals, protein 3g, carbs 14g, fat 7g, sat fat 2g, fibre 1g, sugar 5g, salt 0.28g

Sausage, sage & onion stuffing

SERVES 8-10 PREP 20 mins COOK in the turkey or separately for 40 mins **EASY** □ □

2 onions, sliced
25g butter, plus extra for greasing
1 small Bramley apple, peeled, cored and diced
2 x 400g packs meaty Cumberland sausages, removed from their skins
handful sage, leaves chopped, plus extra for topping
140g granary breadcrumbs

1 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Fry the onion in the butter for 5 mins, then add the apple and cook briefly. Cool, then mix with remaining ingredients and season well.

2 Grease a 1kg loaf tin with butter, then pack the mixture into the tin and top with extra sage leaves. Or use to stuff the neck end of the bird, then roll any leftovers into balls. Bake for 30-40 mins. Drain off any fat and serve sliced.

PER SERVING 328 kcals, protein 16g, carbs 19g, fat 22g, sat fat 8g, fibre 1g, sugar 6g, salt 1.41g

Rustic chestnut stuffing

SERVES 8-10 PREP 20 mins
COOK in the turkey or separately for 30 mins **EASY** □ □

1 onion, chopped
50g butter
140g small button mushrooms, thickly sliced
200g vacuum-pack whole cooked chestnuts, halved
170g pack Ardennes pâté, cubed
25g pack parsley, chopped
1 tbsp thyme leaves
6 rashers smoked streaky bacon, each rasher cut into 6-8 pieces
140g white or oatmeal breadcrumbs
2 eggs

1 Fry the onion in the butter for 5 mins. Add the mushrooms, then fry for 5 mins.

2 Tip into a bowl, then lightly stir in the remaining ingredients with plenty of salt and pepper. Spoon into oiled muffin tins (half-fill to make 8 servings) and bake for 30 mins or stuff into the neck end of the turkey.

PER SERVING 262 kcals, protein 8g, carbs 19g, fat 18g, sat fat 5g, fibre 2g, sugar 3g, salt 1.29g





Sage, leek & onion balls

MAKES 16 small balls plus 250g to

stuff the turkey **PREP** 20 mins

COOK about 1 hr **EASY** □□

4 tbsp sunflower or vegetable oil

2 onions, finely chopped

1 leek, finely sliced into rings

2 celery sticks, finely chopped

450g pack pork sausages, meat
squeezed out

20g pack sage, leaves finely chopped

140g white breadcrumbs

1 large egg

8 smoked dry-cured streaky bacon
rashers, halved and stretched out

1 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Heat the oil in a large frying pan, then soften the onions, leek and celery for 15 mins with the pan covered. Put the sausagemeat into a bowl. Once the onion mix has cooled, tip onto the sausagemeat, add the sage, bread, egg and seasoning, then mix really well with your hands.

2 Set aside 250g to stuff the turkey, then shape the rest into 16 balls, wrapping each with bacon. Sit these on a non-stick baking sheet, cover with foil, then bake for 15 mins. Uncover, then bake 30 mins more until the bacon is golden.

PER SERVING 131 kcals, protein 6g, carbs 8g, fat 9g, sat fat 2g, fibre none, sugar 1g, salt 0.72g

Vary the herbs

You can use dried sage and thyme if you prefer – you'll need a smaller quantity as dried herbs have a more intense flavour, so substitute 2 tsp of sage and 2 tsp thyme.



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Fantastic side dishes

Mix and match a selection of these vegetable sides to complete your festive feast

Red cabbage with prunes

SERVES 8 PREP 5 mins COOK 5-10 min
EASY 

- 2 large onions, chopped
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- 900g red cabbage, shredded
- 150ml stock, made with
 - 1 vegetable or chicken stock cube
- 2 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 85g pitted prunes
- 2 tbsp redcurrant jelly

1 Fry the onion in the oil until beginning to soften. Tip in the mixed spice, then fry for a few secs more.

2 Add remaining ingredients. Season, stir well, cover and simmer for 20 mins, until tender. On the day, reheat in a pan.

PER SERVING 98 kcals, protein 2g, carbs 15g, fat 4g, sat fat none, fibre 4g, sugar 13g, salt 0.56g

Mashed carrots with Pernod

SERVES 8 PREP 5 mins
COOK 25 mins EASY 

- 1.25kg large carrots, peeled and sliced
- 60g butter
- 2-3 tbsp Pernod

Boil carrots for 20 mins until tender, drain and return to pan. Mash with the

butter and Pernod until fairly smooth and most of the moisture has evaporated. Season. Tip in a bowl and cover. Will keep in the fridge for 2 days. Reheat on High in the microwave for 7 mins, or in the oven for 20 mins, until piping hot.

PER SERVING 118 kcals, protein 1g, carbs 12g, fat 7g, sat fat 4g, fibre 4g, sugar 12g, salt 0.21g

Crunchy roast potatoes

SERVES 8 PREP 30 mins
COOK 1½ hrs EASY

- 20 even-size potatoes, such as King Edwards, peeled and halved if large
- 200g jar goose fat
- salt, to serve

1 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Boil the potatoes for 10 mins, then drain. Rough up their surfaces by shaking them in the pan with the lid on.

2 Melt the goose fat in a roasting tin. Tip in potatoes carefully and coat in fat. Roast for 1½ hrs, turning halfway, until crisp and golden. Serve sprinkled with salt.

PER SERVING 327 kcals, protein 5g, carbs 43g, fat 16g, sat fat 5g, fibre 3g, sugar 2g, salt 0.04g





*Making
the red
cabbage
a few days
ahead
allows the
flavours
to develop*

Glazed apples & pears with sticky shallots

SERVES 8 PREP 10 mins

COOK 1½ hrs EASY

juice ½ lemon
4 small eating apples
4 small pears
900g shallots (unpeeled weight)
1 tbsp olive oil
50g butter
6 tbsp quince or redcurrant jelly
bay leaves, to decorate



mins or until the fruit just gives to a sharp knife. Peel the shallots while you're waiting.

2 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Add the oil and butter to a smallish roasting tin, then add the drained apples,

pears and the shallots. Brush the fruit with a layer of the jelly or jam and roast for 1 hr until softened and golden. Turn the pears and apples around in the fat a few times during cooking, brushing twice more with the glaze.

PER SERVING 145 kcals, protein 2g, carbs 20g, fat 7g, sat fat 3g, fibre 3g, sugar 20g, salt 0.14g

1 Put the lemon juice into a large bowl. Peel the apples and pears, leaving the stalks on, then toss in the juice. Meanwhile, bring a medium saucepan of water to the boil. Lower in the apples and pears, then cover and poach for 30

Golden spiced roast potatoes

SERVES 10 PREP 25-35 mins

COOK 1¼ hrs EASY

Par-boiling the potatoes first with a touch of turmeric gives them a golden glow and a hint of extra flavour.

2.25kg floury potatoes, preferably Désirée or King Edward's
½ tsp turmeric
6 tbsp light olive or sunflower oil
½ tsp paprika
Maldon sea salt

1 Heat oven to 190C/fan 170C/gas 5. Peel the potatoes and cut into big chunks. Put them in a large saucepan of boiling salted water, sprinkle in the turmeric and stir well. Bring back to the boil, then cover and simmer potatoes for 4 mins.

2 Pour the oil into a roasting tin, then put in the oven to heat through for 5 mins. Drain the potatoes well in a colander and give them a gentle shake to roughen up the surfaces a bit, but not too much or they'll break up. This rougher surface will give you crisper potatoes.

3 Carefully tip potatoes into the hot fat in the roasting tin, tossing with a big metal spoon to coat. Scatter with a light sprinkling of paprika and roast, without turning, for about 1½ hrs or until golden and crisp. Sprinkle the potatoes with Maldon sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, then serve immediately.

PER SERVING 199 kcals, protein 4g, carbs 32g, fat 7g, sat fat 1g, fibre 2g, sugar 0g, salt 0.28g



Creamy parsnip & squash bake

SERVES 8 PREP 30 mins plus cooling

COOK 1 hr 10 mins EASY

284ml pot & a 142ml pot double cream
1 small onion or shallot, finely chopped
2 thyme sprigs, 1 stripped of leaves
butter, for greasing
500g parsnips (about 4 large)
500g butternut squash (½ a large one)
25g Gruyère (or vegetarian alternative), grated

1 Place the cream, onion or shallot and the thyme sprig into a small pan. Slowly heat to just below boiling point, then remove from the heat and leave to cool. Strain, discarding the onion and thyme.

2 Heat oven to 160C/140C fan/gas 4. Grease a gratin dish, about 20 x 30cm, with butter. Peel the vegetables, trimming the parsnips and scooping the seeds from the squash, then thinly slice.

3 Layer the parsnip and squash in the dish, pour over the infused cream, then scatter with the thyme leaves and Gruyère. Bake for 1 hr until golden and a fork slides easily into the veg.

PER SERVING 350 kcals, protein 4g, carbs 14g, fat 31g, sat fat 17g, fibre 4g, sugar 8g, salt 0.12g

Crisp-topped sprouts

SERVES 8 PREP 15 mins COOK 15 mins

EASY

1kg Brussels sprouts
50g white bread, preferably ciabatta
2 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for serving
25g flaked almonds
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
zest 1 lemon

1 Remove any tough leaves and trim sprouts, then steam or boil for 10 mins until tender.

2 Tear the bread into crumbs. Fry the bread in the olive oil until just crisp. Tip in the flaked almonds, garlic and lemon zest, then cook gently until everything is golden. Place the sprouts in a serving dish, season, then toss with the crumbs and a little extra olive oil to finish.

PER SERVING 125 kcals, protein 6g, carbs 9g, fat 8g, sat fat 1g, fibre 6g, sugar 4g, salt 0.11g



Get ahead Leave the bake to cool, then cover and place in the fridge for up to 2 days. To reheat, place in a 220C/200C fan/gas 7 oven for 15 mins. If the top starts to brown more than you'd like, cover with foil.



Fabulous festive sweets

Treat yourself, your family and your friends to a taste of indulgence with these Christmas cakes



Rudolph Christmas cake

SERVES 12-15 **PREP** 1 hr 15 mins plus soaking and cooling **COOK** 2 hrs

A CHALLENGE ☐ un-iced cake only ❗

2 x 500g packs mixed dried fruit & peel
100g glacé cherries, washed, dried and cut into quarters

4 tbsp Cointreau, brandy or Madeira
(or the juice from the orange, below),

plus a little extra for soaking, if you like
250g pack salted butter

250g soft dark brown sugar

1 tbsp golden syrup

5 large eggs, lightly beaten

250g plain flour

½ whole nutmeg, finely grated

1 tsp mixed spice

1 tsp ground ginger

½ tsp ground cinnamon

zest 1 orange

zest 1 lemon

TO DECORATE

85g smooth apricot jam, melted

1 tbsp icing sugar, sifted, plus extra for dusting

750g marzipan

1.2kg ready-to-roll white icing

brown, red and black food colouring

3 pretzels, halved

gold string

sparkling red ribbon,

to tie around the base

a pin

1 The night before making the cake, put the mixed fruit and cherries in a bowl, add your chosen spirit or orange juice, cover with clingfilm and leave to soak for 8-12 hrs. If you don't have time to soak the fruit, put the bowl in the microwave for 5 mins, stir, then microwave for 5 mins more before leaving to cool completely.

2 Grease a 23cm springform cake tin and line the base and sides with baking parchment. Heat oven to 150C/130C fan/gas 3. Using a large bowl and electric hand whisk, or a stand-alone mixer, cream together the butter and sugar until pale, light and fluffy. Spoon in the golden syrup, then add the beaten egg in 4 additions, whisking well after each and adding 1 tbsp



of the flour to prevent the mixture from curdling. When all the eggs have been incorporated, gently fold in the rest of the flour and the spices. Finally, fold in the soaked fruit and the orange and lemon zest. Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin and smooth the top with the back of the spoon. Bake for 2 hrs or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Your kitchen will be filled with lovely Christmas smells!

3 Leave the cake to cool in the tin for about 30 mins. Remove from the tin and place on a wire rack until completely cold. If not decorating straight away, wrap the cake in foil to store. If you've made your cake a few weeks before you want to eat it, brush the cake with a little extra alcohol every week for up to 4 weeks. This will keep it moist and add flavour.

4 To decorate the cake, brush all over with a little melted jam. Lightly dust your work surface with icing sugar and roll out the marzipan to a circle, large enough to cover the top and sides of the cake. Lift the marzipan by hanging it over the rolling pin and drape it over the cake. Smooth the marzipan down the sides of the cake, then trim away any excess from the bottom. Brush the marzipan all over with the remaining apricot jam, then roll out 1kg of the fondant icing and, using the same method as for the marzipan, cover your cake with the icing. Trim the edges and smooth out any marks with the palm of your hand, rubbing the icing to give it a shine.

5 Knead the remaining icing, then cut off a small piece, about the size of a small marble, and set aside. Colour the large piece of icing with brown food colouring, adding a little at a time and kneading in well, until you have the desired colour. Divide the icing into 3, then shape a reindeer – body, head, 2 feet and a tail – from each piece. Mix 1 tbsp icing sugar with a tiny splash of water to use as a glue. Stick the head onto the body and squash down a little. Use a small knife to make three indents in the feet, then stick to the reindeer body, along with the tail.

6 Remove a small piece from the reserved icing to make Rudolph's red nose. Colour with red food colouring, then use the icing glue to attach to one of the reindeer heads. Colour the remaining icing black and shape into two more noses and two eyes for each reindeer, then stick onto the heads. Poke half a pretzel into either side of the reindeers' heads to create antlers. Use a little of the icing sugar glue to stick the reindeer to the top of the cake, then tie the gold string around their bodies to create reins. Finish the cake by tying a sparkling red ribbon around the base and securing it in place with a pin.

PER SERVING UNDECORATED (15)

494 kcals, protein 6g, carbs 78g, fat 16g, sat fat 9g, fibre 3g, sugar 66g, salt 0.4g

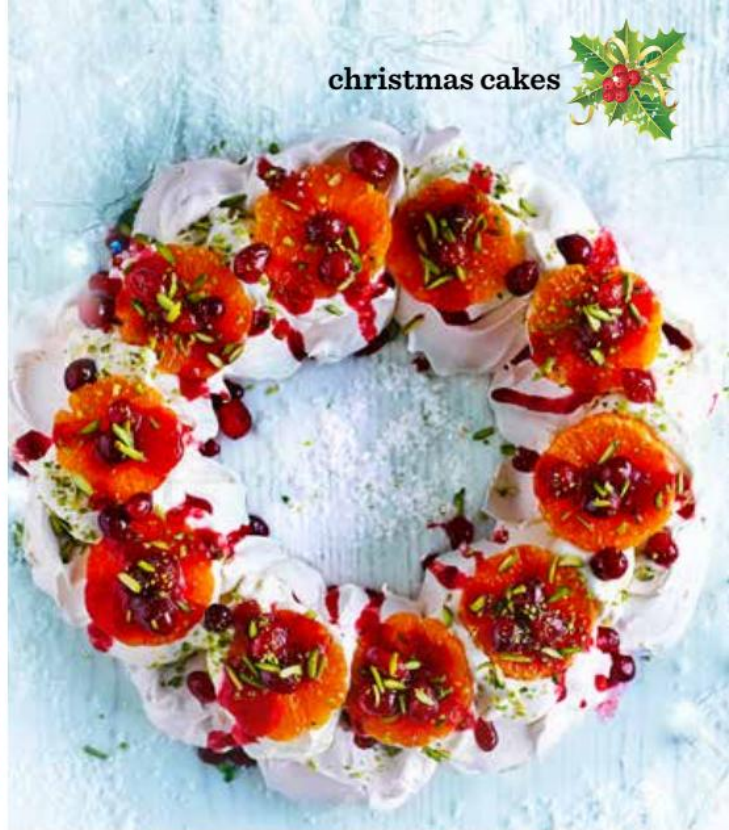
PER SERVING DECORATED (15) 1,004 kcals, protein

10g, carbs 187g, fat 23g, sat fat 10g, fibre 3g, sugar 171g, salt 0.7g



Make ahead

You can make the meringue wreath up to 3 days before serving. Once cool, place on a tray lined with baking parchment and cover with cling film. The cranberries can also be cooked and stored in the fridge for 3 days.



Clementine, cranberry & pistachio meringue wreath

SERVES 10 PREP 25 mins

COOK 1 hr 30 mins MORE EFFORT †

FOR THE MERINGUE

4 large egg whites

200g caster sugar

FOR THE TOPPING

100g fresh or frozen cranberries

75g caster sugar

300ml pot double or whipping cream

2 small clementines, zested, then peeled and sliced

2 tbsp orange liqueur (optional)

100g pistachios (slivered ones look nice, but you can use chopped)

1 Heat oven to 140C/120C fan/gas 2 and cut a piece of baking parchment large enough to line your biggest baking sheet. Using a plate as a template, draw a circle roughly 28cm in diameter onto the parchment, then lift it over onto the baking sheet so the pencil marks don't come into contact with the meringue.

2 Put the egg whites in a large, clean bowl and beat with an electric whisk until doubled in volume and holding soft peaks. Add the sugar 1 or 2 tbsp at a time, whisking continuously, until the

meringue is stiff and shiny, and the sugar has been used up.

3 Dab a blob of meringue on each corner of the parchment to stick it to the baking sheet. Using the circle as a guide, spoon 10 mounds of meringue onto the parchment in a wreath shape. Create a little divot in the centre of each one with the back of a teaspoon. Bake for 1 hr 30 mins, then leave in the oven to cool completely (overnight if you can).

4 Put the cranberries and sugar in a saucepan and bring to a simmer. Turn up the heat and boil for 1-2 mins, until you have a sugary syrup, but the cranberries are still whole. Leave to cool completely.

5 When you're ready to serve, place the meringue wreath on a large board or plate. Pour the cream into a bowl, and add the zest and liqueur, if using. Whip until the cream just holds soft peaks. Fill each meringue crevice with a spoonful of cream, then top with 1-2 slices of clementine and some cranberries. Drizzle some cranberry syrup and sprinkle generously with pistachios, then let everyone dive in.

PER SERVING 304 kcals, fat 17g, sat fat 8g, carbs 32g, sugars 31g, fibre 2g, protein 4g, salt 0.1g



Simple snow sparkle cake

TAKES 20 mins EASY

400g white sugar cubes
100g preserving sugar
3 tbsp edible pearly balls
1 egg white, lightly whisked edible silver glitter

YOU WILL ALSO NEED

ribbons
shop-bought decorations (optional)

1 Once the cake has been removed from the oven, increase the heat to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Leave the cake in its tin. Put the

sugar cubes in a large bowl and crush with the end of a rolling pin to a sugary rubble. Mix in the preserving sugar, pearly balls and egg white – it should have the texture of wet sand. Tip the mixture on top of the cake and level the surface. Bake the cake for 5 mins to set the sugary crust, then remove and leave to cool.

2 Once completely cooled, remove from the tin and peel off the baking parchment. Sprinkle the top with edible glitter, tie ribbons around the side and decorate with your favourite figurines, if you like (see right).

The right equipment

Cake-decorating essentials are available from most good cookware shops – however, there's loads more choice online. We particularly like the ranges available at squires-shop.com and cakedecoratingstore.co.uk.

A snowflake cutters set is available from Lakeland. For a selection of ribbons, try John Lewis. The reindeer decorations are from notonthehighstreet.com.



Wrap your truffles and put them in a pretty box to give as homemade gifts

Choc hazelnut truffles

MAKES about 25 **PREP** 30 mins plus chilling **COOK** 5 mins **MORE EFFORT**

■ without decoration ▼

175ml double cream
200g bar dark chocolate, chopped
1 tbsp frangelico or 1 tsp vanilla extract
50g hazelnuts, roughly chopped
different coloured sprinkles and edible glitters

1 In a small saucepan, bring the cream to the boil. Remove from the heat and pour over the chopped chocolate. Gently stir the mixture until smooth, then add the alcohol or vanilla extract and hazelnuts. Cover and put in the fridge for 30 mins or until the mixture is thick but not solid.

2 Scoop out teaspoons of the mixture and roll into small balls with your hands. Put each of your sprinkles or glitters onto separate small plates or bowls. Roll each truffle into the sprinkles or glitter to coat, then chill again to firm up. Will keep chilled for 1 week, or freeze for up to 1 month without the decoration.

PER TRUFFLE 90 kcals, protein 1g, carbs 5g, fat 7g, sat fat 4g, fibre none, sugar 5g, salt none



Mince pies with a *twist*

Nothing's more likely to get you feeling festive than baking a batch of mince pies



Hazelnut crunch mince pies

MAKES 12 **PREP 30 mins plus chilling**
COOK 20 mins **EASY** □

FOR THE PASTRY

250g plain our, plus extra for dusting
100g chopped hazelnuts
75g icing sugar, plus extra for dusting
140g cold butter, cut into cubes
1 egg, separated

FOR THE FILLING

400g good-quality mincemeat
1 small eating apple, grated
zest 1 orange

1 Put the flour, half the hazelnuts, the icing sugar and butter in a food processor and blitz to a sandy texture. Add the egg yolk and 1-2 tbsp water, and blitz briefly until the dough clumps together. Tip out onto a work surface and knead the dough a little until smooth. Flatten to a puck shape, wrap in clingfilm, then chill for 30 mins.

2 Mix the mincemeat, apple and orange zest in a bowl. Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Unwrap the pastry and roll out on a lightly floured surface to the thickness of a £1 coin. Stamp out 12 circles with a 10cm fluted biscuit cutter and use them to line a 12-hole muffin tin.

3 Fill each pie with the mincemeat mixture. Scrunch up the pastry trimmings and re-roll to the same thickness as before. Stamp out 6 circles using an 8cm cutter, and 6 stars. Put the remaining hazelnuts in a dish and lightly whisk the egg white in another. Brush a little egg white around the inner rim of each pie, then brush one side of each pastry lid, and the stars. Press each lid into the hazelnuts, egg-side down, so they stick, then lightly press on top of the pies, nutty-side up. Repeat with the stars and place these on the remaining pies.

4 Bake for 20 mins or until golden and crisp. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 mins, then scoop out and cool on a wire rack. Dust with icing sugar before serving. Will keep in a sealed container for 3 days.

PER PIE 347 kcals, protein 4g, carbs 43g, fat 17g, sat fat 7g, fibre 2g, sugar 27g, salt 0.2g



Baked mincemeat doughnuts

MAKES 12 PREP 2½ hrs including 1½ hrs rising
COOK 10-12 mins
 MORE EFFORT □

200g strong white bread flour
1 rounded tbsp caster sugar
25g butter, cut into small pieces
1 x 7g sachet easy-blend dried yeast
5 tbsp milk
1 egg, beaten
4 tbsp mincemeat
TO COAT
3 tbsp icing sugar
85g caster sugar
1 tsp ground cinnamon

1 Tip the flour, sugar and a good pinch of salt into a large bowl. Add the butter and rub into the flour with your fingertips. Stir in the yeast.

2 Warm the milk to hand hot. Make a well in the centre of the flour and add the milk and egg. Mix everything together to make a soft dough. Tip onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 5 mins until the dough is smooth, elastic and no longer sticky. Put the dough back in the bowl, cover with a tea towel and leave to rise for about 1 hr or until doubled in size.

3 Knead the dough again briefly, then divide into 12 equal pieces. Roll out each piece to a 9cm round and put 1 tsp mincemeat in the centre. Gather up the edges of the dough to enclose the filling, pinching it well to seal. Shape into a ball between your hands and put on a baking sheet lined with baking paper, sealed side down, allowing space for the dough to rise. Cover with a tea towel and leave for about 30 mins. Heat the oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5.

4 Bake the doughnuts for 10-12 mins until risen and golden. Mix the icing sugar with 2 tbsp cold water in a shallow bowl. Mix the caster sugar and cinnamon in another bowl. Roll each doughnut first in the sugar syrup, then into the caster sugar to coat all over. Leave to cool.

PER DOUGHNUT 149 kcals, protein 3g, carbs 30g, fat 3g, sat fat 2g, fibre 1g, sugar 17g, salt 0.06g





mince pies

Chunky mince pie slices

MAKES 15 slices PREP 20 mins

COOK 15 mins EASY □

280g mincemeat

25g pecans, mix of broken and whole

25g pistachios, halved lengthways

2 tbsp flaked almonds

25g dried cranberries

½ small apple, cored & finely chopped

zest 1 lemon, plus 2 tsp juice

375g ready-rolled sheet puff pastry

1 rounded tbsp ground almonds
beaten egg, to glaze (optional)

50g icing sugar

1 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7.

Combine the mincemeat with the nuts, cranberries, apple and lemon zest.

2 Unroll the pastry and lay it on a lightly floured work surface. Slice off a strip across one end to leave a 23cm square of pastry. From the strip, cut out 15-30 star shapes (depending on whether you want 1 or 2 stars per slice). Thinly re-roll the pastry trimmings until it is all used up. Lay the pastry square on a baking sheet

and scatter over the ground almonds. Carefully spread the mincemeat mixture over so that it comes right to the edge of the pastry (the mincemeat shouldn't spread when baked). Lay the stars in lines across the mincemeat, slightly overlapping them if necessary to fit, so you can cut out 15 slices when baked. Brush the stars with egg to glaze, if you like.

3 Bake for 15 mins or until the pastry is golden. Leave to cool. Meanwhile, mix the icing sugar with 2 tsp lemon juice. Drizzle over the cool pastry and cut into 15 slices.

PER SLICE 204 kcals, protein 3g, carbs 27g, fat 10g,
sat fat 3g, fibre 1g, sugar 17g, salt 0.21g

Tip Using a mixture of whole and broken pecans gives the slices a good, crunchy texture and the lemon icing adds a delicious sharpness.





Bake a festive treat

Christmas is a time for traditional fare, so get baking these festive classics

Yummy chocolate log

SERVES 8 PREP 30 mins

COOK 10 mins MORE EFFORT

FOR THE CAKE

- 3 eggs
- 85g golden caster sugar
- 85g plain flour (less 2 tbsp)
- 2 tbsp cocoa powder
- ½ tsp baking powder

FOR THE FILLING & ICING

- 50g butter
- 140g dark chocolate, broken into squares
- 1 tbsp golden syrup
- 284ml pot double cream
- 200g icing sugar, sifted
- 2-3 extra-strong mints, crushed (optional)

icing sugar and holly sprigs to decorate
– remove the berries before serving

- 1** Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Grease and line a 23 x 32cm Swiss roll tin with baking parchment. Beat the eggs and sugar together with an electric hand whisk for about 8 mins until thick and creamy.
- 2** Mix the flour, cocoa and baking powder together, then sift onto the egg mixture. Fold in very carefully, then pour into the tin. Now tip the tin from side to side to spread the mixture into the corners. Bake for 10 mins.
- 3** Lay a sheet of baking parchment on the work surface. When the cake is ready, tip

it onto the parchment, peel off the lining paper, then roll the cake up from its longest edge with the paper inside. Leave to cool.

- 4** To make the icing, melt the butter and chocolate together in a bowl over a pan of hot water. Remove from the heat and stir in the syrup and 5 tbsp cream. Beat in the icing sugar until smooth. Whisk the remaining cream until it holds its shape. Unroll the cake, spread the cream over the top, scatter over the crushed mints, if using, then carefully roll up again into a log shape.
- 5** Cut a thick diagonal slice from one end of the log. Lift the log onto a plate, then arrange the slice on the side with

the diagonal cut against the cake to make a branch. Spread the icing over the log and branch (don't cover the ends), then use a fork to mark the icing to give the effect of tree bark. Scatter with unsifted icing sugar to resemble snow, and decorate with the holly.

PER SERVING 552 kcals, protein 5g, carbs 64g, fat 32g, sat fat 18g, fibre 1g, sugar 54g, salt 0.32g



Simple gingerbread house

MAKES 20 biscuits **PREP 1 hr plus**
drying **COOK 12 mins** **MORE EFFORT**

FOR THE GINGERBREAD

250g unsalted butter
200g dark muscovado sugar
7 tbsp golden syrup
600g plain flour
2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
4 tsp ground ginger

TO DECORATE

200g bag flaked almonds
2 egg whites
500g icing sugar, plus extra
for dusting
125g pack mini chocolate fingers
generous selection of sweets of
your choice (choose your own
colour theme)
1 mini chocolate roll or Dipped Flake
few edible silver balls (optional)

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Melt the butter, sugar and syrup in a pan. Mix the flour, bicarbonate of soda and ground ginger into a large bowl, then stir in the butter mixture to make a stiff dough. If it won't quite come together, add a tiny splash of water.
2 Cut out the template (see tip, right). Put a sheet of baking paper on your work surface and roll about one quarter of the dough to the thickness of two £1 coins. Cut out one of the sections, then slide the gingerbread, still on its baking paper, onto a baking sheet (A). Repeat with the remaining dough, re-rolling the

trimmings, until you have two side walls, a front and back wall and two roof panels. Any leftover dough can be cut into Christmas trees, if you like.

3 Pick out the most intact flaked almonds and gently poke them into the roof sections, pointy-end first, to look like roof tiles (B). Bake all the sections for 12 mins or until firm and just a little darker at the edges. Leave to cool for a few mins to firm up, then trim around the templates again to give clean, sharp edges. Leave to cool completely.

4 Put the egg whites in a large bowl, sift in the icing sugar, then stir to make a thick, smooth icing. Spoon into a piping bag with a medium nozzle. Pipe generous snakes of icing along the wall edges, one by one, to join the walls together. Use a small bowl to support the walls from the inside, then allow to dry, ideally for a few hours (C).

5 Once dry, remove the supports and fix the roof panels on. The angle is steep so you may need to hold these on firmly for a few mins until the icing starts to dry. Dry completely, ideally overnight. To decorate, pipe a little icing along the length of 20 mini chocolate fingers and stick these lengthways onto the side walls of the house. Use three, upright, for the door.

6 Using the icing, stick sweets around the door and on the front of the house. To make the icicles, start with the nozzle at a 90-degree angle to the roof and squeeze out a pea-sized blob of icing.

Keeping the pressure on, pull the nozzle down and then off – the icing will pull away, leaving a pointy trail. Repeat all around the front of the house. Cut the chocolate mini roll or Dipped Flake on an angle, then fix with icing to make a chimney. Pipe a little icing around the top. If you've made gingerbread trees, decorate these now, too, topping each with a silver ball, if using. Dust the roof with icing sugar for a snowy effect. Lay a winding path of sweets, and fix gingerbread trees around and about using blobs of icing. Your gingerbread house will be edible for about a week, but will stay looking good as a decoration for a lot longer.

PER SERVING 454 kcal, protein 6g, carbs 71g, fat 19g, sat fat 8g, fibre 2g, sugar 46g, salt 0.38g

Tip Visit bbcgoodfood.com/recipe/simple-gingerbread-house to download your gingerbread house template or use the measurements below to draw up your template on a piece of paper.

Roof panels x 2

17cm high/13cm wide

Side walls x 2

7cm high/9cm wide

Front and back walls x 2

12cm wide across bottom

Sides 7cm high to where the slope starts

Slope length 15cm on each side to reach a point







perfect pudding

The perfect pudding

Last-minute Christmas pudding

SERVES 6-8 PREP 10 mins

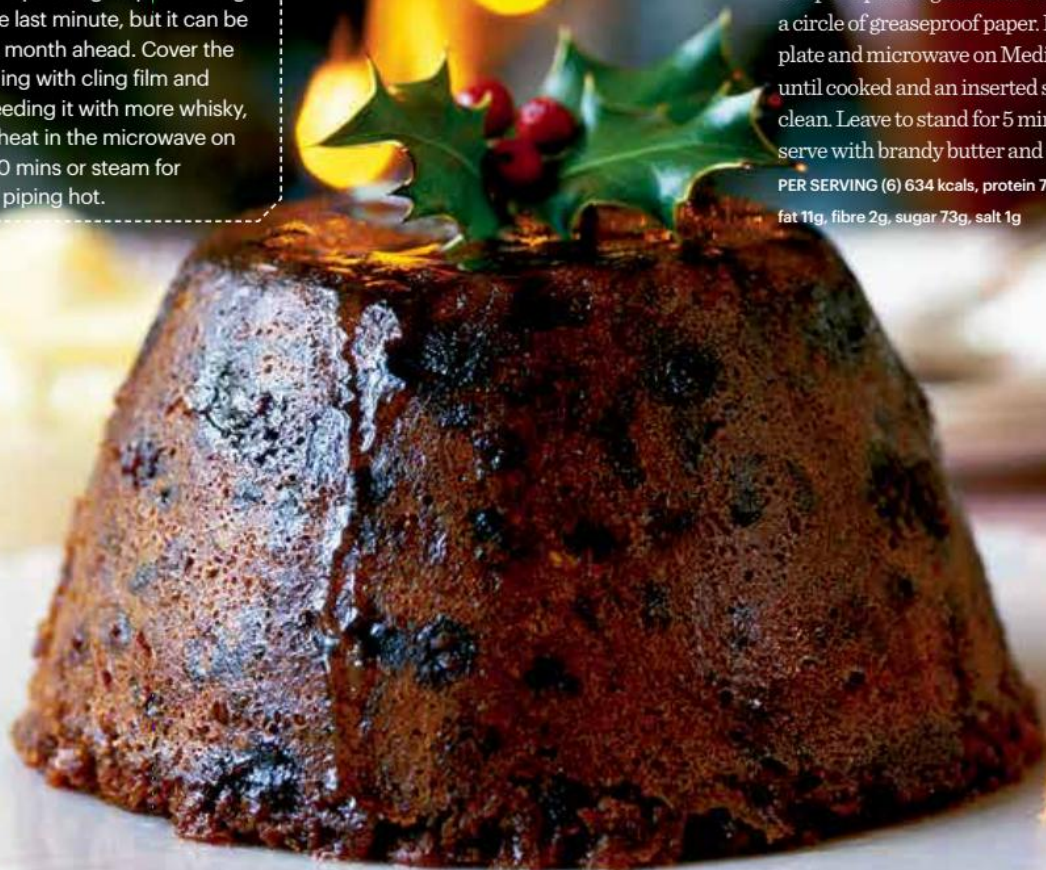
COOK 25 mins EASY □ †

300g good-quality mincemeat
140g fine cut orange marmalade
200g molasses cane sugar
4 tbsp black treacle
3 eggs, beaten
4 tbsp whisky
100g butter, frozen and coarsely grated
200g self-raising flour

1 Butter and line the base of a 1.5-litre pudding basin with greaseproof paper. In a large bowl, stir the ingredients together, adding them one at a time in the order they are listed, until completely mixed.
2 Tip the pudding mix into the basin and cover with a circle of greaseproof paper. Place the pudding on a plate and microwave on Medium for 20-25 mins until cooked and an inserted skewer comes out clean. Leave to stand for 5 mins, then turn out and serve with brandy butter and cream.

PER SERVING (6) 634 kcals, protein 7g, carbs 108g, fat 20g, sat fat 11g, fibre 2g, sugar 73g, salt 1g

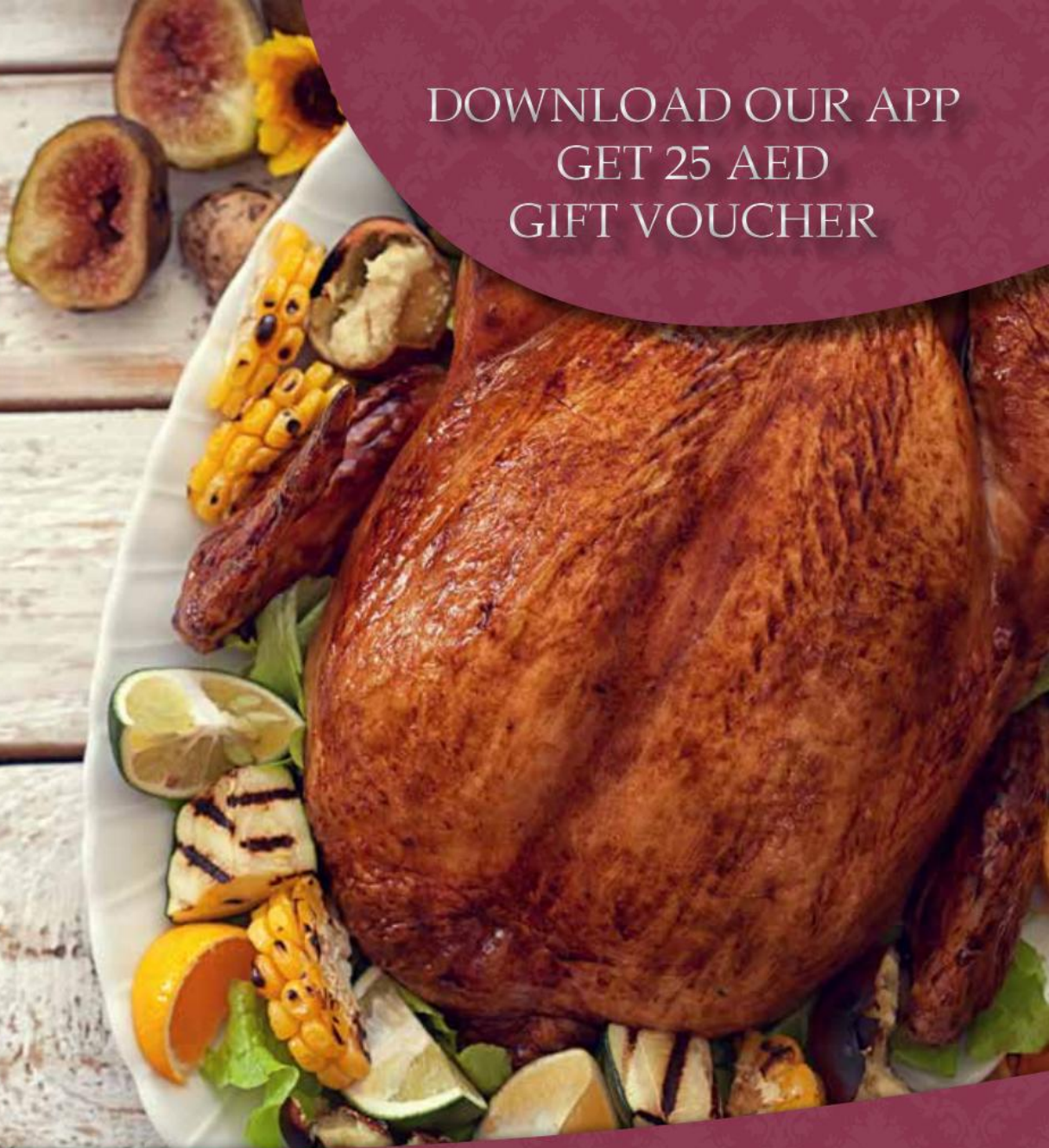
Get ahead This pudding is quick enough to make at the last minute, but it can be made up to a month ahead. Cover the cooked pudding with cling film and refrigerate, feeding it with more whisky, if you like. Reheat in the microwave on Medium for 10 mins or steam for 30 mins until piping hot.



Christmas pudding in just 35 mins



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