

SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Meal Plan Occasions 3

Seven more celebration meals with a main course and a dessert each, from St Patrick's Day to a dinner party, with a shopping list for every recipe.

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MEAL PLAN OCCASIONS 3

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Meal Plan Occasions 3: Even More Special Occasions

Occasion 1 · St Patrick's Day

Welcome to Even More Special Occasions. This third collection has seven more celebrations, each with a **main meal and a dessert**, mostly written for **4 people**. Healthy rules are still relaxed here. We start with **St Patrick's Day** on 17 March: a simple, warming Irish meal of sausages, bacon and potatoes in a savoury broth, with fresh soda bread that needs no yeast and no kneading. The coddle simmers while the bread bakes. Quantities are for the whole table, in metric with UK names.

Main meal

MAIN MEAL · SERVES 4 · IRISH

Irish Coddle with Irish Soda Bread

Prep: 25 minutes | Cooking: about 1 hour 15 minutes | About 40 minutes of hands-on work | Serves 4

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

8	good-quality pork sausages
8 rashers	thick back bacon, cut into 3 cm pieces
1 kg	floury potatoes (such as Maris Piper), peeled and cut into 1 cm slices
3	large onions, sliced
1 tbsp	sunflower or vegetable oil
1 cube	chicken stock cube
600 ml	hot water for the stock
1 tsp	dried thyme
2 tbsp	chopped fresh parsley, to serve
1 pinch	black pepper
450 g	plain flour, for the soda bread, plus extra for dusting
1 tsp	bicarbonate of soda
1 tsp	salt
400 ml	buttermilk (or 400 ml of milk mixed with 1 tbsp of lemon juice, left for 10 minutes)

WHAT IS A CODDLE?

Dublin coddle is a traditional Irish dish, a stew of sausages, bacon, potatoes and onions, simmered gently in stock until everything is soft and the broth thickens. It was famously eaten on a Thursday night in Dublin, and is cheap, filling and relaxed to make. It is not meant to look fancy.

MAKE IT AHEAD

The coddle is even better the day after. Make it the day before, cool, chill and reheat it gently. The soda bread is best on the day it is made, but keeps for 2 days wrapped in a tea towel.

METHOD

1. **The soda bread first:** heat the oven to 220°C (200°C fan) and dust a baking tray with flour. In a large bowl mix the 450 g of flour, the bicarbonate of soda and the salt. Make a well in the middle and pour in the buttermilk. Mix quickly with a fork, then with your hand, just until it comes together as a soft, sticky dough. Do not knead it.
2. Tip it onto a floured surface, shape it quickly into a round about 5 cm thick, and put it on the tray. Cut a deep cross in the top, almost through the loaf. Bake for 15 minutes, then turn the oven down to 200°C (180°C fan) and bake for another 20 minutes, until golden and it sounds hollow when you tap the base. Cool on a wire rack.
3. **The coddle:** heat the oil in a large, heavy casserole dish with a lid over a medium-high heat. Brown the sausages for 6 to 8 minutes, turning, and lift them onto a plate. Fry the bacon for 3 minutes and lift it out too.
4. Dissolve the stock cube in 600 ml of boiling water. Layer half the onions and half the potatoes in the dish, season with pepper and thyme, then add the sausages and bacon, then the rest of the onions and potatoes. Pour in the stock.
5. Bring to a gentle simmer, put the lid on and cook on a low heat for 45 to 50 minutes, until the potatoes are very soft and the stock has become a thick, savoury broth. Alternatively, cook in a 160°C (140°C fan) oven for 1 hour.
6. Scatter with the parsley and serve in wide bowls, with thick slices of the soda bread and butter to mop up the broth.

SAUSAGES AND BACON MUST BE COOKED THROUGH

Sausages must be cooked until there is no pink in the middle and the juices run clear. Chill leftovers within 2 hours and eat them within 2 days, reheated once until steaming hot.

SWAPS

A few carrots or a handful of cabbage in the coddle. Wholemeal flour for half of the soda bread. A spoonful of wholegrain mustard stirred in at the end.

Shopping list for this recipe

Dessert

DESSERT · SERVES 4 TO 6

Irish Apple Cake with Custard

Prep: 25 minutes | Oven: 55 minutes | About 30 minutes of hands-on work | Serves 4 to 6

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

450 g	Bramley or other cooking apples, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
2 tbsp	caster sugar, for the apples
1 tsp	ground cinnamon
225 g	plain flour
2 tsp	baking powder
100 g	cold butter, cubed, plus a little for the tin
100 g	caster sugar
1	egg, beaten
100 ml	milk
1 tbsp	demerara sugar, for the top
500 g	fresh chilled custard (shop-bought), or home-made custard

> **MAKE IT AHEAD**
>
> Bake the cake the day before and warm it for 10 minutes at 160°C before serving. It keeps for 2 days in an airtight tin. Heat the custard gently just before serving.

METHOD

1. Heat the oven to 180°C (160°C fan). Grease and line the base of a 20 cm round tin (or a deep pie dish) with baking paper.
2. Toss the sliced apples with the 2 tbsp of sugar and the cinnamon in a bowl, and leave for 10 minutes.
3. In a large bowl, rub the cold butter into the flour and baking powder with your fingertips until it looks like breadcrumbs. Stir in the 100 g of sugar.
4. Stir in the egg and milk to make a soft dough, a bit like a thick scone mixture.

5. Press about half the dough into the base of the tin. Pile the apples on top, spreading them to the edges, and spoon over any juice. Dot the rest of the dough over the apples in small pieces (it will spread as it bakes). Sprinkle with the demerara sugar.
6. Bake for 50 to 55 minutes, until the top is golden and the apples feel soft when you push a skewer in. Leave for 10 minutes in the tin.
7. Cut into wedges and serve warm, with hot custard poured over.

SWAPS

Cloves or a little mixed spice with the apples. Cream or vanilla ice cream in place of the custard. Sultanas or blackberries mixed in with the apples.

Shopping list for this recipe

COMING UP NEXT

Occasion 2 is Father's Day, with slow-cooked sticky BBQ pork ribs, corn and coleslaw, followed by a strawberry Eton mess.

Meal Plan Occasions 3: Even More Special Occasions

Occasion 2 · Father's Day

Today at a glance. Father's Day in the UK falls on the third Sunday in June. This is a hands-on, messy feast for **4 people**: the ribs cook for 3 hours in foil, then get sticky in a hot oven. The dessert takes 15 minutes. Quantities are for the whole table, in metric with UK names.

Main meal

MAIN MEAL · SERVES 4 · PORK

Slow-Cooked Sticky BBQ Pork Ribs with Corn and Coleslaw

Prep: 20 minutes | Oven: about 3 hours | About 40 minutes of hands-on work | Serves 4

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

1.6 kg	pork ribs (2 racks of baby back or spare ribs)
2 tbsp	dark brown soft sugar, for the rub
1 tbsp	smoked paprika
2 tsp	ground cumin
1 tsp	flaky sea salt
1 tsp	black pepper
6 tbsp	tomato ketchup, for the glaze
2 tbsp	runny honey, for the glaze
2 tbsp	soy sauce, for the glaze
2 tbsp	white wine vinegar, for the glaze
1 tsp	mustard, for the glaze
4	corn on the cob, husks removed
40 g	butter, for the corn
½	white cabbage (about 350 g), finely shredded
2	carrots, grated
3 tbsp	mayonnaise, for the coleslaw
2 tbsp	plain Greek-style yoghurt, for the coleslaw
1 tbsp	lemon juice, for the coleslaw

MAKE IT AHEAD

Rub the ribs with the spices the evening before and keep them covered in the fridge. The ribs can be cooked (steps 2 and 3) a day ahead, then cooled, chilled and glazed and finished in a hot oven for 15 minutes on the day. Make the coleslaw in the morning.

METHOD

1. **The rub:** mix the brown sugar, paprika, cumin, salt and pepper in a small bowl. If the ribs have a thin shiny membrane on the bone side, peel it off (it comes away in one piece if you start at a corner with a knife and then a piece of kitchen paper). Rub the spice mix all over the ribs, pressing it in.
2. Heat the oven to 150°C (130°C fan). Lay each rack on a large piece of foil, bone side up, and wrap it into a tight, sealed parcel. Put both parcels on a large baking tray.
3. Bake for 2 hours 30 minutes, until the meat is very tender and has shrunk back from the ends of the bones.
4. **The glaze:** in a small pan, mix the ketchup, honey, soy sauce, vinegar and mustard, bring to a simmer and cook for 3 minutes, until slightly thick.
5. **The coleslaw:** mix the cabbage and carrots in a bowl with the mayonnaise, yoghurt and lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper, cover and chill.
6. Increase the oven to 220°C (200°C fan). Carefully open the foil parcels (the steam is very hot), lift the ribs onto the tray, brush generously with the glaze, and roast for 12 to 15 minutes, brushing again once, until dark, sticky and bubbling at the edges.
7. **The corn:** while the ribs finish, boil the corn for 6 minutes, drain and brush with the butter.
8. Rest the ribs for 5 minutes, then cut them into individual ribs. Serve with the corn and coleslaw, and plenty of napkins.

> **PORK MUST BE COOKED THROUGH**
>
> Pork ribs must be cooked right through. After 2 hours 30 minutes in foil they will be, but the meat should be tender and nothing pink. Chill leftovers within 2 hours and eat them within 2 days, reheated once until steaming hot.

SWAPS

Chicken drumsticks in place of ribs (roast at 200°C for 45 minutes with the glaze). Potato wedges or baked potatoes in place of the corn. Burger buns and pulled meat for sandwiches.

Shopping list for this recipe

Dessert

DESSERT · SERVES 4

Strawberry Eton Mess

15 minutes | No cooking | About 15 minutes of hands-on work | Serves 4

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

500 g	strawberries
1 tbsp	caster sugar
300 ml	double cream
1 tbsp	icing sugar
1 tsp	vanilla extract
4	ready-made meringue nests (about 60 g)

> **MAKE IT AHEAD**
>
> Hull and slice the strawberries and whip the cream up to 4 hours ahead, and keep them covered in the fridge. Fold in the meringue only at the last minute, or it goes soggy.

METHOD

1. Hull the strawberries. Slice about three quarters of them into a bowl, toss with the caster sugar and leave for 10 minutes so they release their juice. Mash the remaining quarter with a fork to make a rough sauce.
2. Whip the cream with the icing sugar and vanilla to soft peaks in a large bowl.
3. Break the meringue nests into rough chunks with your hands.
4. Gently fold the sliced strawberries and meringue into the cream, leaving it streaky. Ripple through the mashed strawberries.
5. Spoon into 4 glasses or bowls and serve straight away.

SWAPS

Raspberries, blackberries or chopped mango in place of the strawberries. Greek yoghurt mixed with the cream for a lighter mess. Lemon curd rippled through instead of the strawberry sauce.

Shopping list for this recipe

COMING UP NEXT

Occasion 3 is Diwali, the festival of lights, with a butter chicken (or paneer), pilau rice and naan, followed by a cardamom rice pudding.

Meal Plan Occasions 3: Even More Special Occasions

Occasion 3 · Diwali

Today at a glance. A festive meal for **4 people** for Diwali, the festival of lights, which falls in late October or November (the date changes every year, so check a current calendar). A mild, creamy butter chicken with fragrant rice and warm naan, and a slow-cooked cardamom rice pudding. There is a vegetarian version of the main meal in the first tip box. Quantities are for the whole table, in metric with UK names.

Main meal

MAIN MEAL · SERVES 4 · CHICKEN (OR PANEER)

Butter Chicken with Pilau Rice and Naan

Prep: 20 minutes, plus 30 minutes' marinating

Cooking: about 45 minutes

About 45 minutes of hands-on work

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

800 g	boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into 3 cm pieces
150 g	plain Greek-style yoghurt, for the marinade
2 tsp	garam masala
1 tsp	ground turmeric
2 tsp	ground cumin
1 tsp	paprika or mild chilli powder
1 tbsp	lemon juice, for the marinade
4 cloves	garlic, crushed (3 cloves for the sauce, 1 for the marinade)
3 cm	fresh root ginger, peeled and grated
2 tbsp	sunflower or vegetable oil
2	onions, finely chopped
1 tbsp	tomato purée
1 tin (400 g)	chopped tomatoes
40 g	butter
1 tsp	runny honey or sugar
150 ml	double cream
2 tbsp	chopped fresh coriander, to serve
300 g	basmati rice
1 tbsp	sunflower oil, for the rice
1 tsp	cumin seeds (or ground cumin)
4	green cardamom pods, lightly crushed

1 pinch	ground cinnamon
4	naan breads, to serve
1 pinch	salt

> **A NOTE ON DIWALI**
>
> Diwali is the Hindu, Sikh and Jain festival of lights, celebrated for 5 days in autumn, usually in late October or November, with lamps, sweets and family meals. Many families keep their Diwali meals vegetarian. For a vegetarian version, use 500 g of paneer (cubed) or 2 tins of chickpeas (drained) in place of the chicken, and add them to the sauce for the last 10 minutes. The date changes every year, so check a current calendar.

> **MAKE IT AHEAD**
>
> Marinate the chicken in the morning or the day before. The sauce is even better made the day before: cool, chill and reheat gently before adding the chicken.

METHOD

1. **The marinade:** in a large bowl mix the yoghurt, garam masala, turmeric, 1 tsp of the cumin, the paprika, lemon juice, 1 crushed garlic clove and half of the ginger. Add the chicken, stir to coat, cover and chill for at least 30 minutes (up to 24 hours).
2. **The sauce:** heat the oil in a large, deep pan over a medium heat. Cook the onions for 10 minutes, stirring, until soft and golden. Add the remaining garlic, ginger and 1 tsp of cumin, and the tomato purée, and stir for 1 minute.
3. Add the chopped tomatoes, bring to a simmer and cook for 10 minutes, stirring now and then. Blend with a stick blender until smooth, if you like a smooth sauce.
4. Add the marinated chicken to the sauce. Cook gently for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring, until the chicken is cooked through with no pink. Stir in the butter, honey and cream and simmer for 3 minutes. Taste and season with salt.
5. **The rice:** rinse the rice in a sieve until the water runs clear. Heat the oil in a saucepan over a medium heat, add the cumin seeds, cardamom and cinnamon and cook for 30 seconds. Add the rice and stir for 1 minute. Pour in 600 ml of boiling water and a pinch of salt, bring back to the boil, cover, turn the heat to the lowest setting and cook for 10 minutes. Take off the heat and leave covered for 5 minutes, then fluff with a fork.

6. Warm the naan in a hot oven, a dry frying pan or the toaster. Scatter the coriander over the butter chicken and serve it with the pilau rice and naan.

> **COOK THE CHICKEN THROUGH**
>
> The chicken must be cooked right through, white all the way with no pink, and the sauce must be bubbling hot. The marinade is cooked with the chicken in the sauce. Wash your hands, the board and the knife after handling raw chicken. Chill leftovers within 2 hours and eat them within 2 days, reheated once until steaming hot.

SWAPS

Chicken breast in place of the thighs (cook for 5 minutes less). Frozen peas or spinach stirred in at the end. Cauliflower or sweet potato added to the sauce. Mango chutney and a cucumber and yoghurt raita on the side.

Shopping list for this recipe

Dessert

DESSERT · SERVES 4

Cardamom Rice Pudding (Kheer)

Prep: 10 minutes | Cooking: about 50 minutes | About 20 minutes of hands-on work | Serves 4

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

100 g	pudding rice (or basmati rice)
1 litre	whole milk
75 g	caster sugar
6	green cardamom pods, lightly crushed
30 g	raisins or sultanas
30 g	flaked almonds or chopped pistachios, toasted
1 pinch	saffron strands (optional)

> **MAKE IT AHEAD**
>
> Kheer is delicious warm or chilled, and can be made the day before. It thickens as it cools, so stir in a splash of milk before serving. Add the nuts at the last minute.

METHOD

1. Rinse the rice in a sieve and drain well. Put it in a heavy-based saucepan with the milk and the crushed cardamom pods (pods and all).
2. Bring to the boil over a medium heat, stirring, then turn the heat down to low. Simmer gently for 35 to 40 minutes, stirring every few minutes (more often towards the end) so the rice does not catch on the bottom, until the rice is very soft and the milk has reduced and thickened to a creamy consistency.
3. Stir in the sugar, raisins and saffron (if using) and cook for another 5 minutes. Taste and add more sugar if you like it sweeter. Fish out the cardamom pods if you can find them.
4. Toast the almonds or pistachios in a dry frying pan for 2 minutes until golden.
5. Serve warm in small bowls, topped with the nuts, or chill and serve cold.

SWAPS

A spoonful of rose water or a pinch of nutmeg. Condensed milk in place of the sugar (use 4 tbsp, and stir it in at the end). Chopped dried apricots or mango.

Shopping list for this recipe

COMING UP NEXT

Occasion 4 is Christmas Eve, with a sharing supper of baked camembert, pigs in blankets, cured meats and bread, followed by homemade mince pies.

Meal Plan Occasions 3: Even More Special Occasions

Occasion 4 · Christmas Eve

Today at a glance. A relaxed Christmas Eve supper for **4 people**, so that nobody has to cook a big meal the night before the big day. Most of the work is arranging the board, and the oven does the rest. The mince pies can be baked ahead, so on the night there is no pastry work. Quantities are for the whole table, in metric with UK names.

Main meal

MAIN MEAL · SERVES 4 · SHARING SUPPER

Christmas Eve Sharing Supper: Baked Camembert, Pigs in Blankets and Cured Meats

Prep: 20 minutes | Cooking: about 30 minutes | About 30 minutes of hands-on work | Serves 4

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

2	whole camembert cheeses in wooden boxes (250 g each)
4 cloves	garlic, cut into slivers
4 sprigs	fresh rosemary (or 1 tsp dried rosemary)
2 tbsp	runny honey, to drizzle
1 tbsp	olive oil
16	chipolata sausages
8 rashers	streaky bacon, each cut in half
2 tbsp	cranberry sauce, to glaze
2	baguettes (or 1 large sourdough loaf)
150 g	cured meats (salami, prosciutto or chorizo slices)
1 small jar	cornichons or pickled onions
1 small jar	chutney or cranberry sauce
400 g	seedless grapes
4	celery sticks, cut into short lengths
4	carrots, cut into sticks
200 g	cherry tomatoes

MAKE IT AHEAD

Wrap the chipolatas in bacon in the morning and keep them covered in the fridge. Prepare the camembert and the platter up to 1 hour in advance. The whole supper goes into the oven for one 25-minute stretch.

METHOD

1. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan). Take the cheeses out of their plastic wrapping and put them back in their wooden boxes (without the lids), and sit the boxes on a baking tray.
2. **Camembert:** make 8 small cuts in the top of each cheese with a sharp knife, and push a sliver of garlic and a small sprig of rosemary into each cut. Drizzle with the honey and olive oil.
3. **Pigs in blankets:** stretch each half-rasher of bacon with the back of a knife, wrap it around a chipolata, and lay them seam-side down in a roasting tin. Brush with a little cranberry sauce.
4. Put the sausages in the oven first and bake for 10 minutes. Add the camembert tray and bake both for another 15 to 20 minutes, until the sausages are golden and cooked through, and the camembert is soft and molten when you press the top.
5. **The platter:** while they bake, arrange the cured meats, grapes, celery, carrot sticks, tomatoes, pickles and chutney on a big board. Warm the baguettes in the oven for the last 5 minutes.
6. Carry the molten camembert to the table in the box. Tear the warm bread, dip it into the cheese, and add the sausages, meat and pickles to the plate.

> **SAUSAGES MUST BE COOKED THROUGH**
>
> The sausages must be cooked right through, with no pink, and the bacon crisp. Keep the cured meats and cheese in the fridge until the last minute, and do not leave the board out for more than 2 hours. Chill any leftovers within 2 hours and eat them within 2 days.

SWAPS

Brie in place of camembert. Vegetarian sausages with pastry or halloumi for a vegetarian supper. Mini sausage rolls from the freezer. Sliced apple and pear on the board.

Shopping list for this recipe

Dessert

DESSERT · MAKES 12

Homemade Mince Pies with Orange Butter

Prep: 30 minutes, plus 30 minutes' chilling | Oven: 18 to 20 minutes | About 40 minutes of hands-on work | Makes 12 (3 each for 4 people)

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

250 g	plain flour, plus extra for dusting
125 g	cold butter, cubed
25 g	caster sugar
1	egg yolk
2 tbsp	cold water
1 jar (about 410 g)	mincemeat
1	egg, beaten, for glazing
1 tbsp	icing sugar, to dust
75 g	soft butter, for the orange butter
100 g	icing sugar, for the orange butter
1	orange (zest and 1 tbsp of juice)

> **MAKE IT AHEAD**
>
> The pastry can be made up to 2 days ahead and kept wrapped in the fridge. The pies can be baked 2 days ahead and kept in an airtight tin, then warmed at 160°C for 5 minutes. Unbaked pies freeze well for 3 months, and can be baked from frozen with 5 extra minutes.

METHOD

1. **The pastry:** put the flour and cold butter in a large bowl. Rub them together with your fingertips until it looks like breadcrumbs. Stir in the caster sugar. Add the egg yolk and water and mix with a knife, then your hands, until it comes together into a smooth dough. Wrap in cling film and chill for 30 minutes.
2. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan). Lightly grease a 12-hole shallow bun tin.

3. Roll out the pastry on a floured surface until about 3 mm thick. Cut 12 circles with a 7.5 cm cutter, and press them into the holes of the tin. Re-roll the offcuts, and cut 12 smaller circles (about 6 cm) or stars for the lids.
4. Put a heaped teaspoon of mincemeat in each pastry case (do not overfill, or it will bubble out). Dampen the edge of each case with a little water, put on a lid, and press the edges together gently. Brush with the beaten egg and cut a small slit in the top of each lid.
5. Bake for 18 to 20 minutes, until golden. Leave in the tin for 5 minutes, then lift out onto a wire rack. Dust with icing sugar.
6. **The orange butter:** beat the soft butter with the 100 g of icing sugar, the orange zest and the juice until pale and fluffy. Serve a spoonful with each warm pie.

> **HOT MINCEMEAT**
>
> Mincemeat gets very hot in the oven and stays hot for several minutes after baking. Let the pies cool for 10 minutes before eating them.

SWAPS

Ready-rolled shortcrust pastry in place of the homemade (you will need about 500 g). A splash of brandy in the orange butter, if you like. Cream or custard in place of the orange butter.

Shopping list for this recipe

COMING UP NEXT

Chapters 5 to 7 cover an anniversary dinner for two, a movie night and a dinner party, and chapter 8 is the Occasions planner.

Meal Plan Occasions 3: Even More Special Occasions

Occasion 5 · Anniversary Dinner

Today at a glance. A restaurant-style dinner for **2 people**, for any anniversary or special evening. The Wellington looks impressive but is mostly assembly, and it can be wrapped in the morning. The posset needs no cooking skill at all and is made ahead. Quantities are for two, in metric with UK names, with notes on scaling up.

Main meal

MAIN MEAL · SERVES 2 · BEEF

Beef Wellington for Two with Gravy, Buttery Mash and Green Beans

Prep: 45 minutes, plus 1 hour's chilling | Oven: 30 to 35 minutes | About 1 hour of hands-on work | Serves 2

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

350 g	beef fillet, from the thick centre (centre-cut, trimmed of fat and sinew)
1 tbsp	olive oil, for searing
1 tbsp	Dijon mustard
300 g	chestnut mushrooms, finely chopped (a food processor makes this quick)
1	shallot, finely chopped
1 clove	garlic, crushed
1 tsp	fresh thyme leaves (or ½ tsp dried thyme)
1 tbsp	olive oil, for the mushrooms
4 slices	prosciutto or Parma ham (about 60 g)
1 sheet	ready-rolled puff pastry (about 320 g), chilled
1	egg yolk, beaten with 1 tsp of water, to glaze
400 g	floury potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
25 g	butter, for the mash
50 ml	milk, for the mash
200 g	green beans, trimmed
10 g	butter, for the beans
15 g	butter, for the gravy
1 tbsp	plain flour, for the gravy
1 cube	beef stock cube
250 ml	hot water for the gravy
1 tsp	redcurrant jelly or cranberry sauce, for the gravy

1 pinch	salt and black pepper

> **MAKE IT AHEAD**
>
> The Wellington can be wrapped in pastry up to 8 hours ahead and kept in the fridge, which means you can relax at the table. Glaze it just before baking. Prepare the mash and beans earlier, then reheat them. The gravy can also be made earlier and warmed.

METHOD

1. **Sear the beef:** pat the fillet dry and season with salt and pepper. Heat the 1 tbsp of oil in a frying pan over a high heat until smoking. Sear the beef for 1 minute on each side and the ends, until browned all over. Lift onto a plate, brush all over with the mustard, and leave to cool completely.
2. **The mushrooms:** heat the other 1 tbsp of oil in the same pan over a medium-high heat. Cook the mushrooms, shallot, garlic and thyme for 12 to 15 minutes, stirring, until all of the liquid has gone and the mixture is dry and paste-like. Season well and leave to cool.
3. **Wrap in ham:** lay a large sheet of cling film on the worktop and overlap the prosciutto slices on it in a rectangle, slightly wider than the beef. Spread the mushroom mixture evenly over the ham. Put the beef on one edge, and using the cling film, roll it up tightly into a neat log, twisting the ends like a sweet. Chill for at least 30 minutes.
4. **Wrap in pastry:** unroll the pastry on a sheet of baking paper. Unwrap the beef and put it near one edge of the pastry. Brush the edges with egg yolk, roll the pastry around the beef, trim the excess, and press the seam and ends to seal, tucking the ends under. Put it seam side down on a baking tray lined with baking paper. Brush all over with egg yolk and score a pattern with the back of a knife. Chill for 20 minutes.
5. **Bake:** heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan). Brush the pastry again with egg yolk, sprinkle with a little salt and bake for 30 to 35 minutes for medium-rare (a thermometer in the centre should read 50 to 55°C), or 38 to 40 minutes for medium (60°C). Rest on a board for 10 minutes before cutting.
6. **The mash and beans:** boil the potatoes in salted water for 15 to 20 minutes, drain and mash with the 25 g of butter and the milk. Boil the beans for 4 minutes, drain and toss with the 10 g of butter.
7. **The gravy:** melt the 15 g of butter in a small pan, stir in the flour for 1 minute, then gradually add the stock cube dissolved in 250 ml of hot water. Simmer for 5 minutes,

stir in the redcurrant jelly and season.

8. Cut the Wellington into thick slices with a very sharp knife and serve with the mash, beans and gravy.

> **COOKING A WELLINGTON SAFELY**
>
> A beef fillet is a whole muscle, so it is safe to serve pink in the middle, but the pastry stops you seeing the colour, so use a thermometer: 50 to 55°C is medium-rare (it will rise a little as it rests), and 60°C is medium. If you are cooking for anyone pregnant or unwell, cook it to at least 70°C. Wash your hands, the board and the knife after handling raw beef.

SWAPS

Chicken breast wrapped in the same way (cook to 75°C). A mushroom and chestnut Wellington for a vegetarian anniversary. Pancetta in place of the prosciutto.

Shopping list for this recipe

Dessert

DESSERT · SERVES 2

Lemon Posset with Shortbread

Prep: 10 minutes, plus 3 hours' chilling | Cooking: 5 minutes | About 15 minutes of hands-on work | Serves 2

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

200 ml	double cream
55 g	caster sugar
1	large lemon (zest of half, juice of the whole, about 45 ml)
4	shortbread biscuits, to serve
4	raspberries or a few strawberries, to decorate (optional)

MAKE IT AHEAD

Posset must be made ahead: it needs at least 3 hours to set. Make it in the morning or the day before. It is the perfect dessert for a night when you do not want to cook after the main course.

METHOD

1. Put the cream and sugar in a small saucepan over a medium heat. Stir until the sugar dissolves, then bring to the boil and simmer for exactly 3 minutes, watching it carefully so it does not boil over.
2. Take it off the heat, stir in the lemon juice and the lemon zest. It will thicken very slightly as it cools.
3. Leave for 5 minutes, then pour through a sieve into 2 small glasses or ramekins.
4. Let it cool to room temperature, cover and chill for at least 3 hours, until set like a soft, silky pudding.
5. Serve with the shortbread on the side, and a raspberry on top.

WHY DOES IT SET?

Just cream, sugar and lemon juice: the acid in the lemon thickens the hot cream, so no gelatine or eggs are needed.

SWAPS

Orange or lime in place of the lemon (use a little less juice for orange). Raspberry coulis under the posset. Crushed ginger biscuits in place of the shortbread.

Shopping list for this recipe

COMING UP NEXT

Occasion 6 is a movie night, for 4: loaded beef nachos and sticky chicken wings, followed by chocolate chip cookie bars.

Meal Plan Occasions 3: Even More Special Occasions

Occasion 6 · Movie Night

Today at a glance. A finger-food feast for **4 people**, for a film or a big match at home. The wings go in the oven first, the nachos are assembled while they finish, and the cookie bars are baked earlier in the day. Everything is for eating with your hands, so you may want a big pile of napkins. Quantities are for the whole table, in metric with UK names.

Main meal

MAIN MEAL · SERVES 4 · BEEF AND CHICKEN

Loaded Beef Nachos and Sticky Chicken Wings

Prep: 25 minutes | Cooking: about 50 minutes | About 50 minutes of hands-on work | Serves 4

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

1.2 kg	chicken wings (about 16 whole wings, or 24 wingettes)
1 tbsp	sunflower or olive oil, for the wings
4 tbsp	runny honey, for the glaze
3 tbsp	soy sauce, for the glaze
2 tbsp	tomato ketchup, for the glaze
1 tsp	dried chilli flakes
2 cloves	garlic, crushed (for the glaze)
500 g	beef mince (10 to 15% fat)
1	onion, finely chopped
2 cloves	garlic, crushed (for the beef)
2 tsp	smoked paprika
2 tsp	ground cumin
1 tbsp	tomato purée
1 tin (400 g)	kidney or black beans, drained and rinsed
1 tin (400 g)	chopped tomatoes
1 tbsp	oil, for the beef
300 g	tortilla chips (a large bag)
200 g	Cheddar cheese, grated
2	tomatoes, diced (for the salsa)
½	red onion, finely chopped (for the salsa)
1	lime, juiced
2 tbsp	chopped fresh coriander, for the salsa

150 ml	soured cream, to serve
1 small jar	pickled sliced jalapeños, to serve (optional)

> **MAKE IT AHEAD**
>
> Make the beef topping and the salsa the day before, and reheat the beef until steaming hot. Marinate the wings in the glaze overnight if you like. On the night, the wings go in the oven first, and the nachos are assembled while they finish.

METHOD

1. **The wings:** heat the oven to 220°C (200°C fan). Pat the wings dry with kitchen paper and toss them in the oil, a pinch of salt and pepper on a large baking tray, in a single layer. Roast for 35 minutes, turning once.
2. **The glaze:** in a small pan, mix the honey, soy sauce, ketchup, chilli flakes and 2 cloves of crushed garlic. Simmer for 3 minutes, until thick. After the wings have had 35 minutes, take them out, pour the glaze over, toss and roast for 10 minutes more, until sticky and dark at the edges and cooked through.
3. **The beef:** while the wings roast, heat the 1 tbsp of oil in a large frying pan over a medium-high heat. Cook the mince for 6 minutes, breaking it up, until brown all over and no pink is left. Add the onion and cook for 4 minutes. Stir in the garlic, paprika, cumin and tomato purée for 1 minute. Add the beans and tomatoes, simmer for 15 minutes, until thick. Season.
4. **The salsa:** mix the diced tomatoes, red onion, lime juice and coriander in a bowl, with a pinch of salt.
5. **The nachos:** turn the oven down to 200°C (180°C fan) once the wings are out, or use a second oven shelf. Spread half of the tortilla chips on a large baking tray lined with baking paper, spoon over half the beef, and sprinkle with half the cheese. Add the rest of the chips, beef and cheese in a second layer. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes, until the cheese is melted and bubbling.
6. Top the nachos with the salsa, soured cream and jalapeños. Put the wings on a separate plate or board, and serve everything while hot, with lots of napkins.

> **COOK THE CHICKEN AND BEEF THROUGH**
>
> Chicken wings must be cooked right through, with no pink near the bone, and the juices running clear (75°C). The beef must be cooked until no pink is left and steaming hot. Wash your

> hands, the board and the tongs after handling raw chicken. Chill leftovers within 2 hours and eat them within 2 days, reheated once until steaming hot.

SWAPS

Pulled pork or shredded chicken on the nachos. Chilli sauce in the glaze for heat. Guacamole on the side. Vegetarian nachos with extra beans and sweetcorn.

Shopping list for this recipe

Dessert

DESSERT · MAKES 12

Chocolate Chip Cookie Bars

Prep: 15 minutes | Oven: 22 to 25 minutes | About 20 minutes of hands-on work | Cuts into 12 bars, so serves 4 with leftovers

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

125 g	butter, melted, plus a little for the tin
150 g	light brown soft sugar
1	egg
1 tsp	vanilla extract
175 g	plain flour
½ tsp	bicarbonate of soda
1 pinch	salt
150 g	chocolate chips (or a chopped chocolate bar)

MAKE IT AHEAD

Bake them in the morning or the day before. They keep for 3 days in an airtight tin, and can be warmed for 10 seconds in the microwave to make the chocolate gooey again. Vanilla ice cream on warm bars is the right way to watch a film.

METHOD

1. Heat the oven to 180°C (160°C fan). Grease a 20 cm square tin and line it with baking paper, leaving some hanging over the edges.
2. In a large bowl, stir the melted butter and sugar until combined. Beat in the egg and vanilla.
3. Stir in the flour, bicarbonate of soda and salt until just combined, and then fold in about two thirds of the chocolate chips. The dough will be thick and sticky.
4. Press the dough into the tin with the back of a spoon (wet your hands if it sticks), and scatter the rest of the chocolate chips on top.
5. Bake for 22 to 25 minutes, until golden brown on top but still slightly soft in the middle. It will firm up as it cools.

6. Cool in the tin for 20 minutes, then lift out using the paper and cut into 12 bars.

SWAPS

Chopped nuts, mini marshmallows or pretzels pressed into the top. Peanut butter swirled in. Milk or white chocolate in place of the dark.

Shopping list for this recipe

COMING UP NEXT

Occasion 7 is a dinner party for 6, with slow-roast lamb shoulder, dauphinoise potatoes and green beans, followed by a banoffee pavlova.

Meal Plan Occasions 3: Even More Special Occasions

Occasion 7 · Dinner Party

Today at a glance. A relaxed dinner party for **6 people**, designed so that you can enjoy your guests: the lamb cooks for over 4 hours with almost no attention, the dauphinoise goes in alongside it, and the pavlova is made the day before. Quantities are for the whole table, in metric with UK names.

Main meal

MAIN MEAL · SERVES 6 · LAMB

Slow-Roast Lamb Shoulder with Dauphinoise Potatoes and Green Beans

Prep: 30 minutes | Oven: about 4 hours 30 minutes | About 45 minutes of hands-on work | Serves 6

INGREDIENTS (6 PORTIONS)

2.2 kg	bone-in lamb shoulder
4 cloves	garlic, cut into slivers
4 sprigs	fresh rosemary, leaves picked, plus extra sprigs for the tin
3 tbsp	olive oil
2 tsp	flaky sea salt
1 tsp	black pepper
3	onions, thickly sliced
1	lemon, halved
1 cube	lamb or vegetable stock cube
400 ml	hot water for the tin
1.2 kg	waxy potatoes (such as Désirée or Charlotte), peeled and sliced 3 mm thick
300 ml	double cream
200 ml	whole milk
2 cloves	garlic, crushed (for the dauphinoise)
25 g	butter, for the dish
60 g	Gruyère or Cheddar cheese, grated
600 g	green beans, trimmed
20 g	butter, for the beans
1 tbsp	plain flour, for the gravy

MAKE IT AHEAD

The lamb can be rubbed with oil, garlic and rosemary the day before. The dauphinoise can be assembled earlier in the day, covered and chilled, and baked later. This is the best dish for a

> dinner party because after the first 20 minutes the oven does everything. Plan to eat at 6:30 pm: the lamb goes in at about 1:50 pm.

PLAN OF ATTACK

Times are counted from when the lamb goes in (0:00), assuming dinner is served about 4 hours 40 minutes later. Adjust to suit your guests.

METHOD

1. **Prepare the lamb:** heat the oven to 220°C (200°C fan). Take the lamb out of the fridge 45 minutes before cooking. Make deep cuts all over it with a sharp knife and push in the slivers of garlic and a few rosemary leaves. Rub with the oil, salt and pepper.
2. Put the sliced onions and the rosemary sprigs in the middle of a large roasting tin, sit the lamb on top, and squeeze the lemon halves over (leave them in the tin).
3. **0:00** Roast for 20 minutes to brown the outside. Dissolve the stock cube in 400 ml of boiling water and pour it around the lamb (not over it). Cover the whole tin tightly with foil, turn the oven down to 150°C (130°C fan), and roast for 3 hours 30 minutes, without opening it, until the meat is falling off the bone.
4. **2:30** Make the dauphinoise: butter a large baking dish (about 30 x 20 cm). Heat the cream, milk and crushed garlic in a pan until just steaming, with plenty of pepper and a little salt. Layer the sliced potatoes in the dish, pouring over some of the cream mixture between layers, finishing with a layer of potatoes. Pour over the rest and cover tightly with foil.
5. **2:45** Put the dauphinoise in the oven beside the lamb and bake for 1 hour 15 minutes. Take off the foil, sprinkle with the cheese and bake for another 30 minutes, until golden and bubbling, and a knife slides through the potato easily.
6. **3:50** Take the foil off the lamb and turn the oven up to 200°C (180°C fan). Roast for 20 to 25 minutes to colour the top, while the potatoes finish.
7. **4:15** Lift the lamb onto a board, cover loosely with foil and rest for 20 minutes. Keep the dauphinoise warm in the switched-off oven.
8. **The gravy:** strain the juices from the tin into a jug and skim off the fat. Put 3 tbsp of the fat back in the tin, stir in the flour for 1 minute, then add the juices gradually, simmering for 5 minutes. Season and strain into a warm jug.
9. **The beans:** boil the beans in salted water for 4 to 5 minutes, drain and toss with the butter and a little pepper.

10. Pull the lamb into large chunks with two forks (it will fall apart) and serve with the dauphinoise, green beans and gravy.

> **COOKED RIGHT THROUGH**
>
> After 4 hours the lamb will be well done and tender. Check the thickest part is at least 75°C. Chill leftovers within 2 hours and eat them within 2 days, cold or reheated once until steaming hot.

SWAPS

A half-leg of lamb (shorter cooking time: about 2 hours). New potatoes and mint sauce in place of the dauphinoise. Roast carrots and parsnips in place of the green beans.

Shopping list for this recipe

Dessert

DESSERT · SERVES 6

Banoffee Pavlova

Prep: 30 minutes | Oven: 1 hour 15 minutes, plus cooling | About 45 minutes of hands-on work | Serves 6

INGREDIENTS (6 PORTIONS)

4	egg whites (at room temperature)
225 g	caster sugar
1 tsp	cornflour
1 tsp	white wine vinegar
½ tsp	vanilla extract
50 g	butter, for the toffee sauce
75 g	light brown soft sugar, for the toffee sauce
100 ml	double cream, for the toffee sauce
400 ml	double cream, whipped, for the topping
3	ripe bananas, sliced
40 g	pecans or hazelnuts, toasted and roughly chopped

MAKE IT AHEAD

The meringue base can be baked up to 2 days ahead and kept in an airtight container. Make the toffee sauce the day before. Assemble the pavlova no more than 1 hour before you serve it, or the meringue will go soft.

METHOD

1. Heat the oven to 150°C (130°C fan). Line a baking tray with baking paper and draw a 20 cm circle on it with a pencil, then turn the paper over.
2. Whisk the egg whites in a very clean, grease-free bowl with an electric whisk until they form stiff peaks that hold when you turn the bowl upside down. Add the caster sugar a tablespoon at a time, whisking for a few seconds between each, until the meringue is thick and glossy and no grains of sugar can be felt between your fingers. This takes about 8 minutes.

3. Whisk in the cornflour, vinegar and vanilla. Spoon the meringue into the circle, building up the edges and making a slight dip in the middle.
4. Put it in the oven and immediately turn the temperature down to 120°C (100°C fan). Bake for 1 hour 15 minutes, until the outside is crisp and pale. Turn the oven off and leave the pavlova inside with the door shut until it is completely cool (at least 2 hours, or overnight).
5. **The sauce:** put the 50 g of butter, 75 g of sugar and 100 ml of cream in a small pan over a medium heat. Stir until the sugar dissolves, then simmer for 3 minutes, until thick. Leave to cool.
6. **Assemble:** slide the meringue onto a serving plate (peel off the paper). Whip the 400 ml of cream to soft peaks and pile it on top. Arrange the sliced bananas over the cream, drizzle with the toffee sauce and scatter the toasted nuts over the top. Serve straight away, cutting with a serrated knife.

> **IF IT CRACKS**
>
> A crack in the pavlova is normal, and the cream hides it. If the meringue weeps or goes sticky, the oven was too hot or the sugar not fully dissolved. It will still taste great.

SWAPS

Raspberries, passion fruit or mango in place of the bananas and toffee. A spoonful of lemon curd folded into the cream. Individual meringue nests for easier serving.

Shopping list for this recipe

> **COMING UP NEXT**
>
> Chapter 8 is the Occasions planner, with the dates for each occasion for the next three years, a make-ahead timeline for each, a scaling guide and food-safety reminders.

Meal Plan Occasions 3: Even More Special Occasions

Chapter 8 · Occasions planner

How to use this chapter. The occasions fall on different days, so there is no single weekly shopping list. Each of the 14 recipes has its own shopping list (follow the link on the recipe), and this chapter helps you plan: when each occasion falls, how much time it needs, what to do the day before, and how to scale the recipes up or down. Chapters 1 to 4 and 6 are written for 4 people, chapter 5 (the anniversary dinner) is for 2, and chapter 7 (the dinner party) is for 6.

When each occasion falls

Father's Day in the UK is the third Sunday in June. Diwali follows the Hindu lunar calendar and falls in late October or November, so check a current calendar for the exact date. The anniversary dinner, movie night and dinner party are whenever you choose.

OCCASION	2027	2028	2029
St Patrick's Day	Wed 17 Mar 2027	Fri 17 Mar 2028	Sat 17 Mar 2029
Father's Day (third Sunday in June, UK)	Sun 20 Jun 2027	Sun 18 Jun 2028	Sun 17 Jun 2029
Diwali (late October or November: check a current calendar)	Varies	Varies	Varies
Christmas Eve	Fri 24 Dec 2027	Sun 24 Dec 2028	Mon 24 Dec 2029
Anniversary dinner	Your date	Your date	Your date
Movie night	Any day	Any day	Any day
Dinner party	Any day	Any day	Any day

The seven occasions at a glance

CH	OCCASION	SERVES	MAIN MEAL	DESSERT	TIME NEEDED
1	St Patrick's Day	4	Irish coddle with soda bread	Irish apple cake with custard	About 1 hour 30 minutes
2	Father's Day	4	Slow-cooked sticky BBQ pork ribs, corn and coleslaw	Strawberry Eton mess	About 3 hours 30 minutes (mostly hands-off)
3	Diwali	4	Butter chicken (or paneer) with pilau rice and naan	Cardamom rice pudding (kheer)	About 1 hour 30 minutes, plus marinating
4	Christmas Eve	4	Sharing supper: baked camembert, pigs in blankets, cured meats	Homemade mince pies with orange butter	About 1 hour, plus pastry chilling
5	Anniversary dinner	2	Beef Wellington with gravy, mash and green beans	Lemon posset with shortbread	About 2 hours, plus chilling
6	Movie night	4	Loaded beef nachos and sticky chicken wings	Chocolate chip cookie bars	About 1 hour 30 minutes
7	Dinner party	6	Slow-roast lamb shoulder with dauphinoise potatoes	Banoffee pavlova	About 5 hours (mostly hands-off)

Make-ahead timelines

Almost all of the work can be done before the day. Here is what to do when.

OCCASION	A FEW DAYS BEFORE	THE DAY BEFORE	ON THE DAY
St Patrick's Day	Buy the sausages, bacon, buttermilk and apples.	Make the coddle if you like (it improves overnight). Bake the apple cake.	Soda bread in the oven 1 hour 15 minutes before you eat. Coddle simmering by then. Warm the cake and the custard at the end.
Father's Day	Order or buy the ribs. Buy the corn, cabbage and strawberries.	Rub the spices into the ribs. Cook the ribs in foil, if you want to finish them tomorrow.	Ribs in foil 3 hours before you eat. Glaze and finish them in the last 15 minutes. Coleslaw in the morning, Eton mess last.
Diwali	Check the date. Buy the chicken (or paneer),	Marinate the chicken. Make the kheer and	Sauce 1 hour before. Rice 25 minutes before. Naan at the last

OCCASION	A FEW DAYS BEFORE	THE DAY BEFORE	ON THE DAY
	spices and naan.	chill it.	minute.
Christmas Eve	Buy the camembert, sausages, bacon, bread and cured meats. Make the mince pie pastry.	Bake the mince pies. Wrap the sausages in bacon.	Sausages in the oven 25 minutes before you eat, camembert for the last 15 minutes. Arrange the board while they bake.
Anniversary dinner	Order the beef fillet from the butcher. Buy the pastry and prosciutto.	Make the posset and chill it. Sear the beef and make the mushroom mixture.	Wrap the Wellington in the morning. Bake for 35 minutes. Mash and beans while it rests.
Movie night	Buy the wings, mince and tortilla chips.	Make the beef topping and the salsa. Bake the cookie bars.	Wings in the oven 50 minutes before you eat. Assemble and bake the nachos at the end.
Dinner party	Order the lamb shoulder. Buy the potatoes, cream and bananas.	Bake the meringue and make the toffee sauce. Rub the lamb with garlic and rosemary.	Lamb in the oven about 4 hours 40 minutes before you eat. Dauphinoise goes in after 2 hours 45 minutes. Assemble the pavlova just before serving.

Scaling the recipes

- **Scaling up (more guests):** multiply the quantities by the number of people, then check the biggest limits: the size of your roasting tin, baking dishes and oven. If a dish will not fit, cook it in two tins or two batches.
- **Cooking times:** do not simply double the time. Roasts need more time by weight, and a bigger dish of dauphinoise or pie filling takes longer to heat through. Wings, sausages and steaks take the same time per piece, but need more space.
- **The anniversary dinner for 4:** use a 700 g fillet, 600 g of mushrooms, 8 slices of prosciutto and 1 sheet of pastry for one large Wellington (bake for 40 to 45 minutes). Double the rest.
- **The dinner party for fewer:** halve the lamb for 3 (a 1.2 kg shoulder, cooking for the same time), halve the potatoes and use a smaller dish, and make the pavlova with 2 egg whites.
- **Desserts:** the mince pies, cookie bars, apple cake and pavlova stretch to extra guests. The posset and the fondant-style desserts are best made to the exact number.

Equipment

- A large roasting tin with foil, two large baking trays and a meat thermometer (ribs, wings, lamb, Wellington, sausages)
- A large casserole or heavy pan with a lid, and a deep frying pan (coddle, butter chicken, nachos beef)
- A 20 cm round or square tin, a 12-hole bun tin, a 20 cm square tin and a large baking dish (cakes, pies, bars, dauphinoise)
- A large bowl, an electric whisk, a sieve and a rolling pin (pavlova, posset, pastry)
- Ramekins or small glasses for the posset, glasses or bowls for the kheer and the Eton mess
- Kitchen paper, cling film, foil and covered containers for the make-ahead steps

Food-safety reminders

THE FOUR RULES FOR EVERY OCCASION

- Cook pork, sausages, chicken, wings and lamb shoulder right through, with no pink and clear juices. Beef fillet, lamb and steak can be served pink in the middle if you like (the outside is the part that is seared). Use a thermometer for the Wellington.
- Cool leftovers quickly, within 1 to 2 hours, keep them covered in the fridge and eat them within 2 days. Reheat only once, until steaming hot.
- Keep raw meat on the bottom shelf, away from other food, and wash your hands, boards and knives after handling it. Use separate plates and tongs for raw and cooked meat.
- Defrost frozen joints in the fridge, allowing about 24 hours for a big joint, and overnight for mince and chicken. Never refreeze after defrosting. Do not leave food on the table for more than 2 hours.

SHOPPING ACROSS THE OCCASIONS

Because each occasion is a different day, shop for each one a few days before, and order big joints (the lamb, the beef fillet and the ribs) from the butcher at least a week ahead. Cream is used in several recipes (the butter chicken, the dauphinoise, the pavlova and the posset), so check the amounts on each shopping list. Honey, mustard and spices keep for months, and a jar of mincemeat keeps until its date.