

Hey Frequent Feasters...

Thirteen might be unlucky for some, but for me, this being the 13th edition of Flip's Frequent Feasters Newsletter means it's celebrating its third birthday! Thank you for your support. I hope you enjoy reading this. And keep your feedback coming – both good and bad! It's always nice to hear from subscribers.

Flip



food in focus: ginger



Ginger is not only wonderfully aromatic and delicious but it is very therapeutic.

Ginger mixed with honey is regarded as an excellent cold weather drink to fight off chills, exhaustion and depression.

A small amount of fresh ginger grated into a cup of hot water eases morning or motion sickness.

And chewing a small amount of ginger after a big meal can assist digestion and breaks up intestinal gas! It can even remedy a toothache.

Ginger has been popular for yonks. Henry VIII of England believed ginger would fight the plague and sent a recipe to the Mayor of London. Meanwhile, medical students during the early renaissance believed ginger was an aphrodisiac.

It is mentioned in the Koran, in the writings of Confucius and in Shakespeare's play *Love's Labour's Lost*. Meanwhile, the Romans and Greeks loved it and by the ninth century it was so popular ginger was included in every table setting, like salt and pepper are today.

Ginger ale dates back to the nineteenth century when English tavern owners put out small containers of ground ginger for people to sprinkle onto their beer!

Ginger is even believed to improve a poor disposition. Well, a plate of gingerbread men always puts me in a good mood.

photo: chris27, www.sxc.hu

a date for your diary

If you are interested in the Tour De France, cycling or seeing a great movie, then check out what's happening at Cinema Nova (380 Lygon Street, Carlton, Victoria) on Thursday 18th June at 7pm.

Brunettis and Cinema Nova are organising a fundraising event for the Amy Gillett Foundation - a Road Safety related charity aimed to promote awareness and safety between motorists and cyclists. For \$30, you will be treated to a pre Tour de France party (which includes light snacks, a gift bag and entry into a prize draw) with a special appearance by cycling legend Phil Anderson prior to the screening of the film "Hell on Wheels". There is also a chance to win a 5 day cycling trip in France for two or a Phil Anderson signed Tour de France cycling jersey with the purchase of a raffle ticket.

So get your cycling mates together to share a night in celebrating good food, a great movie and a wonderful cause. For more info: <http://www.brunetti.com.au/upcomingevents.aspx>

buy what's in season during winter?

Vegetables

- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Beetroot
- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Celeriac
- Fennel
- Jerusalem artichoke
- Sweet potato

Fruits

- Custard apples
- Mandarins
- Rhubarb
- Oranges
- Pink lady apples
- Quince
- Passionfruit
- Avocado

Nuts

- Chestnuts
- Hazelnuts
- Walnuts

Our greatest glory consists not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.

Confucius

make indian soup

When travelling through India years ago I became addicted to dahl and delicious soups served in little silver bowls at bus and train stops and of course restaurants. In winter I make a pot of this each week. It's even better the following day.

ingredients

3 tablespoons oil
 ½ - 1 tablespoon mustard seeds
 1 onion, finely diced
 1 garlic clove, finely diced or grated
 1 teaspoon chili flakes
 ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
 ½ teaspoon cumin
 ½ teaspoon cardamom
 1 ½ cups (250 g) yellow split peas
 1 litre water
 Fresh coriander, chopped

Hot vegetable stock - additional
 Yogurt - to serve
 Raw cashews, roughly chopped - to serve, optional
 Squeeze of lemon - optional

Naan or roti - optional

method

Wash yellow split peas well (this make take several goes to get the water clear).

Warm oil in a heavy based saucepan, add mustard seeds and cook for a few minutes until they 'pop'.

Add onion, garlic and chili flakes and cook for 5 minutes or until onion is translucent.

Add turmeric, cumin and cardamom and cook for a few minutes on a medium heat until aromatic. Watch that the spices don't catch on the saucepan. (Add a little more oil or a splash of water if this is the case).

Add split peas and water and bring to the boil. Simmer for approximately 45 minutes or until peas are tender and soup is thick.

Stir occasionally, more frequently towards the end of cooking.

Depending on your desired consistency, you may wish to puree (I don't!) or add some stock.

Stir through plenty of fresh chopped coriander.

To serve, pour soup into bowls, top with yogurt and cashews, if using.

A small squeeze of lemon juice is lovely too but not essential.

Warmed naan or roti is delicious with this.

do

As the temperature cools down we need to rug up.

Throw on an extra layer of clothing rather than flicking the central heating switch to high as it will save some money and the earth.

Keep active. Sitting still can make you cold and cause your metabolism to slow down, digestion can become sluggish too (especially if we slump over our computers) and we can feel lethargic.

Try adding some warming spices to your cooking - nutmeg, ginger, cinnamon and of course chili (fresh, flakes and powder), turmeric and mustard seeds can all fire up the belly - just be careful you don't overdo it!

Food can also keep you warm from the inside... start the day with a warming bowl of porridge or pour some warmed milk or apple juice over your cereal, have some soup for lunch, and finish the day with a rib-sticking curry or stew.

new gluten-free muesli

This time last year I launched the five-grain porridge which has surprised even me by its popularity. It has been selling consistently throughout the year - rain, hail or shine! So thank you to all the porridge eaters.

Now - after almost a year of research and development I have launched my gluten free muesli which is available on line and also in some stores. Check the website for stockists. My husband was diagnosed as being Coeliac late last year and he is now free of stomach pains for the first time in, well as long as he can remember. While I have tried to be sympathetic and give up pasta and breads... I just can't. So I did the next best thing - I created a muesli he loves to eat. The good news is, you don't need to be a Coeliac to enjoy it. I love it, and I hope you will too.



Dont forget National Porridge Day on 1 June.
 If you haven't already, it's time to have your first bowl of porridge for winter.