

Forget flash restaurants.. best grub is home-made

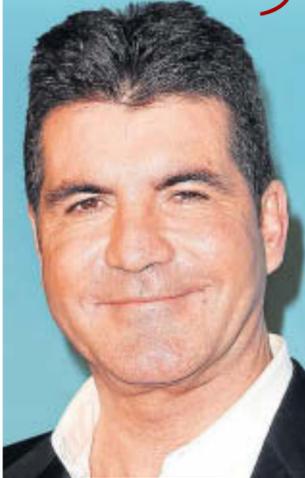
BY SIMON COWELL

WHAT I love about Food Glorious Food is that it's the opposite of all other food shows I've seen before.

I've always believed that the best British food is found on kitchen tables in homes up and down the country, not in fancy restaurants.

We wanted to find those special home-cooked dishes and recipes that have been passed down through family generations. Food Glorious Food has shown that really great home cooking has never been so popular, whether it's the best oatcakes in Stoke-on-Trent or amazing home-made Cornish pasties.

Here we share some of those special recipes with you, including my own favourite... Mum's roast potatoes.



MY MUM'S ROAST POTATOES

Ingredients: 1.5kg large Maris Piper potatoes, olive oil, salt

1. Preheat oven to 220°C/425°F/Gas Mark 7. Peel the potatoes, cut in half and cook in boiling water until just soft. Drain well and allow to dry without letting them go cold.

2. Pour a generous amount of oil into a roasting tin and place in the oven until piping hot.

3. Lay potatoes cut side down and scrape lines across the top with a fork. Put them cut side down into the roasting dish and place in the oven.

4. Roast for 40 minutes until crispy, turning the potatoes during cooking so they are golden all over. Season with a sprinkling of salt just before cooking time ends.

Simon Cowell



HENRY'S MALAY JUNGLE CURRY

RACHEL Kelly's father Henry learned to make this dish when he was in the Army in Malaya in the 1950s and one of her earliest memories is of him cooking it at home.

Ingredients (serves 4-6): 2 tbsp vegetable oil, 1 tsp ground coriander, 1 tsp ground cumin, 1 tsp chilli powder, 3 medium onions, salt, 4-5 garlic cloves, 1 tsp finely grated fresh ginger, 12 chicken thighs on the bone, 1 tsp tomato purée, 2 litres (3½ pints) chicken or vegetable stock, 2-3 large baking potatoes quartered, 1 tsp tamarind paste (optional), 400ml can of coconut milk, 8 hard-boiled eggs

For Malay curry powder: 2 tsp coriander seeds, 2 tsp cumin seeds, seeds from 1 tsp green cardamom pods, 2 tsp fennel seeds, 1 tsp yellow mustard seeds, 1 tsp black peppercorns, 5cm (2in) cinnamon stick, crushed, 2-3 large dried chillies, 2½ tsp ground turmeric, 1 tsp ground ginger, 1 tsp ground nutmeg, ½ tsp ground cloves.

1. Fry seeds, peppercorns, cinnamon stick and chillies for 2-3 minutes in hot dry pan, shaking occasionally, until fragrant. Allow to cool slightly then grind finely. Add all ground spices and grind again.

2. Heat the oil in a large, heavy-based saucepan over a medium heat. Add the ground coriander, cumin and chilli powder, plus 2 tablespoons of the Malay curry powder. Stir thoroughly in the oil then add the onions, stir again and sprinkle with a little salt. Cover with a lid and cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the onions are beginning to soften.

3. Stir in the garlic and ginger, and cook for 2 minutes. Add the chicken thighs, mix well and cook for 5 minutes.

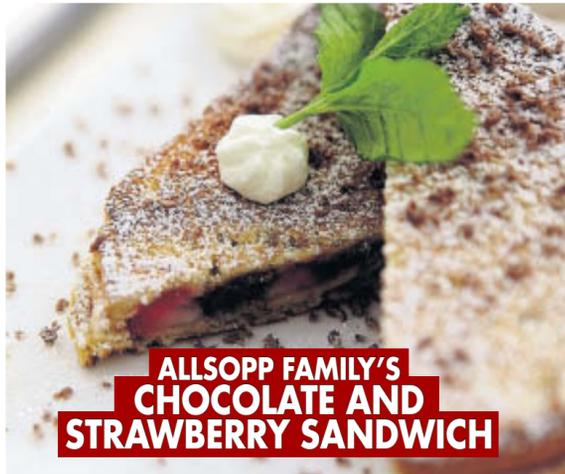
4. Add the tomato purée and at least half the stock so it covers the chicken. Bring

to the boil then cover and simmer on the lowest heat for 45 minutes. Meanwhile, put potatoes in a pan of cold water, bring to the boil and parboil for 5 minutes.

5. Drain, add potatoes to the curry and cook for 20 minutes. You might need to add more stock. I like to add tamarind paste to sharpen up the flavours and give the curry a fresh taste (optional).

6. When potatoes are cooked add the coconut milk and cook over a medium heat for 10 minutes. Taste and adjust seasoning, then add hard-boiled eggs, cut into wedges if you like and continue cooking just long enough for the eggs to heat through.

7. Serve the curry with plain steamed rice, cucumber raita and small bowls of salted peanuts, chopped tomatoes, spring onion and pineapple.



ALLSOPP FAMILY'S CHOCOLATE AND STRAWBERRY SANDWICH

EXPERIMENTAL baker Lewis Allsopp had a raspberry toastie in a restaurant and decided to try making his own version with strawberries and chocolate. It's now become a family classic and a favourite with his friends.

Ingredients (serves 1): 2 medium strawberries cut into 5mm (¼in) slices, 2 slices of brioche, 35g (1¼oz) milk chocolate, 20g (¾oz) roughly chopped and the rest grated, 25ml (1fl oz) whipping cream, 1 tsp icing sugar, 1 sprig of mint

1. Preheat a toastie-maker. Place half the strawberries on a slice of brioche and sprinkle with the chopped chocolate. Top with the second slice of brioche.

2. Place in the hot toastie-maker for 2 or 3 minutes until the bread is golden brown and the chocolate has melted.

3. Meanwhile, whip the cream until light and fluffy and spoon into a piping bag.

4. Cut the toasted sandwich into diagonal slices and place on a plate. Sift the icing sugar over the sandwich and sprinkle with the grated chocolate.

5. Pipe the whipped cream on to a corner of the plate and garnish with the remaining strawberry slices and the mint leaf.

JOANNA'S GREEK BAKED MACARONI

JOANNA Herd's Cypriot parents made this dish when she was growing up in North London... it's one of the most popular dishes in Cyprus.

Ingredients (serves 8): Olive oil, 1 large onion, 500g (1lb) minced pork, 500g (1lb) minced beef, 400g can of tomatoes, 1 bay leaf, 200ml (7fl oz) red wine, handful flat-leaf parsley, 1 tsp dried mint, 1 tsp salt, tsp freshly ground pepper, 2 tsp ground cinnamon

For the pasta: 1 litre (1.75 pints) water, 1 chicken stock cube, olive oil, 250g (8oz) dried macaroni

For the bechamel sauce: 125g (4oz) butter plus extra for greasing, 6 tbsp plain flour, 1.5 litres (2 pints) milk, salt, 125g (4oz) halloumi cheese, 1 egg yolk beaten with 2 tsp milk, pinch of grated nutmeg.

1. Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas Mark 4. Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a frying pan and fry onion until golden. Add minced meat and fry, stirring frequently, until brown and juices have evaporated. Stir in tomatoes and bring to the boil. Add bay leaf and simmer until almost all liquid has evaporated. Pour in wine and simmer until juices have gone. Add parsley, mint, salt, pepper and cinnamon, stir, turn off heat.

2. Put water and stock cube in large pan, add drizzle of olive oil and bring to boil. Add macaroni and cook. Drain under cold running water, stir in a drizzle of olive oil.

3. To make bechamel sauce, melt butter in a non-stick pan then stir in flour until smooth. Gradually add milk, stirring between each addition. Add a little salt and halloumi and stir until the cheese has melted. Take sauce off the heat and stir in egg mixture. Add extra milk if it is too thick. Return to the heat, stirring constantly until bubbles appear then remove from heat.

4. Butter a large ovenproof dish and add a third of the macaroni. Spoon half the mince mixture over it then pour a thin layer of the bechamel over that. Add another third of macaroni, spoon the remaining mince over it, and cover with the rest of the macaroni. Pour the remaining bechamel over the surface and set aside to cool for at least an hour.

5. Bake the macaroni for 35-45 minutes until bubbling and lightly browned, then set aside to rest for at least 10-15 minutes before serving. The dish is equally good hot or cold.



FOOD Glorious FOOD

6 great tried and tested family recipes from the hot new TV show

By FRANCESCA COOKNEY
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THE hunt is on for Britain's tastiest recipe...

Food Glorious Food hit screens this week in a celebration not of complex culinary techniques but of good old-fashioned home cooking, with X Factor supremo Simon Cowell putting Britain's wannabe cooks to the test.

The show is presented by Carol Vorderman, who is joined by four expert judges - pasta sauce guru Loyd Grossman, food writer and historian Tom Parker Bowles, ex-Masterchef semi-finalist Stacie Stewart and WI vice-chairman Anne Harrison.

Over the next eight weeks thousands of people will pit their signature dishes against each other's in a bid to win the grand prize of

£20,000 and the chance to see their dish on sale at Marks and Spencer.

Using their own recipes, as well as those handed down through generations, the cooks battle to impress the judges - and the rest of the country - with everything from sausages in milk to baked squirrel.

Among the more bizarre offerings are hundreds of brilliant home-cooked recipes that come from a Michelin-starred restaurant, but from the kitchens of ordinary families.

Only one dish can be crowned the nation's favourite but with so many fantastic ideas it would be a shame not to share them.

We've picked six mouth-watering recipes to inspire you and bring some brilliant British home cooking to your table.

● FOOD Glorious Food is on ITV1 at 8pm on Wednesday evenings.



KIRSTY'S MINT, PEA & LIME RISOTTO

KIRSTY Couper loves to cook with fresh, seasonal produce. This zingy dish is one of her favourites.

Ingredients (serves 8): 125g (4oz) butter, 6 tbsp olive oil, 2 large onions, 6 celery stalks, large head of garlic, cloves, 400g (13oz) arborio rice, 250ml (8fl oz) dry white wine, 1.8 litres (3 pints) chicken stock, 625g (1lb) frozen peas, leaves from 3 large bunches of mint, zest of 8 lemons, juice of 3 lemons, juice of 2 limes, salt and freshly ground black pepper, 250g (8oz) Parmesan cheese, mint flowers, to garnish (optional)

For the asparagus: 20 asparagus spears, 1 tsp olive oil, zest of 1 lemon

1. Heat butter and 4 tablespoons of oil in large frying pan. Add onions and celery

and fry over a gentle heat for a few minutes. Add garlic and cook for 12-15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

2. Stir in rice, coating it in the butter. Increase the heat to medium-high, add the wine and stir until it evaporates.

3. Add stock a ladleful at a time, stirring until the rice has absorbed the liquid. Cook for about 20 minutes.

4. In the meantime, cook peas in boiling water for 2 minutes, drain and place in a blender or food processor. Add mint, reserving a few leaves for decoration, add remaining oil, half lemon zest, lime juice and all but 1 tablespoon of lemon juice. Whizz until mint has been incorporated.

5. Season risotto then add remaining lemon zest and all but a handful of the Parmesan. Fold in pea and mint mix.

6. For asparagus, heat a griddle pan until very hot. Brush asparagus with oil and sprinkle with lemon zest. Place in hot pan until charred on all sides, then transfer to a bowl and add reserved tablespoon of lemon juice. Transfer asparagus to a chopping board and cut on the diagonal into 5cm (2in) pieces. Set tips aside and fold the stalks into the risotto.

7. Garnish the finished risotto with the reserved mint leaves, asparagus tips, mint flowers (if using) and remaining Parmesan and serve straight away.



SUSAN'S DRAGON PIE

SUSAN Flander-Woodhouse, who featured on the first episode of Food Glorious Food, owns Blaenafon Cheddar Co Ltd and makes this dish using her Dragon's Breath cheese, which contains ale and chilli and is matured underground.

Ingredients (serves 4-6): 8 small leeks, 10 medium potatoes, 50g (2oz) butter, 8 slices of smoked ham cut in half, 200g (7oz) hot chilli Cheddar cheese

For the cheese sauce: 65g (2.5oz) butter, 65g (2.5oz) plain flour, 500ml (17fl oz) milk, 200g mature Cheddar cheese (such as Pwll Mwar), 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce, salt and freshly ground pepper

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas Mark 6. Put saucepan over a medium-low heat, add butter plus inch of salt and pepper and melt. Add flour, whisk until combined then cook for two minutes.

2. Take the pan off the heat and slowly add a quarter of the milk, whisking smooth. Return pan to the heat, add quarter of the milk

and whisk. Increase the heat to medium-high, add the remaining milk and heat for 1-2 minutes, until it begins to thicken.

3. Add cheese, stir until thick and creamy then mix on the Worcestershire sauce. Set aside.

4. Cut leeks widthways and place in a saucepan with enough water to cover them. Bring to boil over a medium-high heat then simmer for about 5 minutes. Drain, then place on a tea towel to cool.

5. Put potatoes in a saucepan of salted water, bring to boil then simmer for 15-20 minutes. Drain, add butter and mash the potatoes until light and fluffy. Season.

6. Wrap each leek in a strip of ham and place in an oven-proof dish. Cover with cheese sauce, smooth mashed potato over the top. Sprinkle with cheddar and place in oven for 20-25 minutes until the pie is thoroughly hot in the middle and golden brown on top. Serve with crusty bread.



BEASLEY FAMILY'S CELEBRATION CAKES

PART-time nurse and mother-of-four Carole Beasley has adapted her grandmother's recipe to create these grown-up cupcakes.

Ingredients (makes 12): 170g (6oz) unsalted butter, 170g (6oz) caster sugar, 3 eggs, 1 tsp vanilla extract, 170g (6oz) self-raising flour, 2 tsp milk (optional). For the frosting: 150g (5oz) unsalted butter, 625g (1lb) icing sugar, plus extra for thickening. For the raspberry daiquiri flavouring: 125g (4oz) raspberries (fresh or frozen), 2 tsp icing sugar, 4 tsp white rum. For the toffee vodka flavouring: 115g (3oz) condensed milk, 4 tsp vodka. For the limoncello flavouring: 4 tsp limoncello liqueur, zest of 1 lemon, juice of 1 lemon. For the Irish cream flavouring: 4 tsp Irish cream liqueur, such as Baileys, 12 crushed chocolate-clipped honeycomb spheres, such as Maltesers

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas Mark 4. Place 12 paper cases in a muffin tin.

2. Cream butter and sugar together in a bowl. Add eggs and vanilla extract, beat until glossy.

3. Fold in flour until fully mixed.

4. Spoon a heaped tablespoon of cake batter into each paper case in the prepared tin.

5. Bake in the centre of the oven for 10-18 minutes, or until risen, golden brown and springy. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

6. To make frosting, cream butter and icing sugar in a bowl until light and fluffy. The frosting can be flavoured as follows: For raspberry daiquiri flavouring, place raspberries and icing sugar in a saucepan and heat until reduced to a jam-like consistency. Pass mixture through a sieve by rubbing it with the back of a spoon then discard seeds. For toffee vodka flavouring, gently heat condensed milk in a heatproof bowl over a saucepan of simmering water. Stir occasionally until

it changes to a toffee brown colour. Using a cocktail stick, prick several holes in the top of each cold cupcake and divide the cakes into groups of 3. Flavour each group with a different flavouring - half a teaspoon of rum, half a teaspoon of vodka, half a teaspoon of limoncello or half a teaspoon of Irish cream liqueur. Place equal

amounts of frosting in 4 bowls. Fold cooled raspberry sauce into a portion of frosting and stir in remaining rum. Add extra icing sugar a tablespoonful at a time until frosting holds its shape. Spoon or pipe it on to rum-infused cupcakes. Fold cooled toffee sauce into another portion of frosting and stir in the remaining vodka. Add extra icing sugar until frosting is thick enough to hold its shape. Spoon or pipe it on to vodka-infused cupcakes. Take a third portion of frosting and add three-quarters of lemon zest, the lemon juice and remaining limoncello. Add icing sugar until frosting holds its shape. Spoon or pipe it on to limoncello-infused cupcakes and sprinkle with lemon zest. Take final portion of frosting and fold in three-quarters of the honeycomb balls and remaining Irish cream liqueur. Add icing sugar until frosting holds its shape. Spoon or pipe on to last group of cupcakes and sprinkle with crushed honeycomb spheres.

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