



TOM AIKENS

FoodSpy

Barbecues, cosseted salmon and Heritage potatoes

Now that summer is here, it is time to start cooking outdoors on the barbecue. June is one of the best months for al fresco cooking, since some lovely vegetables are in season to make delightful side dishes like crushed peas with oregano, or grilled asparagus with lemon mayonnaise. The English tomato season begins at the end of the month for homemade tomato gazpacho (choose small cherry tomatoes to make it sweeter).

With barbecues, always keep things simple. Marinade meat before cooking to improve the flavour and tenderise it. Or try some Loch Duart Salmon, a farmed salmon, which we are curing in the restaurant at the moment with beetroot and dill. They have been producing salmon at Loch Duart for hundreds of years and they've cracked it. The company is in Badcall Bay, northwest Scotland, one of the most beautiful, unspoiled parts of the country, and they are doing everything they can to protect the welfare of the fish and the environment, producing low-volume, high-quality salmon. I visited them a few months ago: they transport the fish from fresh water on land out to sea in pods carried by helicopter. It's one of the best farmed salmons on the market; you can buy it at Sainsbury's.



Another great accompaniment to a barbecue is a baked potato. I like Heritage potatoes (www.heritage-potatoes.co.uk), which you'll find at Whole Foods Market or Fortnum & Mason. Try the Red Duke of York 1942, Yukon Gold 1980, or the first dig of the new season, Epicure 1897, which were ready on 2 June and are smaller and can be lightly simmered in water for potato salad (add a little spring onion, parsley and shallot to the mayonnaise).

To wash all this lovely food down, M&S are bringing out a selection of regional, conditioned beers that are as near to cask ales as you can get in a bottle. They are brewed in the traditional way, with a little yeast added at bottling. This starts the second fermentation, which tops up the alcohol and, more importantly, uses up all the oxygen to keep the beer really fresh in the bottle.

One in particular will go down well with my fishermen – a Cornish IPA brewed using pure Cornish spring water and locally grown Maris Otter barley, made at the St Austell Brewery in Cornwall, available from the end of the month.



'I'm no size zero. I still eat fish and chips. And pizza.' **Agyness Deyn** is a fast-food fan



INSIDE OUT Alan Yau

The Michelin-starred chef behind restaurants Hakkasan and Yauatcha says, 'Dolly noodles [dried noodles to cook at home] are my trademark dish but I usually customise the topping.' Always on the go, the man who made dim sum fashionable at Yauatcha has, unsurprisingly, plunged his hands into even more global food ventures this year. 'I'm doing too much as usual. The second Cha Cha Moon in Whiteleys, Princi Italian bakery in Wardour Street, Hakkasans in Miami and Abu Dhabi and that's just for starters,' he says. 'Opening Cha Cha Moon in Ganton Street was relatively stress-free because the idea is so straightforward. It is my take on the quintessential Hong Kong noodle joint so I'm kind of going back to my roots.' At home he is proud of his impressive Italian design luxury kitchen, so much so that he reused some of the design for his customers to enjoy. 'I'm ashamed to say that I have at home a pristine Boffi kitchen, one careful owner, very low mileage. I liked the taps so much that I put them into Cha Cha Moon for everyone to admire.' Unfortunately for the Hong Kong-born restaurateur, he admits that to gorge on his favourite snack, chicken jerky, he has to travel all the way to Kuala Lumpur restaurant Syarikat Kiew Brothers. And back in London? 'Nothing beats a leisurely summer

evening's meal at The River Café. I'll order whatever they recommend.' **Who would join you on the sofa?** I'd invite Steve Jobs so I can pick his brains about creative entrepreneurship and so he can inspire me generally. **What's on the menu?** I hope he likes dolly noodles. **What's for pudding?** No dessert – got to watch the waistline. **And to drink?** Apple juice. **What's on the box?** I think *House* is entertaining yet intellectually stimulating. **What are your favourite restaurants around the world?** *Masa* in New York because the sushi is as good as you would get in Tokyo (the fish is flown in daily from Tsukiji market). I just love the way the counter works, with the fish presented in a traditional wooden box, chilled by a huge block of ice. *Sevva* in Hong Kong, which opened recently. Go for drinks on the roof terrace and enjoy what is perhaps the most dramatic urban vista in the world. *Fuku* in Tokyo: an unassuming local yakitori place but I've never tasted grilled chicken as good as theirs. I always go to *Sade Kahve* when I'm in Istanbul for a slap-up Turkish breakfast by the Bosphorus. And the smart pasta joint *L'Anima* in Shoreditch has just opened. I am a big fan of the chef, Francesco Mazzei. He'll make it the best Italian in town – take my word for it.

PIZZ@HOME

Takeaway on trial

Where? 350 Old Brompton Road, SW5 (020 7244 8080). Free delivery on orders over £10. Open daily 11am-11pm.

The order One margherita pizza, one chorizo and one capricciosa.

How long? They said 30 minutes: our pizzas arrived in 20.

Was it hot? Yes, the pizzas were still steaming when they arrived.

Comment The regular-size pizzas were huge at 14in, with thin and crispy bases and fresh, delicious toppings. The margherita had lots of cheese and tangy tomato sauce; the chorizo was nicely spicy with juicy red peppers; but the ham on the capricciosa looked suspiciously processed. Otherwise an excellent pizza choice.

TOTAL COST: £30.75

Food fight

STUFFED VINE LEAVES

Delphi Vine Leaves, £1.09 for 150g (www.delphifoods.co.uk) These are too oily and lack flavour.

Marks and Spencer, £2.49 for 225g (www.marksandspencer.com) Perfect texture and with delicious flavours of lemon and mint. Seriously moreish. **★STAR BUY★**

Harvey Nichols Odyssey Stuffed Vine Leaves, £3.15 for 340g (www.harveynichols.com) These come in solidified olive oil and are very filling. Tasty but not a patch on M&S.



Edited by VICTORIA-ANNE BULL