

## ROYAL ENTERTAINING

# Crown Jewels

Carolyn Robb, former personal chef to the Prince and Princess of Wales and their boys, shares the secrets of the fresh home-cooked meals she created for them



## CURRIED CHICKEN SALAD WITH FRESH MANGO AND TOASTED CASHEWS

'This is my interpretation of Coronation chicken, a dish that was created for the Queen's Coronation celebrations in June 1953. It always brings back fond memories of the many buffet lunches that I prepared aboard the royal yacht *Britannia*. It was a favourite when we had a large number of guests to feed, particularly when we were in a hot climate. Wherever in the world we were, when we were on board *Britannia*, it felt as if we had brought a tiny corner of Britain with us'

Serves 4

### INGREDIENTS

#### For the sauce

- 3 tbsp curry powder
- 2 tbsp honey
- 3 tbsp white wine
- 4 tbsp mango chutney

- 225ml/8fl oz mayonnaise
- 100ml/4fl oz double cream, whipped
- 4 cooked chicken breasts, diced into 1cm/½in cubes

#### For the mixed-grain salad

- 225g/8oz mixed bulgur wheat and red and white quinoa (or any combination of basmati, jasmine, brown, wild or Camargue red rice for a gluten-free option)
- 60g/2½oz cooked peas
- 60g/2½oz tinned sweetcorn, drained
- ½ red pepper, diced
- ½ orange pepper, diced
- ½ yellow pepper, diced
- ½ courgette, grated

#### For the dressing

- 2 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 6 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp wholegrain mustard
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 tbsp fresh parsley, finely chopped

- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

#### For the garnish

- 50g/2oz raw cashews, lightly toasted
- 1 perfectly ripe mango, peeled and diced
- 1 small avocado, peeled, sliced and tossed in 2 tsp fresh lemon juice to prevent browning
- Handful of cress or micro greens
- Handful of edible flowers, such as nasturtiums

1. To make the sauce, simmer the curry powder and honey together in a small heavy-based saucepan for a few minutes, watching it closely, as it catches and burns very easily.
2. Add the wine and chutney and cook for a further 3 minutes, then leave to cool.
3. When completely cold, stir in the

mayonnaise, then fold in the whipped cream.

4. Stir the chicken into the sauce (if possible, leave this mixture in the fridge overnight before serving).

5. For the salad, cook the grains according to packet instructions. Drain and leave to cool.

6. Toss the peas along with the sweetcorn, diced peppers and grated courgette into the mixed grains.

7. Make the dressing by shaking all the ingredients together in a lidded jar. Season to taste, then add to the grain salad and mix well.

9. Divide the curried chicken mixture between 4 plates, surround the meat with grain salad and decorate with the cashews, diced mango, avocado slices, cress and edible flowers.

## ASPARAGUS AND NEW POTATO SOUP WITH PARMESAN STRAWS

'Whenever I cook with asparagus, I remember the perfect ones that were grown at Highgrove, the Prince of Wales's country residence. Asparagus were only ever on the menu when they were growing in the garden. The traditional English asparagus season runs from St George's Day to Midsummer's Eve (23 April to 21 June) and it remains a wonderful treat when it is keenly anticipated for 44 weeks of the year and eaten with relish during these eight weeks only'

Makes **4 generous lunchtime servings, or 6 starter-size servings**

### INGREDIENTS

#### For the Parmesan straws (makes 18)

- 200g/7oz ready-made, all-butter puff pastry
- 1 medium free-range egg, beaten
- 2 tbsp fresh chives, finely chopped
- 3 tbsp Parmesan, finely grated
- 1 tsp white sesame seeds
- 1 tsp black sesame seeds
- Pinch of paprika

#### For the soup

- 2 medium onions, peeled and finely diced
- 1 small leek, washed, trimmed and finely chopped
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 750ml/26fl oz tasty chicken stock
- 800g/1¾lb fresh asparagus (about 50 spears), tips cut off and reserved
- 6 new potatoes, scrubbed and diced
- 150ml/¼pt crème fraîche
- 1 tbsp fresh chives, finely chopped

- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 25g/1oz butter
- Sprigs of fresh chervil, to serve

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C, 375°F, Gas 5
2. To make the Parmesan straws, roll out the pastry on a floured board to a 25cm/10in square 3mm/¼in thick. Glaze all over with the beaten egg and sprinkle with the chives, Parmesan, sesame seeds and paprika. Chill for 10 minutes, then, using a long-bladed knife, cut 18 long spear shapes, then chill again before baking for 12-15 minutes.
3. To make the soup, cook the onions and leek slowly in the olive oil in a heavy-based saucepan over a low heat with a lid on, until the onion is translucent and the leek is very soft, making sure they don't brown.
4. Meanwhile, bring the chicken stock to the boil in another pan, add the asparagus tips and cook for 3-5 minutes until tender. Remove with a slotted spoon, plunge them into cold water then drain and set aside.
5. Cook the diced potatoes in the stock until tender, then remove with a slotted spoon and set aside.
6. Snap off and discard the tough, woody bottoms of the asparagus stalks, chop the rest into 1cm/½in pieces and, once the onion and leek are soft, add them along with



- the chicken stock to the pan. Cook for a few minutes until the asparagus are tender. (Don't overcook the asparagus or they will become a very dull colour, rather than vibrant green.)
8. Remove from heat and cool before blending to a silky smooth consistency using a liquidiser or a stick blender.
  9. To serve the soup, reheat it

- thoroughly. Whisk in the crème fraîche and chives and season with salt and pepper.
10. Meanwhile, reheat the asparagus tips and diced new potato in the butter.
  11. Pour the soup into warm cups or bowls and top with a spoon of diced potato, a few asparagus tips and a sprig of chervil. Serve with a couple of Parmesan straws.



## SPRING LAMB SALAD

'Lamb was a great favourite of the Princess of Wales, especially when it was served with plenty of mint. This salad is quick to prepare and the lime and mint vinaigrette is deliciously tangy'

Serves **4**

### INGREDIENTS

#### For the mint vinaigrette

- 1 small shallot, peeled and finely chopped
- 2 tbsp lime juice
- 1 tbsp white wine vinegar
- ½ tsp Dijon mustard
- 6 tbsp mild olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Pinch of brown sugar
- 2 tbsp fresh mint, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh parsley, finely chopped

#### For the lamb

- Splash of olive oil
- 1 fully boned and trimmed rack of lamb (ask your butcher to do this for you)

#### For the salad

- ¼ cucumber, sliced very thinly
- ½ red onion, peeled and sliced very thinly
- 100g/4oz mixed salad leaves
- 12 mini plum tomatoes, halved
- 12 Kalamata olives

- 200g/7oz feta cheese, crumbled
- Handful of fresh mint leaves

1. To make the vinaigrette, put the shallot in a large bowl with the lime juice, vinegar and mustard. Blend with a balloon whisk or a handheld stick blender. Add the oil in a slow stream, allowing the vinaigrette to emulsify and thicken as you whisk. Season to taste with salt, pepper and brown sugar and set aside.
2. Heat a heavy-based frying pan over a high heat then add the olive oil. Season the lamb with salt and freshly ground black pepper then add it to the pan. Sear well until it is browned on all sides and medium-rare inside – about 8-10 minutes. Cover it loosely with foil to keep it warm and leave to rest for 10 minutes before slicing it.
3. Blend the mint and parsley into the vinaigrette (added at this stage so they retain their lovely colour).
4. In a large bowl toss all the salad ingredients with a little vinaigrette. Arrange in a mound on a serving dish and top with the slices of lamb. Drizzle more vinaigrette over the lamb and serve.



## TINY TREACLE TARTS

'When Prince Harry was very young I used to make miniature treacle tarts for him. Once, when he came to get one, I asked him to check with Diana first. He reappeared with a wonderful handwritten note from her, reading: "Mummy says it's okay!"'

Makes 20 small 5cm/2in tarts

You will need 20 individual metal tartlet moulds or 2 medium 12-hole muffin pans

### INGREDIENTS

#### For the orange pastry

- 100g/4oz butter
- 2 tbsp golden caster sugar
- 225g/8oz plain flour
- Finely grated zest of 1 orange
- 1 medium free-range egg yolk
- 4 tbsp cold water

#### For the filling

- 400g/14oz golden syrup
- 150g/5oz fresh white breadcrumbs
- Finely grated zest of 1 lemon
- 1 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 2 tbsp double cream

1. To make the pastry, add the butter, sugar and flour to a food

processor and process until resembling breadcrumbs. Add the orange zest, the egg yolk and a little of the water while pulsing the food processor on and off.

2. Put the pastry on a lightly floured board and bring it together into a ball. Wrap in clingfilm and chill in the fridge for 20 minutes.

3. While chilling, warm the golden syrup in a small heavy-based saucepan – do not let it boil. Remove from the heat and mix in the breadcrumbs and lemon zest. Leave to sit so the crumbs absorb the golden syrup and swell.

4. Remove the pastry from fridge and roll it out on a floured board to a thickness of 3mm/1/8in. Cut out circles to line individual metal tartlet moulds or muffin pans and press the pastry down well. Chill for a further 15 minutes.

5. Preheat the oven to 180°C, 350°F, Gas 4. Add the lemon juice and cream to the syrup and



breadcrumb mixture then place a little filling in each tartlet.

6. Decorate each top with small pastry shapes or a lattice of pastry strips, or personalise them by putting names on the top using pastry letters.

7. Bake for 15-18 minutes. Leave to cool in the moulds for 10 minutes before removing.

8. Serve warm with whipped cream or ice cream, if liked.

- 20 crisp amaretti biscuits, crushed into large crumbs
- 4 tbsp cassis
- Handful of fresh mint leaves, finely shredded, plus 4 sprigs extra, to decorate

1. Make up the jelly with 450ml/16fl oz water and leave it to set in a shallow dish. You should do this several hours before you start making the trifles.

2. Cook the blackberries in a little water with half the sugar and the vanilla. When the fruit is soft, purée with a stick blender and rub through a sieve to remove the pips. Set aside.

3. Whip the cream with the remaining sugar.

4. Dice the set jelly into small squares and divide 1/2 of it between 4 stem glasses. Use 1/3 of the whipped cream to add a layer to each glass on top of the jelly.

5. Sprinkle 1/2 of the amaretti crumbs onto the cream.

6. Divide the remaining jelly between the glasses and top with a layer of blackberries and raspberries then drizzle with the cassis.

7. Mix the blackberry purée into half of the remaining whipped cream and spoon it onto the fruit. Sprinkle with the remaining crushed amaretti and add a layer of sliced strawberries. Chill for at least 30 minutes.

8. To serve, fold the shredded mint into the remaining whipped cream. Spread this onto the top of each trifle and decorate with a few berries and a small sprig of mint.



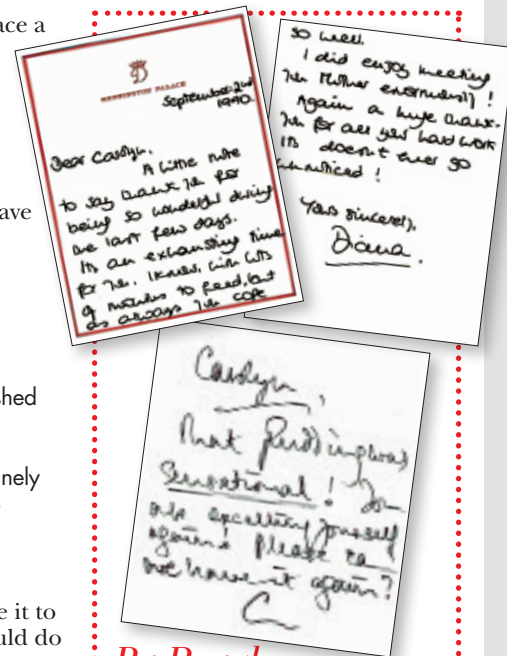
## A TRIFLE ROYAL

'Trifle purists might argue that this is not really a trifle at all. I admit to trifling with the ingredients – replacing sponge cake with amaretti biscuits, custard with blackberry cream and sherry with cassis – but people always come back for more. Trifle has a very special association for me. In 1997, I was invited to Buckingham Palace to the Christmas dance given by the Queen in the Throne Room – and dessert included trifles served in glasses'

Serves 4

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 x 135g packet of strawberry jelly
- 100g/4oz each blackberries, blueberries, raspberries and small strawberries, hulled, washed and dried as necessary (reserve a handful of the best for decoration)
- 50g/2oz caster sugar
- 1/2 tsp vanilla essence
- 300ml/1/2pt double cream



## By Royal Appointment

Carolyn treasures the handwritten appreciative notes she received from Charles and Diana (above).

• *The Royal Touch* is a collection of recipes from former royal chef Carolyn Robb. They're fit for a King yet simple enough to serve at home. Whether entertaining special guests, going on a picnic, cooking with children or you simply feel like trying your hand at some baking, *The Royal Touch* has it all.

• Readers can buy a copy of *The Royal Touch* (ACC Publishing Group, £25) for the special price of £10, plus postage and packing. To order, visit [accdistribution.com/uk](http://accdistribution.com/uk) and enter the promotional code "TRT/H" when prompted. The offer is valid until 1 September.

