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CHRISTMAS

Rocky road ice-cream trifle

Flip for back cover

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Welcome

Make your Christmas merry and bright with taste's latest collection of festive recipes, featuring fresh favourites for 2025 alongside beloved classics we return to year after year.

Michelle Southan
FOOD DIRECTOR

This year's recipe collection is packed with so many favourites that choosing just one cover recipe felt impossible. The solution? Our first-ever double cover featuring the two new desserts our team loves most!

The bejewelled Rocky road ice-cream trifle on the front looks and tastes incredible, but guess what? It's layers and layers of hacks – we're talking store-bought ice-cream, sorbet and lollies. You just have to make the jelly, fill your trifle bowl and let the freezer do the rest! Find the recipe on p79. The Choc pistachio trifle on the back cover is a bit more involved, but worth every minute in the kitchen for its show stopper qualities! The recipe is on p59.

Get the party started with tasty morsels in the Finger food chapter (p9) and fun, festive cocktails from p81. Then fill your table with a feast of mains (p27) and sides (p43). The Christmas desserts and treats (p57) in here are bigger and better than ever before, and full of all the flavours and goodies everyone is loving this year.

Whether you're entertaining at your place or been asked to bring a plate, there are plenty of ideas here to make it a very Merry Christmas!

Michelle Southan

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Key: Q quick · E easy · H healthy · V vegetarian · LC low cal · GF gluten free · LF low fat

Caesar salad parmesan cups p25

Finger food

These nibbles will be flying off the plate as your partygoers merrily crunch, dip, scoop and slurp.

Swedish meatball sausage rolls

MAKES 48 | **PREP** 30 MINS | **COOKING** 25 MINS

Ingredients

2 slices white bread, crust removed, bread torn
60ml (¼ cup) milk
1 brown onion, grated
500g pork and beef mince
1 egg, lightly whisked, plus extra 1, lightly whisked
¼ tsp ground nutmeg
1 tsp ground allspice
50g (⅓ cup) dried cranberries
2 tbsp finely chopped fresh continental parsley leaves, plus extra, to serve
60ml (¼ cup) thickened cream
3 sheets frozen puff pastry, just thawed (see tip), halved
Whole cranberry sauce, to serve

Creamy gravy
50g butter, chopped
2 tbsp plain flour
330ml (1⅓ cups) beef stock
80ml (⅓ cup) thickened cream

Method

1. Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan forced. Line 2 baking trays with baking paper.

2. Place the bread in a small bowl and pour over the milk. Set aside for 5 minutes to soak.

3. Place the onion, mince, egg, nutmeg, allspice, cranberries, parsley, cream and bread mixture in a large bowl, then season and mix to combine (see tip).

4. Place one-sixth of the mince mixture lengthways down the centre of a pastry rectangle. Brush the edges with some of the extra egg. Roll up to enclose the filling and cut into 8 pieces (see tip). Place on a prepared tray, seam-side down, and brush with extra egg. Repeat with the remaining mince mixture, pastry and extra egg. Bake for 25 minutes or until golden and cooked through.

5. Meanwhile, make the creamy gravy. Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the flour and cook, stirring, for 2-3 minutes or until the mixture turns golden. Reduce the heat to low. Gradually stir in the stock and cream, stirring constantly, until it comes to a simmer. Simmer, stirring occasionally, for 1 minute or until thickened slightly. Season, then pour into a small serving bowl.

6. Sprinkle the extra parsley over the gravy and serve with the sausage rolls and cranberry sauce on the side.

Tips

+ Make sure the pastry is properly thawed, but still cold for easier handling. When rolling the pastry around the filling, don't stretch it or it'll shrink back during baking.
+ Don't overmix the meatball mixture – just combine until everything is incorporated to keep it tender.
+ Use a sharp knife to cut the sausage roll logs. A blunt knife will squash out the filling.

Layered Mexican dip

SERVES 12 | **PREP** 30 MINS (+ COOLING) | **COOKING** 20 MINS

Ingredients

- 3 corncobs, husks and silk removed
- 1½ tsp Mexican chilli powder
- 60ml (¼ cup) extra virgin olive oil
- 1 small red onion, finely chopped
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 2 pinches of dried chilli flakes, plus extra, to serve
- 425g can black beans, rinsed, drained,
- 6 small tomatoes, finely chopped
- ½ x 285g jar piquillo peppers, drained, finely chopped
- 160ml (⅔ cup) fresh lemon juice
- 4 green shallots, finely chopped
- 2 bunches radishes, finely chopped
- 2 large avocados
- ½ tsp Tabasco sauce
- ¼ cup finely chopped fresh coriander leaves
- 2 x 200g blocks feta, crumbled
- 2 x 230g pkt white corn tortilla strips

Method

1. Place the corncobs on a microwave-safe plate. Cover with plastic wrap and microwave on High for 4 minutes.

2. Heat a chargrill pan over medium heat. Combine the chilli powder and 2 tsp oil in a large bowl. Rub the spice mixture all over the corncobs. Cook the corncobs, turning, for 6 minutes or until begins to char. Transfer to a plate and set aside to cool.

3. Meanwhile, heat 2 tsp remaining oil in a frying pan over medium-high heat. Cook the onion for 5 minutes or until softened. Add the cumin and chilli flakes. Cook for 30 seconds or until aromatic. Add the black beans and toss to coat. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool.

4. Combine the tomato and peppers in a bowl. Season. Transfer to a sieve set over a bowl to drain any excess juice.

5. Use a sharp knife to cut down the length of each cob close to the core to remove the kernels. Place the corn kernels in a bowl. Add 1 tbsp lemon juice and half the shallot. Season and toss to combine. Spoon the corn mixture into the base of a 3L (12 cup) glass serving bowl.

6. Spoon the bean mixture over the corn mixture, followed by the radish.

7. Place the avocado in a bowl. Add the Tabasco, coriander, 60ml (¼ cup) of remaining lemon juice and remaining shallot. Season and stir to combine. Spoon over the radish, spreading to cover. Top with the tomato mixture.

8. Place the feta, remaining lemon juice, remaining oil and 2 tbsp water in a food processor. Process until the mixture is smooth and creamy. Dollop over the tomato layer, gently spreading to cover. Sprinkle with extra chilli flakes. Serve with tortilla strips.

Tip

+ Make this up to 3 hours ahead. Cover with plastic wrap and store in the fridge until required.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"The Christmassy colours of this dip looked so appealing amongst the party food spread."

WAFFLEISO

Brie & cranberry muffin pan filo scrolls

MAKES 12 | **PREP** 20 MINS | **COOKING** 15 MINS E V

Ingredients

100g butter, melted
6 sheets filo pastry
200g triple cream brie wheel, cut into 1cm-thick slices, then crossways into 3cm pieces
100g (¼ cup) whole cranberry sauce

Method

1. Preheat oven to 220°C/200°C fan forced. Brush twelve 80ml (⅓ cup) muffin pans with a little of the melted butter to grease.

2. Place 1 pastry sheet on a clean work surface. Cover the remaining sheets with a clean, dry tea towel, then a damp tea towel (this will prevent it from drying out). Brush the pastry with a little melted butter. From 1 long side, drag the pastry until it forms an accordion-like strip about 2cm wide. Cut in half crossways.

3. Starting at 1 end, gently roll the filo into a loose coil. Place in a prepared muffin pan. Place 2 brie pieces and ½ tsp of cranberry sauce in between the filo layers (you may need to loosen the filo layers carefully to add the fillings). Repeat with the remaining filo portion and more brie and cranberry sauce. Repeat with the remaining filo sheets, butter, brie and cranberry sauce to create 12 coils in total.

4. Bake for 15 minutes or until golden and crisp. Set aside in the pan for 5 minutes to cool slightly, then serve.

Tip

+ These are delicious served warm or even cold, making them perfect to transport to a Christmas picnic or if you are bringing a plate.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"Never used filo this way before. Scrunching and rolling it up around those yummy fillings was ingenious."

BAKINGSELFIES

Caprese wreath

SERVES 12 | **PREP** 40 MINS V GF

Ingredients

- 750g cherry tomatoes
- 2 bunches fresh basil, leaves picked
- 60g (⅓ cup) macadamias, toasted
- 25g (⅓ cup) finely grated parmesan
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 60ml (¼ cup) extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tsp fresh lemon juice
- 1½ x 180g tubs cherry bocconcini

Method

1. Use a small serrated knife to trim 5mm from the top of each tomato. Use a teaspoon to carefully scoop out and discard the seeds and membrane from each tomato. Place them, cut-side down, on paper towel to drain.

2. Reserve any large basil leaves to make wreath (you need about 1 cup).

3. Place the macadamias in a small food processor. Process until finely chopped. Add the parmesan, garlic, oil, lemon juice and ¾ cup firmly packed basil leaves. Process until a paste forms. Season. Spoon the pesto into a large sealable plastic bag and snip off 1 corner, 1cm from end. Pipe the pesto into each tomato until almost full. Place a bocconcini in each tomato, trimming to fit snugly if needed and pressing gently to secure.

4. Arrange the reserved large basil leaves around the edge of a large serving platter (about 25cm in diameter). Arrange the filled tomato on top to form a wreath and serve.

Tip

+ Make the pesto up to 2 days ahead. Store in an airtight container in the fridge.

Maple bacon pastry trees

MAKES 22 | **PREP** 25 MINS (+ CHILLING) | **COOKING** 20 MINS

Ingredients

- 2 sheets frozen puff pastry, partially thawed
- 200g streaky bacon rashers
- 2 tbsp maple syrup, plus extra, to serve
- 1 egg, lightly whisked
- 22 white cocktail onions
- Chopped fresh continental parsley leaves, to serve

Method

1. Preheat oven to 220°C/200°C fan-forced. Line 2 large baking trays with baking paper.

2. Cut twenty-two 2cm-wide strips from the pastry sheets. Place on a prepared tray. Place in the fridge for 10 minutes to chill.

3. Meanwhile, cut the bacon lengthways into 2cm-wide strips. Place in a large bowl and drizzle over the maple syrup. Toss to coat.

4. Place 1 pastry strip on a flat surface, keeping the remaining pastry in the fridge. Lay a piece of bacon on top, gently pressing to secure (bacon will be shorter than pastry). Use the picture as a guide to fold the pastry and bacon together into a tree shape, starting with a small amount and widen as you go (until you reach the end). Starting at the base of the tree, thread a 10cm-long metal or presoaked bamboo cocktail skewer through the centre to top of tree (leave 1cm at the top of the skewer for a pickled onion). Place on a prepared tray. Repeat with the remaining pastry strips and bacon to form 22 trees in total.

5. Brush the trees with extra maple syrup, then brush them with the egg. Bake for 18 minutes or until golden and puffed. Set aside on the trays for 5 minutes.

6. Press a pickled onion on top of each skewer. Transfer to a serving platter. Drizzle over a little extra maple syrup. Sprinkle with parsley to serve.

Salmon sushi tree

MAKES 36 PIECES | **PREP** 40 MINS (+ COOLING) | **COOKING** 15 MINS LC

Ingredients

645g (3 cups) sushi rice
185ml (¾ cup) sushi seasoning
6 nori sheets
80g (½ cup) sesame seeds, toasted
½ cup chopped fresh continental parsley leaves
Kewpie Mayonnaise, to fill
300g (2 pieces) hot smoked salmon, skin removed, flaked
1 large lemon rind strip, pith removed
Salmon roe, to decorate
Soy sauce and wasabi, to serve

Method

1. Cook the rice following packet directions. Drizzle over the sushi seasoning, then use a large metal spoon to combine. Set aside to cool completely.

2. Cover the surface of a bamboo sushi mat with plastic wrap. Place 1 nori sheet on a chopping board. Use wet hands to spread 1½ cups rice in an even layer over the nori to cover completely.

3. Combine the sesame seeds and parsley in a bowl, then sprinkle 2 tablespoonfuls evenly over the rice layer. Place the mat, plastic wrap-side down, on top of the rice mixture. Use the chopping board to invert so the mat is underneath. Squeeze a line of mayonnaise along a long edge of the nori, leaving a 3cm gap along the edge closest to you. Arrange one-sixth of the salmon in a line next to the mayonnaise.

4. Use the mat to roll up the rice and nori firmly to enclose the filling. Wrap the ends of the plastic wrap to create a firm log. Place the roll in the fridge. Repeat with the remaining nori, rice, sesame mixture, mayonnaise and salmon.

5. Use a sharp knife to trim the ends of each roll, leaving the plastic wrap around the rolls. Cut each roll into 6 slices. Remove and discard the plastic.

6. Arrange 11 pieces of the sushi on a serving platter. Top with another 9 pieces, then 7, 5, 3 and 1 on top to create a tree shape.

7. Use a 5cm star pastry cutter to cut out a star from the lemon rind strip. Use a toothpick to secure to the top of the sushi tree. Decorate with salmon roe. Serve with soy sauce and wasabi.

Tip

+ Make the sushi to the end of step 4 up to a day ahead. Wrap in plastic wrap and store in the fridge. Continue from step 5 on the day of serving.

Prawn & chorizo gazpacho shots

MAKES 24 | **PREP** 20 MINS (+ 1 HOUR CHILLING) | **COOKING** 5 MINS E

Ingredients

24 green prawns, peeled, deveined, tails intact
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
2 garlic cloves, crushed
2 chorizo, cut into 24 slices
1 tbsp finely chopped fresh continental parsley leaves

Gazpacho
2 Lebanese cucumbers
6 ripe roma tomatoes, coarsely chopped
330g jar whole roasted peppers, drained
1 small French shallot
8 fresh mint leaves
2 tbsp sherry vinegar
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

Method

1. To make the gazpacho, remove and discard the seeds from 1 cucumber. Finely chop and set aside. Peel and coarsely chop the remaining cucumber. Place in a food processor with the tomato, peppers, shallot, mint, vinegar and oil. Season. Process for 2 minutes or until smooth, scraping down the side of the processor. Pour the mixture into a fine sieve set over a large jug. Use the back of a spoon to press the mixture through sieve, discarding the solids. Cover the jug with plastic wrap and place in the fridge for 1 hour or until chilled.

2. Meanwhile, place the prawns, oil and garlic in a bowl. Season, then toss to coat. Thread 1 prawn and 1 chorizo slice each onto 24 metal or presoaked bamboo skewers.

3. Heat a large frying pan over high heat. Cook the skewers for 1 minute each side or until lightly charred and just cooked through.

4. Divide the gazpacho among 24 shot glasses. Sprinkle with the reserved chopped cucumber and the parsley. Place a skewer in each glass to serve.

Tips

+ Make the gazpacho up to 1 day ahead. Store in an airtight container in the fridge.
+ Marinate the prawns and thread onto skewers with the chorizo up to 2 hours ahead.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"These looked so fancy and were absolutely delicious!"

HARMONYPUFFIN

Baked brie sunshine tart

SERVES 6–8 | **PREP** 20 MINS | **COOKING** 30 MINS E V

Ingredients

- 2 sheets frozen puff pastry, just thawed
- 200g (10cm-diameter) brie wheel
- 2 tbsp store-bought sun-dried tomato pesto
- 1 egg, lightly whisked
- 1 tsp sesame seeds
- Fresh thyme leaves, to serve

Method

1. Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan forced. Line a baking tray with baking paper.

2. Use a plate as a guide to cut a 23cm-diameter disc from 1 pastry sheet. Place on the prepared tray. Cut the remaining pastry sheet into a slightly larger disc, cutting right to the pastry edges (about 25cm in diameter).

3. Place the brie wheel in the centre of the smaller pastry disc. Spread the pesto over the pastry around the brie, leaving a 5mm border at the edge. Place the larger pastry disc over the top, gently tucking it under the brie so there are no air pockets. Use a fork to prick the pastry around the base of the brie in a neat circle.

4. Make cuts in the pastry from the base of the brie to the edge of the pastry, about 1.5cm apart. Twist each piece, then press the edge with a fork.

5. Brush all over the pastry with the egg and sprinkle with the sesame seeds. Prick the pastry on top of the brie 3 times. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until crisp and golden brown (see tip).

6. Use a small sharp knife to cut off the pastry on top of the brie, slicing to use as extra dippers. Sprinkle with thyme and serve immediately while the brie is warm and still soft. Break off pastry twists to dip into the melted brie.

Tips

+ Check the tart halfway through baking and cover the pastry twists with foil if browning too quickly.
+ This tart can be assembled (without brushing with egg) and stored in the fridge for up to 4 hours before baking.

★★★★★

"Great recipe – clear instructions. This turned out just like the picture and tasted great. Good for a small party."

MARGARET_THOMSON

Caesar salad parmesan cups

MAKES 16 | **PREP** 20 MINS (+ COOLING) | **COOKING** 30 MINS

Ingredients

30g parmesan, finely grated
40g piece streaky bacon
90g (1 ½ cups) finely shredded baby gem lettuce
½ avocado, finely chopped
2 tbsp store-bought caesar salad dressing

Method

1. Preheat oven to 190°C/170°C fan forced. Line a baking tray with baking paper.

2. Place 2 shot glasses, base-side up, on a clean surface.

3. Place 4 slightly heaped tablespoonfuls of parmesan onto the prepared tray, leaving a 4cm gap between each pile to allow for spreading. Use your fingers to shape the piles into 8cm-diameter rounds, creating an even layer. Bake for 7-8 minutes or until bubbling and lightly golden. Remove the tray from oven and let stand for a few seconds or until the parmesan discs start to firm up around the edges.

4. Use an offset spatula to carefully transfer 2 parmesan discs from the tray to the shot glasses, allowing them to drape over the bases. Use your hands to gently press and form a cup shape. Hold them in place for a few seconds to firm up, then lift off and place upside down on a wire rack to cool completely. Repeat with the remaining 2 parmesan discs. (If you find they are too firm, return the tray to the oven to soften slightly before transferring to the shot glasses to shape).

5. Repeat with the remaining parmesan to make 16 parmesan cups in total (you can re-use the same baking paper each time).

6. Cook the bacon in a frying pan over medium heat for 5 minutes or until crisp and golden. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towel to drain. Set aside to cool completely, then finely chop.

7. Combine the lettuce and avocado in a bowl and add the dressing. Toss to coat. Divide the mixture evenly among the parmesan cups. Top with the bacon and serve immediately.

Tip

+ The unfilled parmesan cups are best used within 1 hour of making, but because they are a little fiddly, you can make them up to 24 hours ahead. You'll need to 'refresh' them though. To do this, preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan forced. Turn a mini muffin pan upside down and place the cups over the upturned holes, spaced apart so none are touching. Heat in the oven for 2 minutes. They may slide downwards a bit, but while still warm you can gently reshape them in the pan. Remove and cool on a wire rack. Use within 1 hour.

Hot honey glazed ham p39

Mains

Whether you're entertaining a big or small group, there's a show stopper here to centre your festive feast around.

Apple & sage pork with thyme salt crackling

SERVES 8 | **PREP** 35 MINS (+ 30 MINS COOLING & 10 MINS RESTING)
COOKING 2 HOURS

Ingredients

25g butter
1 French shallot, finely chopped
1 large Granny Smith apple, peeled, cut into 2cm pieces
1 tbsp brown sugar
1 tbsp chopped fresh sage leaves
60g (1 cup) fresh breadcrumbs
2kg rolled pork loin
1 tbsp sea salt flakes
1 tsp finely chopped fresh thyme leaves
Roasted baby carrots (see tip) and gravy, to serve

Method

1. Melt the butter in a frying pan over medium-high heat. Add the shallot and apple. Cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until golden. Add the sugar and 1 tbsp water. Cook, stirring, for 2 minutes or until the sugar dissolves. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to low. Simmer for 5 minutes or until caramelised.

2. Add the sage and cook for 1 minute or until slightly thickened. Transfer to a heatproof bowl and set aside for 30 minutes to cool.

3. Add the breadcrumbs to the apple mixture. Season and stir to combine.

4. Preheat oven to 250°C/230°C fan forced. Lightly grease a wire rack in a large roasting pan.

5. Remove the string from the pork and unroll. Pat dry the rind with paper towel. Use a small sharp knife to score the rind at 1cm intervals. Place the pork, skin-side down, on a chopping board. Slice crossways through the thickest part of the meat, being careful not to cut all the way through. Open out to form 1 large piece. Press the stuffing over the pork, then roll up to enclose. Tie with unwaxed kitchen string at 3cm intervals to secure. Place on the prepared rack.

6. Combine the salt and thyme in a bowl, then rub all over the pork. Roast the pork for 20 minutes, then reduce the oven to 180°C/160°C fan forced. Roast for a further 1 hour 30 minutes or until the juices run clear when a skewer is inserted into the centre of the pork. Transfer to a serving platter and cover loosely with foil. Set aside for 10 minutes to rest.

7. Slice the pork and serve with carrots and gravy.

Tips

+ Roast the baby carrots alongside the pork, if you like. Add to the pan with the pork in the last 30 minutes of cooking.
+ Dress up the pork with extra sea salt flakes, fresh thyme sprigs and finely grated lemon rind, if you like.

Creamy French onion & mushroom strudel

SERVES 8 | **PREP** 25 MINS (+ COOLING) | **COOKING** 50 MINS V

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 400g portobello mushrooms, thickly sliced
- 400g cup mushrooms, thickly sliced
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 tsp chopped fresh thyme leaves, plus extra, to serve
- 3 sheets frozen puff pastry, just thawed
- 140g (½ cup) French onion dip
- 200g camembert, cut into 16-18 wedges
- 1 egg, lightly whisked
- Cranberry jelly, to serve

Method

1. Preheat oven to 220°C/200°C fan forced.

2. Heat a little of the oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. In batches, arrange a single layer of mushrooms in the pan. Cook, without stirring, for 2 minutes or until golden. Turn over the mushrooms and cook for a further 2 minutes or until golden and any liquid has evaporated. Transfer to a large bowl. Repeat with the remaining oil and mushrooms, in batches, adding the garlic and thyme in the last minute of the final batch. Set aside to cool completely.

3. Place a 40cm-long sheet of baking paper on the kitchen bench and top with 1 sheet of the pastry. Cut a second sheet of pastry in half and place next to the first sheet, slightly overlapping by about 1cm, to make a long sheet. Press the overlapping join to seal together.

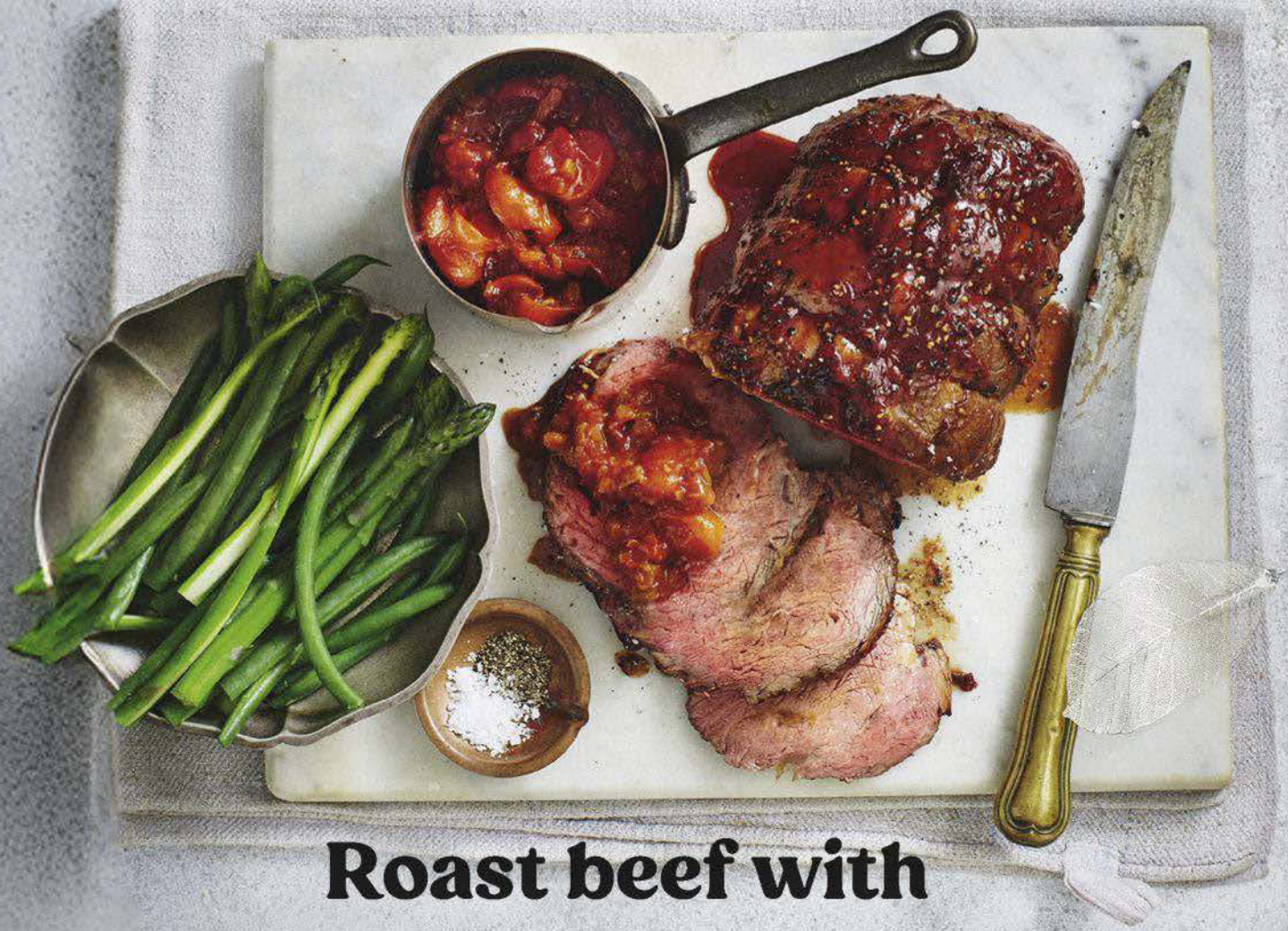
4. Spread half of the dip lengthways onto the centre third of the pastry, leaving a 3cm border at each end. Arrange the cooled mushroom mixture on top of the dip, leaving any liquid behind in the bowl. Arrange the camembert over the mushroom mixture, tucking some of them in under the mushrooms. Top with dollops of the remaining dip. Fold 1 side of the pastry over the filling. Brush the opposite side of the pastry with egg. Fold the remaining pastry side over the filling, slightly overlapping to enclose the filling.

5. Cut the remaining pastry sheet into 1cm-thick strips. On a flat surface, weave the strips together to form a large sheet (see tip). Place over the top of the strudel to cover. Trim the edges and tuck under the strudel. Brush the pastry with egg. Carefully lift the strudel still on the paper onto a large baking tray. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Set aside on the tray to cool slightly.

6. Slice the strudel, sprinkle with extra thyme and serve with cranberry jelly.

Tips

+ Mushrooms hold a lot of water, which can make the strudel soggy. After frying, drain off any moisture that accumulates in the bowl. Also cool completely so no heat transfers to the pastry while assembling.
+ We decorated the strudel with a woven sheet of pastry. If you don't wish to weave, you can use a pastry cutter to cut out shapes to decorate instead.
+ Make this up to 1 day ahead. Undercook it slightly so the pastry doesn't go too dark in the oven the second time around. To do this, cook the strudel, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Cover and refrigerate. To reheat, take out of the fridge 30 minutes before cooking, then bake in a 180°C/160°C fan forced for 15-20 minutes.



Roast beef with bloody mary chutney

SERVES 8 | **PREP** 20 MINS (+ 15 MINS RESTING) | **COOKING** 50 MINS

Ingredients

- 1.5kg piece beef scotch fillet
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 60ml (¼ cup) tomato sauce
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- ½ tsp Tabasco sauce
- 1 tbsp cracked black pepper
- Steamed greens, to serve

Bloody mary chutney

- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 red onion, finely chopped
- 1 celery stick, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 200g grape tomatoes, halved
- 400g can diced tomatoes
- 80g (½ cup) brown sugar
- 2 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- ½ tsp Tabasco sauce
- 2 tbsp vodka

Method

1. Preheat oven to 220°C/200°C fan forced.

2. Remove the beef from the fridge 20 minutes before cooking. Tie with unwaxed kitchen string at 5cm intervals. Rub with the oil.

3. Heat a large frying pan over high heat. Add the beef and cook, turning, for 6 minutes or until browned all over. Transfer to a roasting pan.

4. Combine the tomato sauce, Worcestershire, Tabasco and pepper in a bowl. Brush all over the beef. Roast for 40 minutes for rare or until cooked to your liking. Remove from the oven, cover loosely with foil and set aside for 15 minutes to rest.

5. Meanwhile, make the bloody mary chutney. Heat the oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion and celery. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes or until softened. Add the garlic. Cook for 1 minute or until aromatic. Add all the tomatoes, sugar, Worcestershire, Tabasco and vodka. Bring to the boil. Reduce heat to low. Simmer for 30 minutes or until thickened.

6. Remove and discard the string from the beef, then slice. Serve with the chutney and steamed greens.

Charred herb & feta salmon with radish & onion pickle

SERVES 8 | **PREP** 20 MINS (+ 1 HOUR PICKLING) | **COOKING** 25 MINS

Ingredients

1.6kg boneless whole side of salmon, skin on
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus extra, to drizzle
1 tsp fennel seeds
200g block feta, crumbled
¼ cup chopped fresh continental parsley leaves, plus extra, to serve
2 green shallots, finely chopped
2 tbsp flaked almonds
Salad leaves, to serve

Radish & onion pickle

160ml (⅔ cup) red wine vinegar
2 tbsp caster sugar
2 tsp table salt
2 bay leaves
2 spring onions (globe onions), quartered lengthways
6 red radishes, thinly sliced

Method

1. Preheat oven to 220°C/200°C fan forced. Line a large baking tray with baking paper.

2. To make the pickle, place the vinegar, sugar, salt, bay leaves and 60ml (¼ cup) water in a small saucepan over medium heat. Stir until the sugar dissolves. Bring to a simmer, then remove from heat. Place onion wedges and radish in a heatproof bowl. Pour over the hot vinegar mixture. Set aside for 1 hour to pickle.

3. Meanwhile, place the salmon on prepared tray. Combine the oil and fennel seeds in a small bowl. Season. Rub the mixture all over the salmon. Combine the feta, parsley and shallot in a bowl, then scatter over the salmon along with the almonds. Bake for 15-20 minutes for medium or until cooked to your liking.

4. Drain most of the liquid from the pickle. Separate the onion wedges. Top the salmon with the pickle and extra parsley. Drizzle over extra oil to serve.

Maple roast turkey with gingerbread stuffing

SERVES 10 | **PREP** 1 HOUR (+ 15 MINS RESTING) | **COOKING** 3 HOURS 5 MINS

Ingredients

2 tsp smoked paprika
80ml (⅓ cup) maple syrup
80ml (⅓ cup) extra virgin olive oil
4kg whole turkey
6 parsnips, peeled, halved lengthways
1 whole small kent pumpkin, deseeded, cut into 1.5cm-thick wedges
1 bunch baby carrots, scrubbed
10 garlic cloves, unpeeled
1 cup firmly packed watercress sprigs
60g (⅓ cup) dry roasted almonds, coarsely chopped
Gravy, to serve

Gingerbread stuffing

60ml (¼ cup) extra virgin olive oil
1 large brown onion, chopped
3 garlic cloves, crushed
1 tbsp finely chopped fresh sage leaves
250g beef sausage mince
2 tbsp finely chopped fresh continental parsley leaves
200g gingerbread men, coarsely chopped

Method

1. To make the gingerbread stuffing, heat the oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add the onion, garlic and sage. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 4 minutes or until softened. Transfer to a large bowl. Set aside for 5 minutes to cool slightly.

2. Add the sausage mince, parsley and gingerbread. Season and mix well to combine.

3. Preheat oven to 240°C/220°C fan forced.

4. Combine the paprika, 2 tbsp maple syrup and 2 tbsp oil in a small bowl. Season. Remove and discard the neck from the turkey. Pat dry the turkey inside and out with paper towel. Loosely fill the neck cavity with some stuffing. Use toothpicks to secure the skin over the neck cavity to enclose. Fill the large cavity with the remaining stuffing. Secure the skin over the cavity with toothpicks. Tie the legs together with unwaxed kitchen string. Tuck the wings under the turkey, then place the turkey in a large roasting pan. Brush with the paprika mixture, then cover tightly with greased foil.

5. Place the turkey in the oven and immediately reduce to 180°C/160°C fan forced. Roast for 2 hours.

6. Meanwhile, grease 2 large baking trays and line with baking paper. Arrange the vegetables and garlic cloves on the prepared tray. Drizzle over the remaining maple syrup and oil. Season and toss to coat.

7. Remove the foil. Roast the turkey and vegetables, basting the turkey every 20 minutes, for 1 hour or until the turkey is golden, the juices run clear when a skewer is inserted into a thigh and the vegetables are sticky and tender. Remove from the oven. Cover the turkey loosely with foil and set aside for 15 minutes to rest.

8. Transfer the vegetables to a large serving plate. Scatter over the watercress and almonds. Gently toss. Remove the toothpicks, then place the turkey on top and serve with gravy.

Roast veg & camembert pastry wreath

SERVES 6 | **PREP** 30 MINS (+ COOLING) | **COOKING** 55 MINS V

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tsp chopped fresh thyme leaves
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 700g kent pumpkin, peeled, deseeded, cut into 2cm pieces
- 1 small red capsicum, deseeded, chopped
- 1 small fennel, trimmed, cut into thin wedges
- 4 sheets frozen puff pastry, partially thawed
- 200g camembert, cut into 12 wedges
- 1 egg, lightly whisked
- 250g cocktail truss tomatoes, cut into small bunches
- Fresh basil leaves, to serve

Method

1. Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan forced. Line 2 large baking trays with baking paper.

2. Combine the oil, thyme and garlic in a large bowl. Add the pumpkin, capsicum and fennel. Season and toss to combine. Place on 1 prepared tray and roast for 25 minutes or until tender. Set aside on the tray to cool completely.

3. Meanwhile, join the pastry sheets together to form 1 large square on the remaining prepared tray (the pastry will overhang). Cut a 30cm-diameter circle from the pastry square, reserving the offcuts. Score a 13cm circle in the middle, being careful not to cut all the way through. Use a small knife to cut the 13cm circle into 8 wedges, leaving the circle intact.

4. Increase the oven to 220°C/200°C fan forced.

5. Arrange two-thirds of the camembert around the edge of the pastry, leaving a 2cm border. Top with the roast vegetables and remaining camembert. Fold up the border to meet the filling. Fold the 8 wedges outwards to cover the filling and join the pastry edge. Brush the pastry with egg.

6. Use a 4cm star pastry cutter to cut 8 stars from the reserved pastry offcuts. Place on the points of the pastry wedges. Brush the pastry with egg. Bake for 30 minutes or until the pastry is golden, adding the tomatoes around edge of the tray in the last 5 minutes of cooking. Remove from the oven and set aside on the tray for 5 minutes.

7. Transfer the wreath to a serving platter and arrange the tomatoes and basil on and around the wreath. Season and serve.

Tip

+ Use different vegetables for the filling if you like, such as sweet potato, different coloured capsicums and cherry tomatoes.

Hot honey glazed ham

SERVES 15-20 | **PREP** 30 MINS (+ 15 MINS RESTING) | **COOKING** 1 HOUR 30 MINS E

Ingredients

250ml (1 cup) honey
80ml (⅓ cup) sriracha chilli sauce
2 tsp apple cider vinegar
1 tsp dried chilli flakes
8-9kg whole smoked leg ham
Ribbon, mixed fresh chillies and fresh herbs, to decorate (optional)

Method

1. Preheat oven to 170°C/150°C fan forced. Line a large roasting pan with baking paper.

2. Combine the honey, sriracha, vinegar and dried chilli in a bowl.

3. Use a small sharp knife to cut around the shank, about 10cm from the end. Run the knife around the edge of the ham. Gently lift the rind off in 1 piece by running your fingers between the rind and the fat. Score the fat at 1cm intervals across the ham. Wrap the shank end in foil. Place the ham in the prepared pan. Pour 750ml (3 cups) water into the base of the pan.

4. Brush one-third of the honey glaze over the ham. Bake the ham, brushing with more glaze every 30 minutes, for 1 hour 30 minutes or until the ham is warmed through and the surface is sticky and caramelised. Remove from the oven and set aside for 15 minutes to rest.

5. Remove the foil from the ham hock. Wrap the hock with ribbon and decorate with fresh chillies and herbs, if using.

Tips

+ Prepare the glaze up to a day ahead. Mix together the honey, sriracha, vinegar and chilli and store, covered, at room temperature.
+ You can also remove the rind and score the ham a day ahead. Just lay the rind back over the ham and store in a ham bag in the fridge. Then on Christmas Day all you have to do is brush the ham with the glaze and bake.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"The sweetness of the hot honey glaze went so well with the saltiness of the ham and the spicy kick really cut through the richness."

VIOLAPARMESAN

JOY

Summer barbecue prawn platter

SERVES 8 | **PREP** 10 MINS (+ 30 MINS PICKLING) | **COOKING** 30 MINS

Ingredients

400g (2 cups) black rice
40g (¼ cup) sunflower seeds
60ml (¼ cup) apple cider vinegar
2 tsp caster sugar
1 tsp sea salt flakes
1 bunch radishes, quartered
60g (⅓ cup) pepitas
2 tbsp brown sugar
1 tbsp harissa seasoning
60ml (¼ cup) extra virgin olive oil
32 large green king prawns, peeled, deveined, tails intact
2 mangoes
1 small pineapple, peeled, cored, cut into long wedges
2 bunches asparagus
1 large red capsicum, deseeded, cut into thick strips
1 large red onion, cut into thick wedges
1 avocado, cut into 1cm pieces
2 tbsp fresh lemon juice

Method

1. Cook the rice following packet directions. Season and stir through the sunflower seeds.

2. Combine the vinegar, caster sugar, salt and radish in a bowl. Set aside, tossing occasionally, for 30 minutes to pickle.

3. Meanwhile, line a tray with baking paper. Cook the pepitas in a frying pan over medium-high heat, tossing, for 3 minutes or until toasted. Sprinkle with the brown sugar and season with salt. Cook, stirring, for 2 minutes or until caramelised. Transfer the pepita mixture to the prepared tray and set aside to cool completely. Break into small pieces.

4. Combine the harissa and 2 tbsp oil in a bowl. Add the prawns and toss to coat. Starting from the tail end, thread the prawns onto 32 large metal or presoaked bamboo skewers. Cut the cheeks from the mangoes, discarding the seeds.

5. Preheat a barbecue hotplate and grill on medium-high.

6. Cook the mango and pineapple, turning, for 4 minutes or until charred. Transfer to a tray. Cover to keep warm.

7. Cook the asparagus and prawns, turning occasionally, for 3 minutes or until the asparagus is just tender and prawns are just cooked through. Transfer to the tray.

8. Cook the capsicum and onion for 3 minutes each side or until charred.

9. Drain the radish pickle, reserving 60ml (¼ cup) pickling liquid. Toss the avocado and lemon juice in a bowl. Stir the remaining oil into the reserved pickling liquid.

10. Cut the mango into wedges. Spoon the rice mixture onto a large serving plate. Top with the fruit, vegetables, prawns and avocado mixture. Drizzle over the dressing. Sprinkle with pepitas.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"So fresh and so colourful, this plate was a great mix of summer fruit, veg and seafood."

DANI.BROUGHAM

Brie & cranberry stuffed duchess potatoes p55

Sides

Colourful, fresh and crunchy, this extra special line-up will bring your summer spread together.

Layered pasta salad

SERVES 8 | **PREP** 30 MINS | **COOKING** 10 MINS E

Ingredients

315g (3 cups) dried elbow pasta
2 tsp extra virgin olive oil
4 middle bacon rashers, chopped
½ small red cabbage, chopped
420g can corn kernels, drained
2 baby gem lettuces, shredded
2 large tomatoes, finely chopped
1 continental cucumber, finely chopped
65g (¾ cup) coarsely grated cheddar
2 green shallot, thinly sliced

Creamy mustard dressing

235g (1 cup) sour cream
250g (1 cup) mayonnaise
1 cup fresh continental parsley leaves, chopped
2 tbsp fresh lemon juice
1 tbsp wholegrain mustard

Method

1. Cook the pasta in a large saucepan of salted boiling water following packet directions. Drain and refresh under cold running water.

2. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Cook the bacon, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes or until golden. Drain on paper towel.

3. To make the creamy mustard dressing, combine all the dressing ingredients in a bowl. Season.

4. Scatter the cabbage over the base of a 5L (20 cup) glass serving bowl. Top with the corn, then half the pasta. Spoon over three-quarters of the dressing. Arrange the lettuce over the dressing layer.

5. Toss the tomato, cucumber and remaining pasta in a separate bowl, then spoon over the lettuce layer. Drizzle over the remaining dressing. Sprinkle with the bacon, cheddar and shallot. Season with pepper and serve.

WATCH THE VIDEO

★★★★★

"A salad favourite of mine. Have made this recipe many times and love it every time. Creates a big bowl of salad that inevitably turns into leftovers, which is okay with me! Crowd pleaser too."

STACYLILLY

Hot honey roast potatoes

SERVES 6 | **PREP** 10 MINS (+ 10 MINS COOLING) | **COOKING** 1 HOUR 15 MINS E V

Ingredients

1.5kg sebago (brushed) potatoes, peeled, cut into large chunks
20g butter, melted
2 tbsp olive oil

Hot honey glaze
125ml (½ cup) honey
2 garlic cloves, crushed
2 tbsp sriracha chilli sauce
1 tsp apple cider vinegar
2 tsp minced fresh red chilli

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan forced.

2. Place the potato in a saucepan of cold water. Bring to the boil over high heat. Boil for 5-8 minutes or until just tender (see tip). Drain.

3. Return the potato to the pan and shake the pan over low heat for 30 seconds to create rough surfaces on the potato. Remove from the heat and set aside for 10 minutes to cool slightly.

4. Combine the butter and oil in a bowl. Arrange the potato in a single layer in a roasting pan. Drizzle over the butter mixture. Season. Roast for 50 minutes or until the potato is light golden.

5. Meanwhile, make the hot honey glaze. Combine all the ingredients in a bowl.

6. Pour the honey mixture over the potato and turn to coat. Roast, turning halfway through, for a further 15 minutes or until glossy and sticky.

Tips

+ When boiling the potato in step 2, cook just until tender. If it gets too soft when you drain and shake the pan, the potato will fall apart. This is just to start the cooking process and helps to rough up the edges, so they can catch the oil mixture and bake crispy.
+ Don't cook the glaze for too long as it can stick and burn on the base of the roasting pan – that's why it only goes on the potato for the last 15 minutes of roasting.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"Loving the hot honey craze for all things, especially on roast potatoes – so good!"

DRPRETTY

Sticky hasselback pumpkin

SERVES 8 | **PREP** 20 MINS | **COOKING** 50 MINS V

Ingredients

- 1 (about 1.6kg) small butternut pumpkin
- 25g butter, melted
- 45g (¼ cup) brown sugar
- 2 tbsp golden syrup
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 2 tsp fresh thyme leaves, plus extra sprigs, to serve
- 35g (¼ cup) pecans, toasted, coarsely chopped

Method

1. Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan-forced. Line 2 baking trays with baking paper.

2. Peel the pumpkin and cut in half lengthways. Scoop out the seeds and discard.

3. Place 1 pumpkin half, cut-side down, on a chopping board. Place a bamboo chopstick along each long side of the pumpkin. Use a sharp knife to make thin cuts (do not cut all the way through – the skewers will help to prevent this). Transfer to 1 prepared tray. Repeat with the remaining pumpkin.

4. Combine the butter, sugar, golden syrup, paprika and half the thyme leaves in a small saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring, for 2 minutes or until the sugar dissolves.

5. Brush half the sugar mixture over the pumpkin. Roast, brushing twice with the remaining butter mixture, for 40-45 minutes or until golden and tender.

6. Sprinkle the pumpkin with the pecans, remaining thyme leaves and extra sprigs to serve.

Prosciutto-wrapped carrots

SERVES 8 | **PREP** 20 MINS | **COOKING** 30 MINS E

Ingredients

- 4 thin slices prosciutto, halved lengthways
- 2 bunches baby carrots, trimmed, peeled
- 25g butter, melted
- 80ml (⅓ cup) maple syrup
- 1 tbsp wholegrain mustard
- 2 tsp finely grated orange rind
- Small fresh continental parsley leaves, to serve

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan forced. Line a baking tray with baking paper.

2. Place 1 prosciutto slice flat on a clean work surface. Place 3 carrots at 1 short end of the prosciutto, then roll up to enclose the carrots. Place on the prepared tray. Repeat with the remaining prosciutto and carrots to make 8 bundles in total.

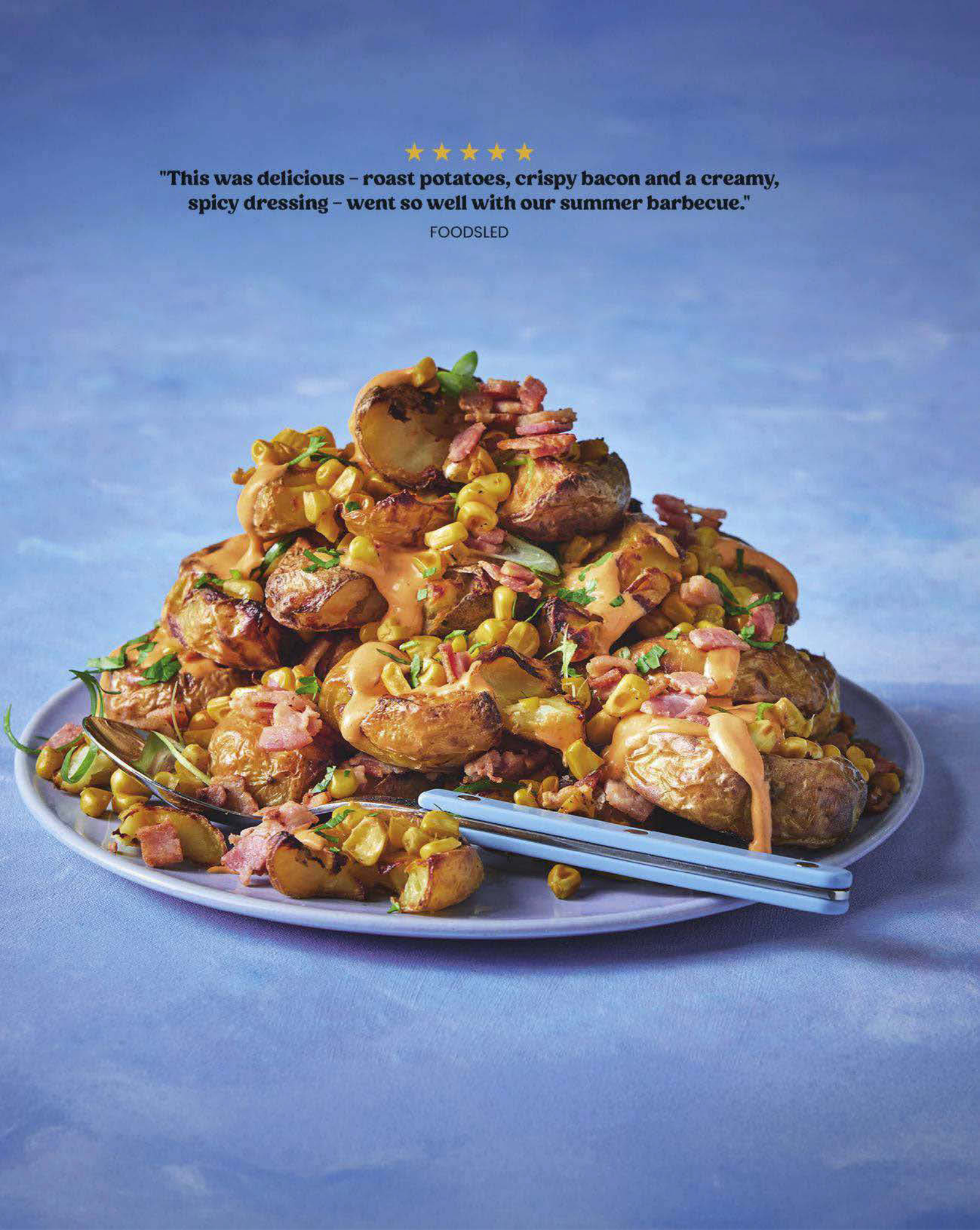
3. Combine the butter, maple syrup, mustard and orange rind in a small bowl. Season. Brush the carrot bundles with half the mixture. Roast, brushing twice more with the remaining butter mixture, for 25 minutes or until golden and tender.

4. Serve the carrots sprinkled with parsley.

★★★★★

"This was delicious – roast potatoes, crispy bacon and a creamy, spicy dressing – went so well with our summer barbecue."

FOODSLED



Creamy gochujang smashed potato salad

SERVES 6 | **PREP** 20 MINS | **COOKING** 1 HOUR 15 MINS E

Ingredients

1.5kg baby Carisma potatoes
400g pkt corn cobettes
3 rindless middle bacon rashers, coarsely chopped
1 green shallot, thinly sliced diagonally
Coarsely chopped fresh continental parsley leaves, to serve

Gochujang dressing
80g (⅓ cup) whole-egg mayonnaise
2 tbsp sour cream
1½ tbsp gochujang
1½ tbsp milk
1 tbsp fresh lemon juice

Method

1. Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan forced. Line a large baking tray with baking paper.

2. Place the potatoes in a large saucepan and cover with cold water. Bring to the boil over high heat. Boil for 10 minutes.

3. Add the corn to the pan and cook for a further 5 minutes or until the potatoes and corn are just tender. Drain. Set aside for 5 minutes to cool slightly.

4. Place the potatoes on the prepared tray. Use the back of a large spoon to squash them slightly. Spray with oil and season. Roast for 1 hour or until golden.

5. Meanwhile, use a sharp knife to cut down the length of the cobettes close to the core to remove the kernels. Cook the bacon in a non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat until crisp. Transfer to a bowl. Add the corn to the pan and cook, tossing, for 3-5 minutes or until lightly toasted. Transfer to the bowl and toss to combine.

6. To make the gochujang dressing, combine all the dressing ingredients in a bowl.

7. Arrange half the potatoes on a serving platter. Sprinkle with half the bacon mixture and half the shallot. Drizzle over half the dressing. Repeat layering with the remaining potatoes, bacon mixture, shallot and dressing. Sprinkle with the parsley to serve (see tip).

Tips

+ This potato salad can be served warm or cold.
+ Make and assemble this salad on the serving platter up to 4 hours ahead. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and store in the fridge.

Moroccan pumpkin, haloumi & chickpea salad

SERVES 4–6 | **PREP** 20 MINS | **COOKING** 50 MINS E V

Ingredients

600g butternut pumpkin, peeled, deseeded, cut into 1.5cm pieces
2 tbs apple cider vinegar
1 tsp caster sugar
½ tsp sea salt flakes
2 red onions, very thinly sliced
2 x 400g cans chickpeas, rinsed, drained
2 tsp Moroccan seasoning
3 zucchini, cut diagonally into 1cm-thick slices
200g pkt haloumi, thinly sliced
120g pkt baby spinach
½ bunch fresh mint leaves, torn if large
440g btl pickled whole baby beetroot, drained, cut into 2cm pieces
115g (¾ cup) pistachio kernels, coarsely chopped

Tahini dressing

60ml (¼ cup) extra virgin olive oil
2 tbs fresh lemon juice
2 tbs tahini
1 tbs maple syrup
1 tsp Dijon mustard

Method

1. Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan forced. Line 2 baking trays with baking paper.

2. To make the tahini dressing, whisk all the dressing ingredients in a jug until combined. Season.

3. Place the pumpkin on 1 prepared tray. Roast for 30 minutes or until tender.

4. Meanwhile, combine the vinegar, sugar and salt in a bowl. Add the onion and toss until coated. Set aside for 10 minutes to pickle.

5. Spread the chickpeas over the remaining prepared tray. Spray with oil and toss with the Moroccan seasoning to coat. Roast the chickpea mixture along with the pumpkin for 5 minutes or until the chickpeas are lightly toasted and the pumpkin is golden.

6. Heat a chargrill pan over medium-high heat. Spray the zucchini and haloumi with oil. Grill the zucchini, in batches, for 3-4 minutes each side or until lightly charred and tender. Transfer to a plate. Cook the haloumi, in batches if necessary, for 1-2 minutes each side or until lightly charred. Transfer to the plate.

7. Drain the pickled onion. Arrange the spinach diagonally down the centre of a 30 x 40cm serving platter (see tip). Arrange the mint, beetroot, zucchini, pumpkin, haloumi, pickled onion, chickpeas and pistachios in rows on either side of the spinach.

8. Drizzle two-thirds of the dressing over the salad. Serve with remaining dressing on the side.

Tips

+ To arrange the salad in neat rows, it can be easier to start with a row in the centre and work your way out to the edges, so you don't run out of space on the platter.
+ To create a great chopped salad of your own, or if you want to substitute ingredients, keep in mind a balance of flavours, textures and colours.

Brie & cranberry stuffed duchess potatoes

MAKES 8 | **PREP** 30 MINS | **COOKING** 35 MINS

Ingredients

850g sebago (brushed) potatoes, peeled, coarsely chopped
40g butter, melted
2 egg yolks, plus extra 1 yolk
100g triple cream brie, cut into 2cm cubes
1 tbsp whole cranberry sauce
Chopped fresh chives, to sprinkle

Method

1. Place the potato in a saucepan. Cover with cold water. Bring to the boil over high heat. Boil for 10 minutes or until very tender. Drain.

2. Return the potato to the pan and shake the pan over high heat for 1 minute or until the moisture has evaporated.

3. Use a potato masher to mash the potato until smooth. Use the back of a spoon to press the potato through a fine sieve into a bowl. Stir in the butter and egg yolks. Season with salt.

4. Preheat oven to 220°C/200°C fan forced. Line a large baking tray with baking paper.

5. Spoon the warm potato mixture into a piping bag fitted with a 1.5cm fluted nozzle (see tip). Pipe a small peak onto the prepared tray and press down gently until you have a 4cm star-shaped disc. Top with a piece of brie and ½ tsp cranberry sauce. Starting at the base, pipe around the cheese and cranberry sauce, enclosing the filling and finishing with a peak to create a Christmas tree-shaped rosette. Repeat with the remaining potato mixture, brie and cranberry sauce to make 8 rosettes in total.

6. Combine the extra egg yolk and 2 tsp water in a bowl. Very gently brush the egg mixture over the rosettes. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until lightly browned.

7. Transfer to a serving plate and sprinkle with chives and pepper to serve.

Tips

+ For smooth, effortless piping, it's important that the potato is still warm when you pipe the rosettes. A cold mixture can cause the potato to break as you pipe.
+ To make ahead, pipe the potato rosettes onto the tray (to the end of step 5). Place in the fridge overnight and continue from step 6 the next day.

Rocky road Christmas pud cheesecake bombe p69

Desserts & treats

Wow your guests with all-new sensational sweets.
You'll find something here, no matter your skill level.

Choc pistachio trifle

SERVES 10 | **PREP** 1 HOUR 30 MINS (+ 3 HOURS 50 MINS CHILLING & 15 MINS SETTING)
COOKING 10 MINS

Ingredients

600g pkt bought dark chocolate mud cake
80g pistachio kernels, finely chopped
125g pkt Loacker Quadratini Double Choc wafers
100g Nestlé White Choc Melts, melted
Green liquid food colouring, to tint
150g Nestlé Dark Choc Melts, melted
300ml ctn thickened cream

Pistachio custard
2 tsp vanilla extract
410ml (1⅔ cups) milk
500ml (2 cups) thickened cream
70g (⅓ cup) caster sugar
70g (½ cup) cornflour
2 egg yolks
50g unsalted butter, chopped
200g jar smooth pistachio spread
Green liquid food colouring, to tint

Chocolate mousse
180g dark chocolate, chopped
40g unsalted butter
2 eggs, separated
2 tbsp caster sugar
300ml thickened cream

Chocolate drizzle
50g dark chocolate, chopped
2 tbsp thickened cream

Method

1. To make the custard, bring vanilla, 250ml (1 cup) milk and 250ml (1 cup) cream just to the boil in a saucepan over medium heat. Remove from heat. Whisk sugar, cornflour, egg yolks and remaining milk in a heatproof bowl until combined, then slowly pour the hot milk mixture over the yolk mixture, whisking constantly, until smooth. Return the mixture to the pan. Whisk over medium heat for 3-5 minutes to thicken. Remove from heat. Whisk in the butter and pistachio spread until well combined. Add a few drops of colouring to tint green. Whisk to combine. Transfer to a bowl. Cover the surface with plastic wrap. Place in the fridge for 3 hours or overnight to chill.

2. Use electric beaters to whip the custard mixture and remaining cream in a bowl until smooth and combined.

3. Use a large serrated knife to cut the cake in half horizontally, keeping icing on. Cut each half into 2cm-thick strips. Place half the cake strips in a layer over the base of a 20cm 4L (16 cup) glass trifle bowl. Spread half the custard evenly over the top. Reserve 1 tbsp of the chopped pistachio, then spoon the remaining around the bowl edge (keep as close to the glass as possible). Top with the remaining cake. Place in the fridge for 20 minutes to chill.

4. Meanwhile, make the mousse. Place the dark chocolate and butter in a heatproof bowl over a saucepan of simmering water (make sure the bowl doesn't touch the water). Stir occasionally until smooth. Remove from heat. Set aside for 5 minutes to cool slightly. Place the egg whites and sugar in a clean, dry bowl. Use clean electric beaters to beat until soft peaks form. Stir the yolks into the chocolate mixture. (Don't overmix or it will harden and set). In batches, fold the egg whites into the chocolate mixture. Use clean electric beaters to beat the cream in a separate bowl until soft peaks form, then gently fold into the chocolate mixture until just combined.

5. Arrange the wafers, on an angle, over cake layer against the glass. (Prop up the first piece with another wafer.) Place any leftover or broken wafers in the centre. Spoon the remaining custard into the centre. Spoon mousse over the top. Smooth the surface. Place in the fridge for 30 minutes or until just set.

6. While the mousse layer is setting, line a large tray with baking paper. Mix half the white choc melts in a small bowl with 1-2 drops of colouring to tint green. Pour the dark choc melts over prepared tray. Use a palette knife to smooth the surface. Drizzle over the green-tinted chocolate and remaining white chocolate. Shake the tray gently to level. Set aside for 3-4 minutes or until just set (chocolate should still be soft and pliable but not melted). Use the tip of a sharp knife to score into shards. Set aside for 10 minutes to set completely.

7. To make the drizzle, place the dark chocolate and cream in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on High for 30 seconds or until starts to bubble. Stir until smooth. Set aside for 5 minutes.

8. Use electric beaters to beat the cream in a bowl until just-firm peaks form. Dollop over the top of the trifle. Top with the chocolate drizzle, shards and reserved pistachio to serve.

Espresso martini Eton mess

SERVES 14 | **PREP** 25 MINS (+ COOLING) | **COOKING** 5 MINS E

Ingredients

2 x 264g pkt mini brownie bites
2 x 600ml ctn thickened cream
160ml (⅔ cup) freshly brewed espresso coffee, cooled
80g pkt meringue nests, crumbled
Cocoa powder, to dust

Espresso martini syrup
160ml (⅔ cup) Kahlúa
160ml (⅔ cup) vodka
300g (1½ cups, firmly packed) brown sugar
250ml (1 cup) freshly brewed espresso coffee
2 tbsp cornflour

Method

1. To make the espresso martini syrup, place the Kahlúa, vodka, sugar and coffee in a small saucepan over medium heat and cook, stirring, until the sugar dissolves. Bring to a simmer, then cook for 2 minutes or until the mixture reduces slightly. Combine the cornflour and 2 tbsp water in a small heatproof bowl. Add to the liqueur mixture and cook, stirring constantly, for 1-2 minutes or until the mixture bubbles and thickens. Transfer to a large jug and set aside to cool completely.

2. Meanwhile, cut 1 packet of the brownies in half. Tear the remaining brownies into 2cm pieces.

3. Use electric beaters fitted with a whisk attachment to whisk the cream and half the espresso martini syrup until soft peaks form. Dip the halved brownies into the cooled coffee, shaking off any excess, then add to the cream mixture. Add half the meringue and fold until just combined.

4. Spoon half the cream mixture into a 3 litre (12 cup) glass serving bowl. Top with half the torn brownies and half the remaining meringue. Drizzle over a little of the remaining syrup. Spoon over the remaining cream mixture, remaining torn brownies, remaining meringue and a little more of the remaining syrup. Dust with cocoa and serve with the remaining espresso martini syrup on the side.

Tips

+ The syrup can be made up to 3 days ahead and stored in the fridge – just bring to room temperature before using.
+ This dessert is best served immediately after assembling, but components can be prepped earlier in the day.
+ For a non-alcoholic version, replace the liqueurs with strong coffee and a splash of vanilla extract.

Dubai-style rocky road

MAKES 20 | **PREP** 20 MINS (+ 1 HOUR 30 MINS CHILLING & 15 MINS STANDING)
COOKING 10 MINS

Ingredients

- 2 x 180g pkt dark chocolate, finely chopped
- 125g pkt Loacker Quadratini Double Choc wafers
- 20g (⅓ cup) white or green mini marshmallows
- 2 x 180g pkt milk chocolate, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp coarsely chopped pistachio kernels

Pistachio filling

- 2 (about 50g) Uncle Tobys Original Shredded Wheat cereal biscuits
- 100g pistachio kernels
- 200g jar smooth pistachio spread

Method

1. Grease a 16 x 26cm (base size) slice pan. Line the base and sides with baking paper, allowing the paper to overhang 2cm above the long sides.

2. Place the dark chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on High, stirring every 30 seconds, for 1-2 minutes or until melted and smooth. Pour into the prepared pan. Use a spatula to spread evenly over the base. Scatter over half the wafers and half the marshmallows. Place in the fridge for 10 minutes or until the chocolate has set.

3. To make the pistachio filling, use your hands to crush the cereal into a frying pan. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, for 2-3 minutes or until golden. Pour into a bowl and set aside to cool slightly. Process the pistachios in a food processor until finely crushed. Add the crushed pistachio and pistachio spread to the cereal and stir until well combined.

4. Spoon the pistachio mixture on top of the dark chocolate layer. Use the back of a spoon to press firmly until smooth. Place in the fridge for 20 minutes to set.

5. Place the milk chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on High, stirring every 30 seconds, for 1-2 minutes or until melted and smooth. Set aside for 5 minutes to cool slightly. Pour the chocolate over the pistachio layer, tilting the pan to evenly cover. Scatter over the chopped pistachio and remaining wafers and marshmallows. Place in the fridge for 30 minutes to set.

6. Transfer the rocky road to a serving board. Set aside for 10-15 minutes, then use a large knife to cut into squares.

Christmas crack caramel bites

MAKES 24 | **PREP** 35 MINS (+ 45 MINS CHILLING & SETTING) | **COOKING** 5 MINS

Ingredients

- 48 Arnott's Jatz crackers
- 200g (⅔ cup) dulce de leche
- 190g milk choc buttons
- 190g dark choc buttons
- 100g white choc buttons
- Red and green sprinkles, to decorate

Method

1. Lay half the crackers on a large tray. Spoon the dulce de leche into a piping bag or sealable plastic bag and snip off 1 corner, 1cm from end. Pipe a 2cm-wide blob onto the centre of each cracker. Top with the remaining crackers, pressing gently to sandwich. Place in the fridge for 30 minutes or until the dulce de leche is firm.

2. Place the milk and dark choc buttons in a heatproof bowl over a saucepan of simmering water (make sure bowl doesn't touch water). Stir occasionally until smooth. Remove from the heat.

3. Meanwhile, place white choc buttons in a separate heatproof bowl over a separate pan of simmering water (make sure bowl doesn't touch water) and stir occasionally until melted and smooth. Remove from heat and spoon into a piping bag or sealable plastic bag and snip off 1 corner, 5mm from end.

4. Use 2 forks to dip the sandwiched crackers, 1 at a time, in the milk choc mixture until covered, allowing any excess chocolate to drip back into the bowl. Return the crackers to the tray. Set aside to set.

5. Drizzle over the white chocolate and scatter over sprinkles before the drizzle sets. Place in the fridge for 15 minutes to set. Serve.

Baileys espresso swirl cheesecake

SERVES 12 | **PREP** 30 MINS (+ CHILLING & COOLING) | **COOKING** 5 MINS E

Ingredients

- 2 x 128g pkt Oreo Chocolate biscuits
- 80g butter, melted
- 3 tsp gelatine powder
- 2 tsp instant espresso coffee granules
- 1 tbsp boiling water
- 500g cream cheese, at room temperature, chopped
- 110g (½ cup) caster sugar
- 125ml (½ cup) thickened cream
- 125ml (½ cup) Baileys The Original Irish Cream liqueur
- 50g dark chocolate, melted, cooled

Method

1. Release the base from a 20cm (base size) round springform pan. Invert the base and line with baking paper, allowing the paper to overhang the edge. Secure the base, paper-side up, back in the pan. Grease the side of the pan and line with baking paper.

2. Place the biscuits in a food processor and process until coarsely crushed. Add the butter. Process until combined. Press the mixture firmly over the base of the prepared pan. Place in the fridge to chill until required.

3. Meanwhile, place 2½ tbsp water in a small microwave-safe bowl. Sprinkle with the gelatine, then set aside for 2-3 minutes to soften. Microwave the mixture on High for 20 seconds or until warm (see tip). Use a fork to whisk until dissolved. Set aside to cool slightly.

4. Dissolve the coffee granules in the boiling water. Set aside to cool.

5. Clean and dry the processor. Add the cream cheese, sugar and cream. Process until smooth. Beat in the cooled gelatine mixture, then spoon 60ml (¼ cupful) of the mixture into a separate bowl and set aside.

6. Add the Baileys to the processor and process until well combined.

7. Add the melted chocolate and coffee mixture to the reserved cream cheese mixture. Stir until well combined.

8. Pour half the Baileys mixture over the biscuit base. Drizzle over half the chocolate mixture. Use the tip of a flat-bladed knife to create a swirl effect. Repeat with the remaining Baileys mixture and chocolate mixture, creating a swirl on the top. Place in the fridge for 4 hours or until set.

Tips

+ It's important not to overheat the gelatine in the microwave as this can affect its setting properties.
+ This can be made up to 2 days ahead. Store in the fridge.

White Christmas mini pavlova trees

MAKES 12 | **PREP** 45 MINS (+ COOLING) | **COOKING** 45 MINS

Ingredients

- 2 egg whites
- 110g (½ cup) caster sugar
- 2 x 150g pkt tart shells (6 in each)
- 80g (¼ cup) raspberry jam
- 2 x 200g jars pistachio spread
- 600ml ctn thickened cream
- Pink gel food colouring, to tint
- 2 tbsp shredded coconut
- 2 tbsp chopped pistachio kernels
- 2 tbsp chopped dried cranberries

Method

1. Preheat oven to 150°C/130°C fan forced. Line a baking tray with baking paper. Use a 5cm round cutter to draw twelve circles on the paper. Turn paper over and place, ink-side down, on tray.

2. Use electric beaters to whisk the egg whites in a bowl until stiff peaks form. Gradually add the sugar, 1 tbsp at a time, beating constantly until dissolved and the mixture is thick and glossy. Spoon the mixture into a large piping bag fitted with a 1cm round nozzle. Pipe rounds of meringue to fill each marked circle on the paper.

3. Reduce the oven to 110°C/90°C fan forced. Bake meringues for 45 minutes or until crisp and dry. Turn off oven. Leave the meringues in the oven, with door closed, until cooled completely.

4. Meanwhile, place the tart shells on a baking tray. Spoon 1 teaspoon jam into the base of each shell. Place the pistachio spread into a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on High for 1 minute or until runny. Divide the pistachio spread among the tart shells. Place in the fridge for 30 minutes to chill.

5. Use electric beaters to whisk the cream in a bowl until firm peaks form. Use a small paintbrush to paint 4-5 long stripes of colouring in total down the sides of a piping bag fitted with a 1.5cm star nozzle. Spoon the cream into the piping bag.

6. Place a meringue on top of each tart. Pipe cream around the meringue to cover and form a peak. Sprinkle with the coconut, pistachio and cranberry.

Espresso martini panna cottas

MAKES 6 | **PREP** 40 MINS (+ CHILLING) | **COOKING** 5 MINS

Ingredients

200ml milk
200ml thickened cream
1 tbsp vanilla
2 tsp gelatine powder
55g (¼ cup) caster sugar
Coffee beans, to decorate

Coffee jelly

310ml (1¼ cups) freshly brewed espresso coffee
2 tsp gelatine powder
55g (¼ cup) caster sugar
80ml (⅓ cup) Kahlúa
1 tbsp vodka

Method

1. Lightly grease six 140ml jelly moulds with cooking oil spray. Wipe with paper towel to ensure they are well coated and there are no puddles of spray. Place moulds on a small baking tray.

2. Place the milk, cream and vanilla in a small saucepan. Sprinkle with the gelatine and stir to combine. Set aside for 2 minutes to soften. Place the pan over medium-low heat. Cook, stirring constantly, for 1-2 minutes or until the gelatine dissolves and the mixture is warm. Add the sugar. Stir until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat. Spoon 1 tablespoonful of the mixture into each prepared mould. Place in the fridge for 20 minutes or until just set but not firm.

3. Meanwhile, make the coffee jelly. Place the coffee in a separate small saucepan. Sprinkle with the gelatine and stir to combine. Set aside for 2 minutes to soften. Place the pan over medium-low heat. Cook, stirring constantly, for 1-2 minutes or until the gelatine dissolves and the mixture is warm. Add the sugar and stir until the sugar dissolves. Remove from heat. Stir in the Kahlúa and vodka. Set aside for 10 minutes to cool slightly.

4. Spoon 1 tablespoonful of coffee jelly mixture into each prepared mould. Return to the fridge for 20 minutes or until just set but not firm.

5. Repeat layering, alternating the remaining milk and coffee jelly mixtures, and returning to the fridge for 10-15 minutes after each layer or until just set. Once the final layer has been poured into the moulds, place in the fridge for 4 hours or overnight to set.

6. To serve, gently loosen each panna cotta from its mould by pulling it away from the edges. Carefully turn onto a serving plate. Top with coffee beans to decorate.

Rocky road Christmas pud cheesecake bombe

SERVES 10 | **PREP** 40 MINS (+ 6 HOURS 45 MINS CHILLING) | **COOKING** 10 MINS

Ingredients

105g (3 cups) Kellogg's Rice Bubbles
2 tbsp desiccated coconut
120g (2 cups) pink and white mini marshmallows
50g unsalted butter
2 tbsp cocoa powder
500g cream cheese, at room temperature, chopped
110g (½ cup) caster sugar
50g coconut milk powder
300ml ctn thickened cream
125g fresh raspberries
150g Nestlé White Choc Melts, melted
Allen's Jaffas lollies and spearmint leaves lollies, to decorate

Rocky road

4 scotch finger biscuits, coarsely chopped
50g mini marshmallows
45g (¼ cup) blanched hazelnuts, toasted
45g (¼ cup) glacé cherries, chopped
3 pieces Turkish delight, chopped
250g milk chocolate, melted
1 tbsp coconut oil, melted

Method

1. Grease and line a 22cm round 2.5L (10 cup) dome pan (see tip) with plastic wrap, allowing the wrap to overhang the side.

2. Place the Rice Bubbles and desiccated coconut in a heatproof bowl. Place the marshmallows, butter and cocoa in a saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 8-10 minutes or until melted and smooth. Add to the Rice Bubbles mixture and mix well. Working quickly, spoon the mixture into the prepared pan. Use damp hands to press the mixture evenly over base and up the side of the pan. Stand the pan in a small bowl (if using a rounded dome pan) and place in the fridge for 15 minutes to chill.

3. Use electric beaters to beat the cream cheese, sugar and coconut milk powder in a bowl until well combined and smooth. Add the cream and beat until thick and well combined. Gently fold through the raspberries. Spoon the cheesecake mixture into the pan and smooth the surface. Return to the fridge for 30 minutes to chill.

4. To make the rocky road, place the biscuits, marshmallows, hazelnuts, cherries and Turkish delight in a bowl. Combine the milk chocolate and coconut oil in a separate bowl, then add to the biscuit mixture and stir until well combined.

5. Spoon the rocky road over the cheesecake layer and use the back of the spoon to level. Cover with the overhanging plastic wrap and return to the fridge for 6 hours or overnight to set.

6. Turn the pudding onto a serving plate. Drizzle the melted white chocolate over the top, allowing it to drip down the side slightly. Decorate with Jaffas and spearmint leaves.

Tip

+ If you don't have a dome pan, use a pudding mould, or glass or ceramic bowl instead.

Easy pineapple crunch cake

SERVES 8 | **PREP** 20 MINS (+ 1 HOUR CHILLING) E

Ingredients

- 450g pkt double unfilled slab sponge cakes
- 450g can pineapple slices in syrup
- 500g cream cheese, at room temperature, chopped
- 85g pkt pineapple jelly crystals
- 300ml ctn thickened cream, whipped
- 6 butternut snap biscuits, finely crushed

Method

1. Remove the sponge cakes from the plastic container. Line the container with baking paper, allowing the paper to overhang the 2 long sides. Use a large serrated knife to cut each sponge cake in half horizontally into 2 even layers (you will only need 3 layers for this recipe; freeze the remaining layer for another use).

2. Drain the pineapple, reserving the syrup from the can. Chop 4 of the pineapple slices, reserving the remaining slices in the fridge, covered, until needed.

3. Use electric beaters to beat the cream cheese in a bowl for 5 minutes or until creamy and smooth. Add the jelly crystals and 60ml (¼ cup) reserved pineapple syrup. Beat for 2 minutes or until combined and dissolved. Fold through the chopped pineapple.

4. Lay 1 sponge layer in the prepared container (see tip). Drizzle over one-third of the remaining syrup. Spread over half the cream cheese mixture. Top with another sponge layer and half the remaining syrup, then spread over the remaining cream cheese mixture. Top with the final sponge layer, gently pressing down to secure. Drizzle over the remaining syrup. Cover with plastic wrap and place in the fridge for at least 1 hour to chill and set.

5. Run a knife along the sides of the cake to loosen as needed. Either use the paper to lift out or invert the cake onto a serving plate. Use a flat-bladed knife to smooth the edges of the cream cheese mixture, if necessary.

6. Spoon the whipped cream into a piping bag fitted with a 1.5cm fluted nozzle. Pipe rosettes on the top of the cake to cover. Cut the reserved pineapple slices in half, then slice into smaller pieces. Decorate the cake with the pineapple pieces and sprinkle with the crushed biscuit to serve.

Tips

+ Very conveniently, the container the sponge comes in is used as the pan to assemble. When you put the first sponge layer back into the container, you'll notice it doesn't fit snugly, especially at the short ends. Put the sponge tight up against a short end and leave a gap at the other end. As you assemble the cake, keep it to the snug end (the filling is quite thick, so it won't run). This ensures that the filling stays neat between the layers of sponge and won't ooze into the gaps.
+ Make this to the end of step 4 up to a day ahead, then decorate up to 1 hour before serving. Store in the fridge.

Cinnamon roll cheesecake

SERVES 10 | **PREP** 40 MINS (+ OVERNIGHT CHILLING & 2 HOURS COOLING)
COOKING 1 HOUR 20 MINS

Ingredients

250g pkt Lotus Biscoff biscuits
80g butter, melted
750g cream cheese, at room temperature, chopped
125g (½ cup) sour cream, plus extra 85g (⅓ cup)
165g (¾ cup) caster sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
1½ tsp ground cinnamon, plus extra, to dust
3 eggs
125ml (½ cup) thickened cream

Cinnamon crumb
45g (¼ cup lightly packed) brown sugar
1½ tbsp plain flour
1 tbsp ground cinnamon
20g butter, melted

Method

1. Grease a 20cm (base size) round springform pan and line the base and side with baking paper.

2. Place the biscuits in a food processor and process until finely crushed. Add the butter. Process until well combined. Spoon the mixture into the prepared pan. Use a flat-bottomed glass or the back of a spoon to press the mixture evenly over the base and two-thirds up the side of the pan. Place in the fridge for 30 minutes to chill.

3. Meanwhile, make the cinnamon crumb. Combine all the ingredients in a bowl until well combined and the mixture resembles wet sand.

4. Preheat oven to 150°C/130°C fan forced.

5. Place the cream cheese, sour cream, caster sugar, vanilla and cinnamon in a clean food processor and process until smooth. Add the eggs and process until combined. Pour half the cheesecake mixture over the biscuit base. Sprinkle over half the cinnamon crumb mixture. Repeat layering with half the remaining cheesecake mixture, remaining cinnamon crumb mixture and finishing with the remaining cheesecake mixture to cover. Smooth the surface.

6. Place the cheesecake on a baking tray. Bake for 1 hour 10 minutes-1 hour 20 minutes or until just set. Turn off oven. Leave the cheesecake in the oven, with the door slightly ajar, for 2 hours or until cooled completely. Place in the fridge overnight to chill.

7. Use electric beaters to beat the cream and extra sour cream in a bowl until just-firm peaks form. Spoon into a piping bag fitted with a plain nozzle. Place the cheesecake on a serving plate. Starting from the centre and working your way outwards, pipe a continuous ring of cream mixture on the top of the cheesecake to cover. Starting from the centre and working your way outwards, use the back of a teaspoon to create a swirl pattern. Dust with extra cinnamon to serve.

Tip

+ To help make it easier to create the cream swirl on top of the cheesecake, use a cake turntable.

Aperol tiramisu

SERVES 10 | **PREP** 25 MINS (+ 4 HOURS CHILLING) E

Ingredients

- 500g mascarpone
- 500ml (2 cups) thickened cream
- 150g (1 cup) icing sugar
- 1 orange, rind finely grated, plus extra, sliced, to decorate
- 185ml (¾ cup) Aperol, plus extra 1½ tbsp
- 125ml (½ cup) fresh orange juice
- 30 thin savoiardi (sponge finger biscuits)
- 170g (½ cup) Cottee's Breakfast Marmalade
- Fresh mint leaves, to decorate (optional)

Method

1. Use electric beaters to beat the mascarpone, cream, icing sugar and orange rind in a bowl until thick and well combined.

2. Combine the Aperol and orange juice in a shallow bowl. Dip half the biscuits, 1 at a time, into the Aperol mixture, turning to coat. Arrange in a single layer over the base of a 6cm-deep, 18 x 28cm (base size) baking dish, trimming to fit as necessary. Spread half the mascarpone mixture over the biscuit layer to cover. Repeat layering with the remaining biscuits, Aperol mixture and finishing with the remaining mascarpone mixture. Cover and place in the fridge for 4 hours or overnight to chill.

3. Place the marmalade in a small microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on High for 30 seconds or until warm. Stir to remove any lumps. Stir through the extra Aperol.

4. Drizzle the marmalade mixture over the top of the tiramisu. Top with extra orange slices and mint, if using.

Tip

+ Make this up to 2 days ahead. Cover the dish loosely and keep in the fridge. Just before serving, decorate with the orange slices and mint.

Ambrosia Eton mess

SERVES 8 | **PREP** 10 MINS GE

Ingredients

- 250ml (1 cup) thickened cream
- 300g ctn sour cream
- 2 tbsp icing sugar mixture
- 2 x 100g pkt pink and white mini marshmallows
- 500g fresh strawberries, hulled, coarsely chopped
- 450g can pineapple pieces in juice, drained
- 65g (1 cup) shredded coconut
- 310g can mandarin segments in syrup, drained
- 80g pkt pavlova nests, coarsely crushed
- Maraschino cherries, to serve (optional)

Method

1. Use electric beaters to beat the thickened cream, sour cream and icing sugar in a large bowl until soft peaks form.

2. Add the marshmallows, strawberry, pineapple and coconut. Mix until well combined. Gently fold through the mandarin.

3. Spoon half the fruit mixture into eight 330ml serving glasses. Top with half the pavlova. Repeat layering with the remaining fruit mixture and pavlova. Top each with a cherry to serve, if using.

Festive crack house

SERVES 20 | **PREP** 2 HOURS (+ COOLING & CHILLING) | **COOKING** 30 MINS

Ingredients

- 18 Arnott's Salada Original crispbread
- 480g (3 cups, lightly packed) brown sugar
- 375g salted butter, chopped
- 3 x 180g blocks milk chocolate
- 200g white chocolate, chopped
- Gold star and red sprinkles, to decorate
- 2 x 225g pkt Nestlé White Choc Melts, melted
- 8 vanilla wafers
- 42g pkt Milkybar Kit Kat, 1 wafer finger removed
- 1 red M&Ms Minis
- 2 mini pretzels
- 11 Allen's Ripe Raspberries lollies
- 40g pkt Life Savers Raspberry Sherbert Fizz Stix
- Cadbury Flake mini bars, caramel popcorn and desiccated coconut, to decorate

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan forced. Line three 20 x 30cm slice pans with baking paper, allowing the paper to overhang long sides.

2. Arrange 6 Saladas in a single layer over the base of 1 prepared pan, trimming to fit. Repeat with the remaining Saladas and pans.

3. Place 160g (1 cup, lightly packed) sugar and 125g butter in a small saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring, until melted and smooth. Bring to the boil. Cook, stirring, for 30 seconds or until thickened.

4. Pour the mixture evenly over the Salada layer in 1 pan. Smooth the surface. Bake for 5 minutes or until bubbling. Set aside to cool slightly. Repeat with the remaining sugar, butter and slice pans.

5. Break up 1 milk chocolate block. Place in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on High, stirring every 30 seconds, until melted and smooth. Pour over the base in 1 slice pan. Use a palette knife to smooth the surface. Lightly tap the pan on the bench to level surface.

6. Break up another milk chocolate block. Place in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on High, stirring every 30 seconds, until melted and smooth. Place the white chocolate in a separate microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on High, stirring every 30 seconds, until melted and smooth. Pour the milk chocolate over the base in a remaining slice pan. Use the knife to smooth the surface. Dollop over half the white chocolate. Use a skewer to create a marble effect. Lightly tap the pan on the bench to level the surface.

7. Break up the remaining milk chocolate. Place in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on High, stirring every 30 seconds, until melted and smooth. Pour over the base in remaining slice pan. Use the knife to smooth the surface. Dollop over remaining white chocolate and use a skewer to create a marble effect. Lightly tap pan on the bench to level the surface. Scatter over sprinkles. Place the pans in the fridge for 45 minutes-1 hour or until just set.

8. Line 2 large baking trays with baking paper.

9. Remove the slices from the pans. Place 'Front and Back' template (scan QR code below) on 1 side of marbled slice, with a long side facing you. Use a large sharp chef's knife to cut around the template to form the house front. Place on a prepared tray. Repeat with remaining side of marbled slice to form house back, reserving the offcuts. Place on a tray.

10. Repeat step 9 with the milk chocolate slice and 'Wall' template to cut 2 wall pieces. Cut 4 even squares from the remaining milk chocolate slice to form the windows, reserving the offcuts.

11. Repeat step 9 with the star sprinkle slice and 'Roof' template to cut 2 roof pieces, reserving the offcuts. Place trays in the fridge for 1 hour to chill.

12. Spoon white choc melts into a piping bag. Decorate windows. Set aside for 10 minutes to set.

13. To assemble, pipe the chocolate along the base and side edges of 1 wall. Stand upright on a serving board, using a small glass for support. Pipe chocolate along base and sides of the house front. Stand upright on the board and attach to wall, using another glass for support. Repeat with the remaining wall and house back to form the house. Set aside for 10 minutes or until set, then remove the glasses.

14. Pipe chocolate along the top edges of the walls. Place 1 roof piece on the house so the bottom long edge slightly overhangs. Use a glass to support under the eave and hold for 30 seconds or until secured. Pipe chocolate along the top edge of the roof piece. Attach remaining roof piece, using another glass to support. Set aside for 10 minutes to completely set.

15. Use the picture as a guide to attach the wafers, trimming to fit, Kit Kat, M&M's Mini, pretzels, raspberries, windows and Stix.

16. Cut reserved slice offcuts into 3cm pieces, then arrange for a path. Arrange Flake bars in a stack to resemble logs. Decorate with popcorn. Top with coconut. Store in the fridge until ready to serve.

Tips

+ To make popcorn trees, use a little melted white chocolate to make a disc on baking paper. Cover with caramel popcorn, then more chocolate. Continue layering with more popcorn and chocolate to make a tree shape. Scatter over red and green sprinkles. Display the trees on top of pieces of chocolate for the tree trunks (we used Cadbury Pascall Caramels).
+ To make the wreath, use a little melted white chocolate to attach holly sprinkles to a halved chocolate cream biscuit. Set aside to set. Attach to front of the house.

Template & tips

SCAN TO PRINT THE TEMPLATE & FOR MORE TIPS

Rocky road ice-cream trifle

SERVES 20 | **PREP** 1 HOUR (+ 2 HOURS CHILLING, 40 MINS STANDING & 5 HOURS 30 MINS FREEZING) E

Ingredients

- 2 x 85g pkt raspberry jelly crystals
- 2L vanilla ice-cream
- 2L chocolate ice-cream
- 128g pkt Oreo Chocolate biscuits, roughly crushed
- 60g (1 cup) pink and white mini marshmallows, plus extra, to decorate
- 2 x 500ml ctn blueberry sorbet
- Red liquid food colouring, to tint
- 35g (⅓ cup) desiccated coconut
- 300ml ctn thickened cream
- Pink and white marshmallows, fresh raspberries, melted dark chocolate and finely chopped pistachio kernels, to decorate

Method

1. Place 1 packet of jelly crystals in a small heatproof container. Add 250ml (1 cup) boiling water. Stir until dissolved. Place in the fridge for 2 hours or until set.

2. Meanwhile, place half the vanilla ice-cream in a bowl. Set aside for 10 minutes to soften (see tip). Add the remaining jelly crystals to the bowl. Mix well to combine. Spoon mixture over the base of a 4L glass serving bowl, spreading to level. Place in the freezer for 1 hour to freeze.

3. Place half the chocolate ice-cream in a bowl. Set aside for 10 minutes to soften. Spoon the chocolate ice-cream over the vanilla ice-cream layer, spreading to level. Top with the biscuit and mini marshmallows. Return to the freezer for 30 minutes.

4. Place sorbet in a bowl. Set aside for 10 minutes to soften. Add a few drops of colouring to tint red. Mix until well combined. Spoon on top of the biscuit layer, spreading to level. Return to freezer for 30 minutes.

5. Place the remaining vanilla ice-cream in a bowl. Set aside for 10 minutes to soften. Mix in the coconut until combined. Spoon over the sorbet layer, spreading to level. Return to the freezer for 30 minutes.

6. Place the remaining chocolate ice-cream in a bowl. Set aside for 10 minutes to soften. Spoon the mixture over the top of the coconut layer, spreading to level. Place in the freezer for 4 hours or overnight to set.

7. Use a small sharp knife to cut the jelly into 1cm cubes. Use electric beaters to beat the cream in a bowl until just-firm peaks form, then spoon into a piping bag fitted with a 1.5cm plain nozzle. Pipe cream over the top of the trifle to cover. Decorate with marshmallows, extra mini marshmallows, jelly cubes and raspberries. Drizzle over dark chocolate and sprinkle with pistachio. Serve immediately.

Tips

+ When softening each of the ice-creams and the sorbet, it's important not to let it melt. When melted ice-cream is refrozen, larger ice crystals form, changing the texture from smooth to coarse and icy.
+ Want to speed things up? If you have a stand mixer, add the frozen ice-cream to the bowl and beat with the paddle attachment on low speed until combined and smooth.

Berry spritzmas p91

Drinks

Cheers to these Chrissie cocktails designed to get the party started or finish off the feast with liquid dessert.

Gingerbread martini

MAKES 4 | **PREP** 20 MINS (+ 1 HOUR CHILLING & SETTING) | **COOKING** 5 MINS E

Ingredients

3 white chocolate melts, melted
12 small gingerbread men biscuits
12 chocolate wafer rolls
400ml Baileys Irish Cream liqueur
80ml (⅓ cup) vodka
Ice cubes, to serve
125ml (½ cup) thickened cream, whipped to soft peaks

Spiced syrup
70g (⅓ cup) caster sugar
2 tbsp golden syrup
2cm-piece fresh ginger, peeled, sliced
1 cinnamon stick
2 whole cloves

Method

1. To make the spiced syrup, combine the sugar, golden syrup and 80ml (⅓ cup) water in a small saucepan. Stir over low heat until the sugar dissolves. Add the ginger, cinnamon and cloves. Simmer for 5 minutes, then pour the syrup into a heatproof jug or bowl. Place in the fridge for 1 hour or until chilled. Strain and discard the spices.

2. Meanwhile, use the melted white chocolate to stick 8 gingerbread men onto 8 wafer rolls. Set aside until set.

3. Crumble the remaining gingerbread men onto a plate. Dip the rims of 4 serving glasses in the syrup, allowing excess to drip off. Dip in the crushed gingerbread. Set aside until set.

4. Combine the Baileys, vodka and 80ml (⅓ cupful) remaining syrup in a large jug. Add ice. Stir until combined and chilled. Strain into prepared glasses. Gently spoon cream on top. Drizzle over a little of the remaining syrup. Sprinkle with remaining crumbled gingerbread. Top with decorated and undecorated wafer rolls.

Tip

+ The spiced syrup can be made up to 1 week ahead and stored in a jar in the fridge.

Watermelon slushie

MAKES 4 | **PREP** 10 MINS (+ 1 HOUR CHILLING & OVERNIGHT FREEZING)
COOKING 5 MINS E

Ingredients

- 70g (⅓ cup) caster sugar
- 1kg piece watermelon, plus extra slices, cut into stars, to serve (see tip)
- 160ml (⅔ cup) vodka
- 2 tbsp fresh lime juice
- Lime wedges and fresh mint leaves, to serve

Method

1. Combine the sugar and 80ml (⅓ cup) water in a small saucepan. Stir over low heat until the sugar dissolves. Bring to a simmer, then pour into a heatproof jug. Place in the fridge for 1 hour to chill.

2. Cut the rind from the watermelon and chop the flesh. Place the flesh in a food processor and process until smooth. Pour through a sieve into a large jug. Combine the watermelon juice and sugar syrup in a shallow freezerproof 20-22cm square glass or plastic dish. Place in the freezer for 3-4 hours or until almost frozen but still a little soft. Break up with a fork and stir well. Freeze overnight.

3. Thread extra watermelon stars onto 4 bamboo skewers. Use a fork to break up the frozen watermelon mixture and transfer to the food processor. Pour in the vodka and lime juice. Process until just smooth. Divide among serving glasses. Decorate with lime wedges, mint, watermelon star skewers, plus other cocktail decorations, if you like.

Tip

+ To make the watermelon stars, use a star-shaped pastry cutter to cut shapes from 1.5cm-thick watermelon slices.

Mermaid martini

MAKES 4 | **PREP** 5 MINS

Ingredients

- Fresh blueberries, to serve
- Mermaid cupcake decorations and pink and blue edible cake glitter, to decorate (see tip)
- 2 tbsp blue curaçao liqueur
- 12 small ice cubes
- 400ml prosecco
- 160ml (⅔ cup) pink gin

Method

1. Thread blueberries onto the skewers of the mermaid decorations. Brush with a little water to dampen, then dab with pink glitter.

2. Divide the curaçao among 4 serving glasses. Use the point of a small knife to scoop up some blue edible glitter. Add to each glass and stir to combine.

3. Divide the ice cubes among glasses. Slowly pour in the prosecco. Combine the gin and some pink glitter in a jug, then pour slowly into the glasses. Top with the mermaid skewers and halved blueberries to serve.

Tips

+ Find mermaid cupcake decorations at the supermarket or cake decorating shops. Take out the sticks and replace with short skewers for extra length.
+ Find edible glitter at cake decorating shops or online.

Classic margarita

MAKES 4 | **PREP** 5 MINS

Ingredients

Sea salt flakes, to garnish (see tip)
1 lime wedge, plus extra, sliced, to serve
Ice cubes, to serve
180ml tequila
120ml triple sec liqueur
180ml fresh lime juice

Method

1. Spread salt over a small plate. Rub the rim of 4 serving glasses with the lime wedge. Dip rims in the salt.

2. Fill a cocktail shaker with ice. Add the tequila, triple sec and lime juice, in batches if necessary. Shake well. Fill the prepared glass with fresh ice. Strain the cocktail into the glasses and top with extra lime slices.

Tip

+ If you like things on the sweeter side, add a little sugar (to taste) to the salt when decorating the glass.

Frosé cocktail

MAKES 8 | **PREP** 10 MINS (+ COOLING & OVERNIGHT FREEZING) | **COOKING** 10 MINS E

Ingredients

220g (1 cup) caster sugar
250g fresh strawberries, hulled, chopped, plus extra, halved, to decorate
750ml btl rosé wine
80ml (⅓ cup) strawberry liqueur
250ml (1 cup) chilled soda water

Method

1. Place the sugar and 250ml (1 cup) water in a saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until the sugar dissolves. Increase the heat to high and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat to low and simmer, without stirring, for 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool completely.

2. Place the strawberry in a blender and blend until smooth, adding 1 tbsp water if needed. Strain the mixture into a large jug. Stir in the sugar syrup and wine. Pour the mixture into a 2L (8 cup) freezerproof container and place in the freezer overnight.

3. Use a fork to break up the mixture into large ice crystals.

4. Combine the liqueur and soda water in a jug. Divide the mixture among serving glasses. Top with the frosé and extra strawberry halves.

Tip

+ Make this to the end of step 3 up to 1 month ahead and store in the freezer. Just before serving, break up again with a fork, then continue with step 4.

Mango pine-lime cooler

MAKES 4 | **PREP** 10 MINS GF

Ingredients

250g frozen mango pieces
250g frozen pineapple pieces
500ml (2 cups) coconut water
80ml (⅓ cup) lime juice cordial
2 cups ice cubes (see tip)
125ml (½ cup) coconut cream
Shaved coconut or coconut flakes and lime slices, to decorate
Pineapple top, quartered, to serve (optional)

Method

1. Place the mango, pineapple, coconut water and lime cordial in a blender and blend until smooth. Divide the ice cubes among 4 large serving glasses and top with the mango mixture.

2. Spoon the coconut cream on top of the mango mixture. Decorate with shaved coconut, lime slices and pineapple tops, if using.

Tip

+ If time permits, make ice cubes with coconut water. Use them instead of regular ice cubes.

Berries & Baileys

MAKES 8 | **PREP** 15 MINS (+ 30 MINS CHILLING) | **COOKING** 5 MINS E

Ingredients

- 125g fresh raspberries, plus extra, to serve
- 110g (½ cup) caster sugar
- 350g fresh strawberries, hulled
- 4 cups ice cubes
- 250ml (1 cup) Baileys Irish Cream liqueur
- 125ml (½ cup) strawberry liqueur
- 40 pink mini marshmallows
- 8 mini meringues
- Mint leaves, to decorate

Method

1. Place the raspberries, sugar and 125ml (½ cup) water in a small saucepan. Bring to the boil and cook for 5 minutes or until reduced and thickened. Remove from the heat. Use a blender or food processor to blend until smooth. Place in the fridge for 30 minutes to chill.

2. Meanwhile, place eight 185ml (¾ cup) tall serving glasses in the freezer to chill.

3. Drizzle about 60ml (¼ cup) raspberry puree down the inside of the chilled glasses, swirling to coat. Return to the freezer.

4. Finely chop 4 strawberries and halve the remainder. Place the halved strawberries, ice, Baileys, liqueur and remaining raspberry puree in the clean blender. Blend until combined and a slushy consistency.

5. Pour the cocktail into the chilled glasses. Top with the marshmallows, meringues, chopped strawberries and mint. Thread the extra raspberries onto cocktail skewers to use as swizzle sticks.

Tip

+ The raspberry puree can be made up to 3 days ahead and stored in the fridge.

Midori splice

MAKES 4 | **PREP** 5 MINS

Ingredients

120ml Midori
120ml Malibu
360ml pineapple juice, chilled
Ice cubes, to chill
120ml thickened cream
4 Streets Splice Pine Lime ice-cream
Pineapple wedges and leaves, to decorate

Method

1. Combine the Midori, Malibu and pineapple juice in a cocktail shaker, in batches if necessary. Add ice and shake until combined and chilled. Strain into 4 wide serving glasses.

2. Spoon over the cream (it will sink at first, but then rise to the surface). Top with the ice-creams and a pineapple wedge and leaf.

White Christmas martini

MAKES 6 | **PREP** 20 MINS (+ COOLING & SETTING) | **COOKING** 5 MINS E

Ingredients

- 125ml (½ cup) milk
- 125ml (½ cup) pouring cream
- 150g white chocolate, chopped
- 1½ tbsp desiccated coconut
- Halved marshmallows, maraschino cherries with stems and Ferrero Raffaello chocolates, to decorate
- 160ml (⅔ cup) vanilla vodka
- 80ml (⅓ cup) white crème de cacao liqueur (see tip)
- Ice cubes, to chill

Method

1. Combine the milk, cream and 100g white chocolate in a small saucepan over low heat until melted and smooth. Transfer to a heatproof jug to cool.

2. Meanwhile, spread the coconut over a small plate. Melt the remaining 50g white chocolate and spread over another small plate. Dip the rims of 4 serving glasses in the chocolate, allowing any excess to drip off. Dip in the coconut. Set aside until set.

3. Thread marshmallows, cherries and Raffaellos onto 4 bamboo skewers.

4. Combine the milk mixture, vodka and crème de cacao in a jug. Add ice cubes. Stir until combined and chilled. Strain into prepared glasses. Decorate with the skewers to serve.

Tip

+ Crème de cacao is a chocolate bean liqueur with a hint of vanilla. For a quick Christmas digestive, add a splash to coffee.

Berry spritzmas

MAKES 6 | **PREP** 5 MINS (+ 6 HOURS FREEZING) E

Ingredients

24 fresh raspberries
30 fresh blueberries
300ml cranberry juice
12 small fresh thyme sprigs
185ml (¾ cup) gin
500ml (2 cups) sparkling rosé

Method

1. Divide the berries among the holes of a 6-hole jumbo (4.5 x 4.5cm) silicone ice cube tray. Fill with the cranberry juice and top with the thyme. Place in the freezer for 6 hours or until firm.

2. Divide the ice cubes among serving glasses. Pour over the gin, then top up with the sparkling rosé.

Tips

+ Instead of weakening the cocktail, these ice cubes actually enhance it as they melt. Make them a couple of days ahead, so you're basically done before your guests arrive.
+ Don't overfill the ice cube tray – leave a little space for expansion. When adding the thyme, press it gently into the cranberry juice, but don't fully submerge it.

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FRONT & BACK COVER RECIPES
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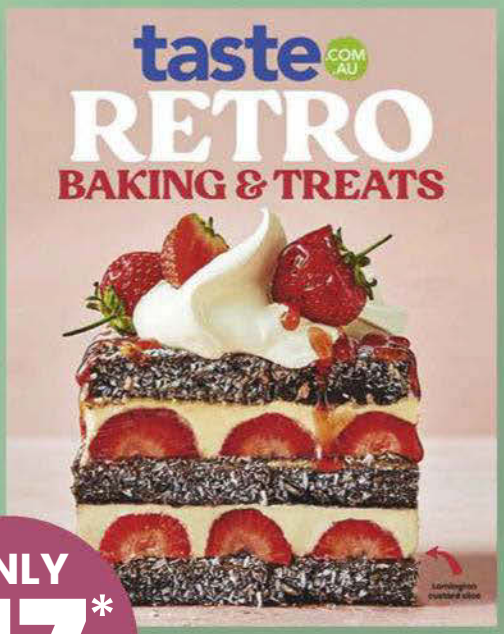

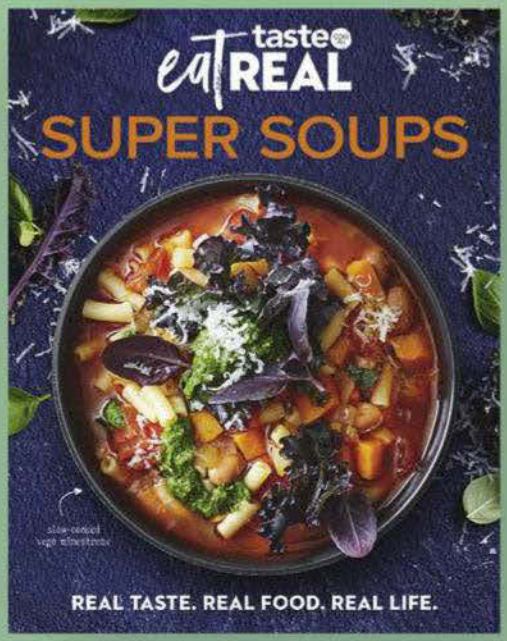

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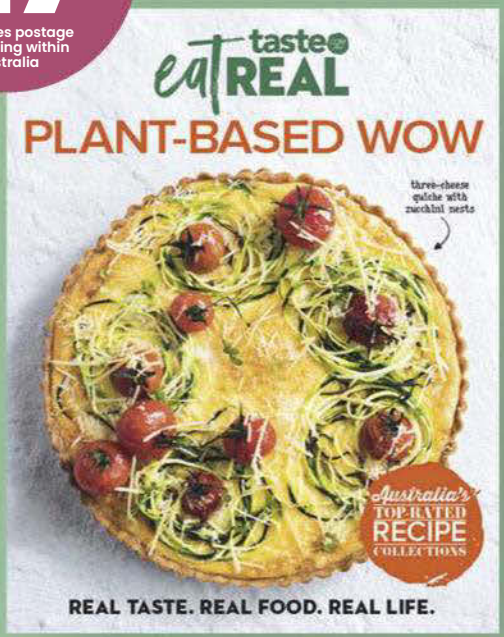

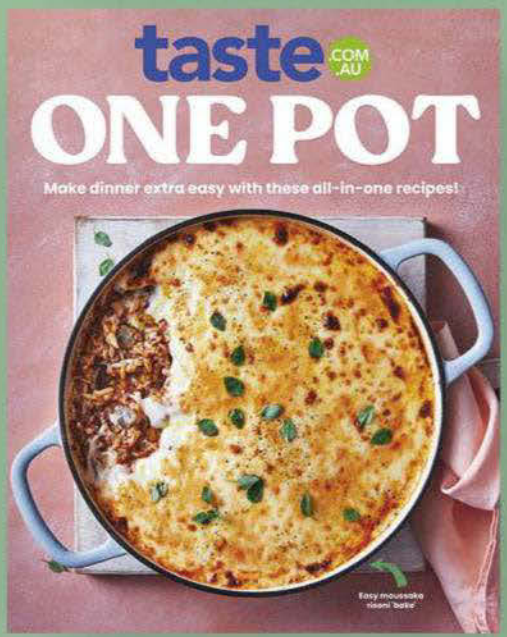

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