

Red Apron



MAGAZINE

from Art of Living for people who enjoy cooking

Issue 5 Christmas 2006

The art of Christmas

Cooking essentials
and great gift ideas



The Latest Products ■ Offers ■ Services



A big welcome to this Christmas issue of the magazine. We are so pleased to have (nearly) finished the Cobham refurbishment. Ben and his team have worked their socks off to enable it to happen with minimal disruption to you and we are all very pleased with the results.

It is no secret that we've been looking for bigger premises in Reigate. We are also looking for a warehouse type place from which to run our website, so if you know of anywhere, do let us know. There was a memorable day recently when no one could get into the shop for all the boxes of Riedel glasses delivered that day for web orders. Appropriately Andrew and I were in Manchester at the time meeting Georges Riedel himself, at his annual English wine tasting. It confirmed for me (not a big wine drinker, unlike Andrew) that Riedel glasses, which come packed in pairs this Christmas, really do make a difference to the way wine tastes. I used to dislike Sauvignon Blanc because I found it too acidic. However, having tried it from a Riedel Sauvignon Blanc glass, I am now a fan. Hence the front cover photo!

There are now about 3,000 of you Red Apron members out there and we're constantly thinking up new ways to improve our service. We want to reinforce the message that Art of Living is the first place to come for quality, service AND value for money.

We also try to offer customers more than just products. This newsletter is part of that, as is the Kitchen Angel service you'll see on the opposite page. We are working on finding venues to hold demonstrations, as numbers are growing too large for our shops now. We'll keep you informed. In the meantime, we wish you and your family a happy and peaceful Christmas.

Babette and Andrew Bluett-Duncan



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Sharp practice

Kitchen knives are going to be put through their paces this Christmas. If yours aren't up to the job, better drop a line to Santa

If you've read Andrew's recent emails, you'll know why your knives might go blunt and the best ways to sharpen them. But no matter how good your chopping board or knife sharpener, you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear and if you've got poor quality knives, no matter how much you sharpen them, they will still be poor quality.

With Christmas coming and all that cooking to get through, now might be the time to treat yourself to a really good set of knives. Or, if you're looking for gift ideas for someone in your life that really loves to cook, a

set of really good knives is one that will last for years.

One of the leading brands we sell is Global, which makes top quality chef's knives. You'll probably have seen their distinctive design being used on television.

Deep blades

They're light to hold, well weighted, superb quality and really well designed. They look beautiful but it's not just about looks - they're a dream to use as well. Many knives have blades that are too narrow so you constantly knock your knuckles as you're chopping.

Gift idea: Homemade pâté pot

This is an easy present to make, with that all-important personal touch. Fill two of our Le Parfait jars (the smallest size) with this chicken liver pâté and the jars become part of the gift. Other ideas are biscuits or flavoured oils in bottles. Think about using the Nigella tins (see p8), or even give a cake with a cake stand.

Ingredients

450g chicken livers
50g butter (plus extra to cover pot)
1 medium onion, chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed

75ml double cream
15ml tomato puree
15ml brandy
Salt & pepper

Method

1. Clean and dry chicken livers
2. Heat butter, cook garlic and onions until soft, 5 minutes. Add livers and cook for a further 5 minutes
3. Cool and add cream, puree and brandy. Season well.
4. Puree the mixture, put into jar. Cover with a melted butter seal to prevent pâté drying out
5. Refrigerate. The pâté will last at least 4-5 days if seal is not broken.



Global knife block: currently on offer with five knives for just £199

Global knives have good deep blades so this doesn't happen. Their balance and shape makes them very comfortable to use.

However, do come and try them for yourself because, like any other knife, they are only as good as they feel in your hand. If you're a web customer, you can order one and if you're not comfortable with it, send it back for a full refund.

There's a wide range of shapes and sizes. Global has just launched its new block, which is far more practical than its predecessor, together with a set of five knives for a special offer price of £199, a

saving of £245! With the block you'll get a 20cm cook's knife, a 22cm bread knife, a 13cm small cook's knife, an 8cm peeling knife and an 11cm utility knife.

Add to it

The knife block has space for several more knives and a steel, so you (or the lucky person you're buying it for) can keep adding to your collection.

Imagine how easy all that chopping and peeling could be this Christmas if you made an early present to yourself... or treat a loved one to a special gift that will last and last.

Special Offers

These offers are exclusive to Red Apron members.

Carving board

We're offering these specially designed wooden carving boards with **£5 OFF**.



Normal price: £19.99

Typhoon

Spend £30 in a single transaction on Typhoon products and we will give you a **£5 GIFT VOUCHER**.



Spend £100 in a single transaction on anything and we will give you a £10 gift voucher.



Small print: This offer cannot be used in conjunction with the Typhoon offer

Red Apron Event

Demeyere pan demonstration

Demeyere pans are amongst the best on the market, and Mr Demeyere himself is coming to us early next year to give a demonstration and share his vast knowledge of the subject. We'll announce the date in the shops and by email, so if you haven't given us your email address yet, please send it to info@artoflivingcookshop.co.uk.

Kitchen Angel

A specialist service to make your kitchen a heavenly place to cook

We believe that cooking should always be a pleasure. But sometimes the simplest thing can spoil it: a sticking pan, a missing spoon, cupboards full of clutter. That's where Kitchen Angel comes in.

If cooking is becoming a chore for any reason, give us a call and book Babette as your own, personal Kitchen Angel to come round and help sort your problems out. If you're stuck with some specific task ("can't do pastry/bread/mayonnaise/jam?") or with a piece of equipment ("can't use a metal frying pan/always burn things/bought this a while back and don't know what to do with it?"), your kitchen isn't the efficient workspace

you'd like it to be, or you just want some feedback or new ideas, call Kitchen Angel for a tailored cooking consultation. We'll discuss your need beforehand and then find a date for Babette to come and sort it out.

To book Kitchen Angel, whether to sort out your cupboards or to help with your cooking, email babette@artoflivingcookshop.co.uk or leave your phone number in one of the shops and she will get in touch.

Charged at £50 for each hour that Babette is at your house, the fee includes all preliminary discussions and her personal phone number afterwards for 'on tap' support. A group option is available charged at £60/hour for 2 or 3 people.

Tony Tobin in Banstead

Tony, who's famous restaurant The Dining Room is opposite our Reigate shop, has opened a new fine dining, called Post, up the road in Banstead. It also has a deli which sells over 700 products. We wish him all the best with this exciting venture. Post: 01737 373839

Our beautiful cover shot was conceived and photographed by Mike Little, a long-time friend who has his own photography business in Reigate. We wholeheartedly recommend him.



www.mittlephotography.co.uk
01737 244335

Dear Santa...

Looking for inspiration as you set about your Christmas shopping? Here's a selection of fabulous gift ideas - only trouble is, you'll probably want to keep them all yourself



Artisan Mixer from Kitchen Aid, from £329

If someone in your life loves to bake and you love to indulge them, you really can't go wrong with an Artisan mixer from Kitchen Aid, a firm favourite with many of our staff and customers. Their unique 'planetary' beater action means the whisk (or beater) is in contact with the base of the bowl far more than with other mixers. Ingredients are mixed fast and thoroughly and more air gets through them. It's even possible to whisk as little as a single egg white until stiff. Attachments can be bought to turn the mixer into a full-blown food processor and it will last for years and years.

Epicurean Boards, from £9.95

If you've been on our email list for some time you'll already know about these fabulous chopping boards but for those who aren't, here is what all the fuss is about. They're made of wood pulp and resin, are thin, light and amazingly dishwasher-proof. They don't warp and most importantly they don't blunt knives as some boards can. They're utterly practical and come in a range of sizes in either natural coloured, black and gourmet

designs - the gourmet board has a ridge around the edge for collecting those fabulous meat juices for gravy. We're pleased to say we now stock the entire range, but stocks are selling out fast.

Tovolo stacking bowls, £29.95

This set of three melamine mixing bowls is not only a colourful addition to any kitchen, it's also eminently practical. The bowls have



Talking Timer, £10.99

This talking timer can be programmed to alert you with a spoken message of your choice. Wouldn't it be more fun to hear "The sprouts are ready" or even "Time for bed, darling" than a piercing ringing in the ears?

Potato Bag, £5.50

Ever notice your spuds turning green and sprouting shoots before you've had a chance to use them? Don't worry, they're not possessed - it's just daylight. This bag is lined with 'blackout' material which prevents your potatoes from thinking it's time to reproduce, and there's a zip at the bottom so you can use the older potatoes first.



glasses will know that they come in various shapes, each designed to enhance a specific type of wine by delivering it to the most receptive area of the taste buds. These glasses do the same for whisky. If you think the effect is profound with Riedel wine glasses, then you'll have your socks blown off by these little gems. While stocks last, these and other grape varieties are available packaged in pairs - a fabulous gift if there's a whisky drinker on your Christmas list.

Riedel Vinum Cognac Gift Box, £23.90

As with the rest of the Riedel range, the shape of this glass emphasizes the bouquet, harmonizing the aroma and taste of cognac, tempering its alcohol and harshness. For serious cognac drinkers, this would make a gift that you know will go down well at Christmas.



Xmas tips:
Gordon Ramsay says there's no need to cut crosses in the ends of your sprouts - it makes no difference to the way they cook. What does make a difference is the cooking time. Steam them and check after 10 minutes.

a non-stick rubber 'foot' that stops them from sliding around your work surface, a wide lip for easy pouring, they come with lids so they can be used for storage and they stack neatly.



Riedel Vinum Malt Whisky Gift Box, £23.90

Those of you familiar with Riedel wine



Mini Cocottes' from Le Creuset, from £9.50

These mini cocottes are perfect for many things, including individual servings, dips, pâtés and terrines... we've even used them for putting used tea bags in! Coming in a choice of miniature round or oval cocottes or shaped as fruit and vegetables, they are great for cooking small individual portions and when you need to fit several dishes in the oven at once.





Crumb Pets, £5.99

A must for the children: table-top vacuum cleaners in the shape of animals. Choose from the duck, elephant, cow, pig or sheep and let the kids clean up their own mess.

Musical Cake Slice, £8.99

This will raise a smile when it comes to slicing the Christmas cake. A musical cake slice which comes in a choice of four colours and plays four different tunes: Jingle Bells, Happy Birthday, The Wedding March or For He's a Jolly Good Fellow.



Nigella Lawson's Living Kitchen now in Liquorice black, from £7.50

The Living Kitchen has been a firm favourite in our shops and on our website for some time now, but this Christmas there's a new dimension - liquorice black. The wonderfully practical and tactile shapes and designs really seem to come alive in the matt and gloss black finishes. Buy one piece or a complete set, complement existing kitchen items or start from scratch.



Chestnut Roaster, £5.50

Nothing says Christmas for me (or Nat King Cole) quite like sitting in front of an open fire,

watching a film on the television and eating roasted Chestnuts. You can cook them in the embers of the fire if you like, but I find they all too often get lost, so how about this chestnut roasting pan? It works best on an open flame or a gas hob, but at a push you could use it on other heat sources, as long as you get them hot enough.

Bend it Salt & Pepper Shakers, £26.95

If you're after a talking point for your Christmas table, Bend it Salt & Pepper shakers are certainly that. They look like a nut and bolt, apart from the S or P on the top. Bend them in the



middle and the salt or pepper (which can't be too coarse) falls through the 'thread'. When they're bent back into their normal shape, there's no spillage. See how long it takes your guests to figure out how they work.

Many happy returns

We know how difficult it is after Christmas (or at any time) to brave a crowd of shoppers and return or exchange something that isn't quite right for you, especially when the sales assistant looks at you as if you were putting them on the bread line. Whether it's a bright green jumper with a reindeer on it or a piece of cookware that you don't need, some

customers can be put off trying to change things for fear of embarrassment.

As a business that relies on building close relationships with our customers, we want you to feel comfortable about returns. All our assistants will happily provide refunds if you show a receipt, or exchange items without a receipt. And if your case is a bit special they'll call the managers, Ben

in Cobham, Angela in Reigate, to sort the situation for you.

In addition, our TLR scheme enables you to try selected lines (currently Riedel and Demeyere) for 90 days, and if after that you're still not convinced, bring them back and - yes! - we'll give you a full refund.

If you have to send them back, all you have to pay for is the postage.

GIFT IDEAS



Jamie Oliver Flavour Shaker (above), £19.99

Jamie Oliver's Flavour Shaker has been one of the success stories of the last year and it is now available in a range of colours. It's designed to mix, crush, puree and blend all at the same time and at the shake of your wrist. Pop in all your ingredients (including liquid) with the ball, do the lid up and shake vigorously for perfectly crushed herbs and spices, or mixed dressings and marinades.

Bottle Balls, £7.99

Shaped as either a football, cricket or golf ball, you can store these unusual magnetic bottle openers on your fridge so you'll always know where they are and each time you open a bottle they play a recording of a sporting commentary. Give one to the sports fan in your life and close the door quietly behind you.



Champagne Cooler, from £25

If you like a bit of sparkle on Christmas morning, this stainless steel champagne cooler is the



perfect way to ensure your champagne is kept at the correct temperature.

Corn on the cob forks, £1.50 pair

Corn on the cob forks are a bit like socks, aren't they? You start off with a pair but somehow one always gets lost. These ones, from Zyliss, are sold in pairs (you can also buy a set of four pairs) and come in fabulous colours. When they're not in use they push together one into the other so you should never find yourself with an odd one again.



Banana Guard, £3.99

If you can't bear bananas that are battered and bruised, this moulded plastic container is designed to keep your banana



pristine! Perfect for packed lunches and stocking fillers.

Animal Magnets, £3.99

These fun, colourful fridge magnet clips make perfect stocking fillers. As you clip your items into them they make the noise of the animal. What a giggle.



Xmas tips:
A lot of top chefs remove the legs and wings of the turkey and cook them separately, boned and rolled. This way you can cook the breast for less time so that it stays moist, while still ensuring the dark meat is cooked properly.

Port Funnel, £9.95

It's amazing just how many port aficionados appear at Christmas. This funnel will enable them to decant the port expertly - it's curved so



that the port hits the edge of the decanter and trickles down without being aerated. We also sell the wine version which is straight so the wine pours through and is aerated as it goes into the decanter. Being stainless steel, they're dishwasher-proof.



Tovolo Cookie Cutters, £2.25

Children will love making biscuits with these. Not only do they cut out the shape of either a Christmas tree, bear, snowflake or gingerbread house, but they also make the impressions of all the detail so the kids will know exactly where to put the icing.

Typhoon Chocolate Fondue, £10

The perfect gift for chocolate lovers. Dip your marshmallows, strawberries or even brioche into the fondue sauce for the ultimate chocolate experience!. It comes with a glazed stoneware bowl, a chrome stand with space for a tea light below and four colour-coordinated fondue forks to share the pleasure!



Polka dot textiles, from £6.25

Always a popular pattern, you can get just about anything for the kitchen with dots on. Take a look at our tea towels, oven gloves, aprons... you name it, we stock it.





Silicon Bands, £6.99

These reusable silicon cooking bands are just like big rubber bands and are used in the same way but, because they're silicon, they can go in the oven, so you can use them instead of string to truss your turkey. So far we've used them for everything from trussing joints to holding bundles of asparagus together. How will you use yours?



Perlarge Champagne Stopper/Pourer, £13.50

The trouble with champagne is that you have to drink the whole bottle, otherwise it will go flat. Or do you? With this clever stopper/pourer from Perlarge you can keep the fizz in your champagne for days and you don't have to remove the stopper to pour. Cheers!

We can't live without... ...at Christmas



Angela, our Reigate shop manager, couldn't do without her Demeyere stainless steel tongs. "I have two pairs and I use them for everything, even serving pasta. They're stylish enough to be taken to the table."



Judith, who works in the Cobham shop, couldn't live without the traditional Mason Cash mixing bowls. "They always remind me of Christmas when I was younger," she says.



Lesley, our website writer, says, "I wouldn't be without my U-shaped tongs. They're perfect for turning and lifting all foods. If I have to work in a kitchen that doesn't have them I panic."



John, our book keeper, says a spiked carving dish is essential. "They stop your meat from moving around when you're carving and they collect all those fabulous juices for your gravy."



Babette couldn't live without lots of different sizes of roasting trays and a good dollop of duck fat. "It's a juggle enough to cook all the food, without having to struggle to find the right vessel. And when we bring tins of duck confit back from France, I always keep the extra fat. It does make the most divine roast potatoes, parsnips or whatever else."



Vikky, who works in the Reigate shop, says she couldn't live without forward planning. She's so organised she started baking her mince pies back in November. "The secret to a good Christmas is being prepared in advance so that you actually get to enjoy the day," she says.



Breda, who works in Cobham, says she couldn't live without her Le Creuset cocotte for Boxing Day casseroles. "I cook lamb shanks marinated in Guinness, we go for a long walk and come back to this absolutely delicious smell!"



Peter, who sends out our website orders, says he couldn't live without a pizza cutter for his niece. "She will only eat pizza..." Well, it takes all sorts, I suppose.



For Trisha, our Cordon Bleu chef from the Cobham shop, "Christmas starts when on Christmas Eve we open a bottle of champagne and drink it from my Sommelier glasses."



Finally, Trish, who works in the Cobham shop, said she could not live without alcohol... at Christmas, that is!

Be prepared: mini checklist of essentials for a traditional Christmas dinner



Roasting tin

Make sure you've got one big enough for the turkey, and also that it will fit in the oven.

Roasting rack

Make sure it fits your roasting pan.

Turkey Baster

Simple but effective way of making sure your turkey stays moist.

Covered dishes

To make sure all that food stays hot while you're dishing up.

Gravy separator

The best way to get those lovely juices without all the fat.

Gravy boat

We now have the traditional pottery ones with a saucer.

Spiked carving dish

A must for easy carving.

Lock & Lock boxes

Brilliant for storing all those leftovers.

Glasses

Have you got enough?



Apple Parer, £21

We used to stock this gadget and have brought it back due to the recent popularity of tarte tatin. It's incredibly quick at preparing apples for this classic dish. Simply attach an apple to the stainless steel prong and turn the handle - in no time at all it's peeled, cored and sliced to perfection. You can set the machine to slice and core without peeling and also peel without slicing or coring. For an extra special gift, team it up with a tarte tatin dish and wait for the invitation to dinner.



Alligator - The Onion Cutter, £19.99

This cutter has been flying out of our shops over the last few weeks, presumably thanks to its appearance on Gordon Ramsey's The F Word. We can understand why it's been so popular - it's so simple to use and produces fantastic results.

Nigella Cheese/Cake Dome, £30

This versatile item from the Living Kitchen range from Nigella Lawson is wide enough to hold a plate of cheeses or a cake, so, unlike many cheese domes, you



should get regular use out of it throughout the year, not just at Christmas when the stilton comes out. Available in blue, cream or liquorice black.

Tala Cooking Sets, from £4.50

Tala's gorgeous range of cooking sets make perfect presents for all ages. From sets of cookie cutters to complete preserve making kits, the entire range is presented in stylish retro packaging to conjure up images of a bygone era.



Twisting Spaghetti Fork, £6.99

Spaghetti - the ultimate challenge for the messy eater. But help is at hand with this automatic twisting fork. It does the hard work for you! Daft as it may seem, it's proving very popular amongst our customers. What on earth will they think of next? (Batteries not included)



Salter Coloured Electronic Pepper Mill, £9.99

If you like a splash of colour in your kitchen, these electronic mills from Salter will add a bright touch to the place, as well as taking the effort out of pepper grinding.



Nigella Trays, Mugs, Storage Tins and Accessories (right), from £4.95

Still as popular as ever, with new designs introduced this year. Nigella's range of stylish storage solutions, mugs, trays, fridge magnets etc will brighten up any kitchen.



Lock & Lock storage containers, £1.59-£14.95

This versatile of storage boxes would come in useful for storing leftovers. They come in lots of shapes and sizes and the cake storer is bound to come in handy at Christmas.

New Screwpull corkscrew, £99

Screwpull continues to stay ahead of the field with its corkscrews. This model, which is the only one on the market that has been specifically designed to tackle plastic corks (many other corkscrews pack up completely with artificial corks), is now available in satin finish and comes with the usual 10 year guarantee. These corkscrews just seem to be getting more and more popular.



Robert Welch Cutlery Sets, from £75

To lend that extra special touch to your sumptuous cooking, we have a range of these beautiful cutlery sets, starting with the Meridian 24 piece.

Tagines, from £17.50

We mentioned these North African dishes in our last edition of Red Apron and a clever little spark in our office suggested using one to cook a curry with the left over turkey... Mmm.

Moo Mixer, £8.99

Here's one final bit of fun for the kids at Christmas. Make milkshakes straight in the cup and avoid all that washing up! (Batteries not included)



Xmas tips:
I've long thought that Christmas should be about eating things we don't usually have time to prepare, concentrating on quality not quantity. I was delighted to read in Radio Times that our dear Nigella says the same.

Typhoon Table Top Warmer, £20

If you don't have the space or desire to own a hostess trolley this table top food warmer which uses tea lights will keep your food hot at the table.

