

Red Apron



MAGAZINE

from Art of Living for people who enjoy cooking

Issue 4 Summer 2006



Summer party

Al fresco entertaining - the easy way

PLUS: The Latest Products ■ Offers ■ Services



We were amused to hear that a couple of our readers ended up having a debate about the picture on the front of our last newsletter. Was it Babette's kitchen or had she been superimposed, because the head looked slightly fuzzy against the background? Well, they were both right. Babette was in her kitchen, but to get her smiling at the same time as the frying pan was flaming proved such a difficult task that we ended up cutting and pasting two pictures together.

We can tell you that this issue's cover image is real and unmanipulated (aside from the merciless bullying we endured from the photographer). We wanted to create a typical summer, al fresco lunch scene to go with Babette's feature on quiches. She actually had reservations about writing such simple recipes when so many of you are highly accomplished cooks, but we hope it helps those who aren't so confident, as well as stimulating the 'masterchefs' amongst you to contribute some of your own recipes to future issues. We'd love to hear from you.

Cooks of all abilities will find plenty to whet the appetite on pages 4,5, where we showcase some of the best recent additions to our product list. And there's information on our new TLR (Try it, Like it or Return it) service. Give it a try - you have nothing to lose. And on page 8 there's more information about Kitchen Angel, Babette's new service where she comes to your house and helps you to sort out your kitchen tools. Don't be afraid to invite her in - she's really quite tame.

Finally, if there's anything you want to ask us or tell us about Red Apron, we'd love to hear from you.

Andrew and Babette Bluett-Duncan



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The cookin' is easy

Summertime, our gardens are gorgeous - we want to have friends around, but what do you rustle up for them? Quiches and salads are always a hit: here are Babette's recipes for some of her favourite quiches

Why do I like quiches? Because you can cook them in advance and reheat them at the last minute, or eat them cold, or just prepare everything and keep the "put together" and cooking for the last half hour, and they freeze very well when you are in a productive mood. And you can always make one with anything you have in the fridge, or even in the cupboard (see tuna and green olives).

With a base of eggs and cream or milk, with or without cheese, you just add whatever veg, fish or meat you have and you have a quiche. Or you can make a thick béchamel, with the addition of 1 or 2 eggs.

Quiche tin or flan tin?

Officially a 'quiche' is 1½in deep, designed for savoury preparations, allowing you more filling, as you usually bind your ingredients with

eggs and milk or cream.

A 'flan', designed for sweet preparations, is only 1in deep as you just put a layer of crème anglaise or compote and then the fruits on top.

But you can use whichever you like, if you want a shallower quiche, or, like me, you like to grab whatever is most handy.

For this article I prepared two quantities of pastry (2 x 200g flour, 100g fat, 75ml water, pinch of salt - see the box on the right) which I used to line a 10in quiche tin, a 9in flan tin and four individual 5in flans.

Quiche Lorraine

This most well-known quiche is supposed to be made with just cheese, bacon, eggs and cream. I don't



Silverwood quiche tins come in a range of sizes from 3.5in to 11in, with prices starting at £2.95



know where the onion I see in many recipes has come from.

The key is to use Gruyere or Maasdam because the flavour is especially nutty, and don't be scared to pile on the cream. This recipe serves 6-8.

For a 9in Silverwood flan tin or some individual 5in ones.

250g Shortcrust Pastry (or count 50g of pastry for each individual 5in)

100g bacon or lardons

150g gruyere or maasdam

3 medium eggs

200ml of cream (double or single or crème fraîche)

NB: No salt as there's a lot in the bacon and cheese, but nutmeg or pepper is lovely.

Line the tins with pastry and put in the fridge again until ready to "assembler", as chefs say in my native country.

Fry the bacon or lardons until as crispy as you like them. Mix together cream, cheese and eggs, pepper or nutmeg.

Put the lardons into the quiche tin, pour over the egg mixture and cook immediately

Pain-free pastry

I have been known to buy my pastry ready-made from time to time, as making it by hand is not one of my fortes (I console myself that it's because I always have warm hands). With the Magimix, though, it's so easy. And if you are going to make a few quiches, then it's well worth the washing up.

Magimix shortcrust pastry

200g flour

100g butter, cold

Up to 75ml ice cold water

Pinch of salt

Fit the double-bladed knife and put the flour and butter, cut into small pieces, in the bowl. Mix until it looks like breadcrumbs. Then add the water through the feeding tube, and stop when the pastry forms a ball around the central blade. Put the pastry in the fridge for 30 minutes before rolling.



in a hot oven (250-260°C) for 25-30 minutes. Serve hot.

If your oven was too hot and the top of the quiche browns too quickly, just pop a sheet of foil over it, which will allow for more cooking without burning the topping.

Onion and Leek quiche

Serves 8

For a 10in Silverwood quiche tin with 250-300g short crust pastry.



For convenience you can cook the onions and leeks the day before you make the quiche, then keep them in the fridge (in the lovely stackable Lock and Lock) until the time you're

Don't overwork

It's a good rule for life and it applies to pastry as well - and that's all down to gluten. Gluten is present in wheat in varying quantities according to the strength of the flour, but its elasticity develops when you work it. With bread, for example, the kneading process is necessary to develop enough elasticity to hold the air formed by the fermentation. With pastry, you do NOT want any elasticity or it makes it hard (as the little girls rolling their first pastry over and over again discover...)

Leftover pastry?

Don't throw away your cut-off bits. Just lay them together roughly in the bottom of a small tin and cut a few slices of courgettes, (or grate some with a Microplane), then sprinkle with cheese and cook in a medium oven until browned. Josephine (9) absolutely loves them, straight from the oven. "Cooks help reward" she calls it.

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Exquisite ta

Not just pretty but practical too, feast your eyes on some of the new lines that have got us swooning at Art of Living



Riedel Vinum Extreme Range (Various grape varieties) (from £17.95)

If you've used Riedel glasses before you'll understand why I'm such a fan. Each glass is designed to have a quite profound effect on the flavours of any wine, shaped to deliver the wine to the area of the tongue that detects the key notes of the wine. The Riedel Vinum Extreme range has been designed primarily for New World wines, which tend to be heavier and therefore need a bigger bowl to enable the bouquet to develop.



Mermaid Companion Set of 3 Trays (£39.95)

This set of three high-quality, hard-anodised baking dishes - one roaster, one shallow roaster and one baking sheet - are small enough (10.5x6.5in) to fit two side by side in a standard oven and are perfect for smaller portions. They are excellent conductors of heat, won't warp or rust and you can use them on the hob, in the oven or under the grill. You can't put them in a dishwasher, but they're very easy to clean. Our staff snapped these up as soon as they came in, because it's amazing how often you find you need a small tray.



Eric the Electronic Scales (£67.00)

There was much hilarity in Art of Living office when I described these scales as looking similar to a Viking helmet. No, there are no horns, but the bowl, when turned over and placed on top for storage, definitely resembles a Viking helmet. They're more than a novelty though - the 1 litre bowl comes with its own stand so it will stand on a worktop despite its rounded base, and they'll weigh from 1g to 3kg (1/8oz to 7lb).



Good Grips Salad Spinner (£23.99)

Especially useful during the summer months, but if you invest in this clever salad spinner you'll use it time after time throughout the year. The clear bowl doubles as a serving dish but the real joy is the spinning top-style mechanism. Pop up the 'plunger', press down to start the spinner, in exactly the same way as a spinning top and when you're finished, lock the plunger in place for easy storage.



Magimix 5200XL (£249.99)

This XL version in satin steel (other sizes are available in white as well) features an extra large feed tube to take whole potatoes, apples and tomatoes, and benefits from all the improvements of the new Magimix ranges, including a thicker, stronger main bowl and lid, a more powerful yet quieter motor, new discs for better slicing and shredding, a new control panel and a design that is more space efficient. It even comes with a recipe book with over 100 tantalising recipes.

Try it
Like it or
Return it

We've eulogised before about Riedel glasses and Demeyere pans, and how they will enhance your life. We're aware, of course, that our enthusiasm for these top-quality lines may not be enough to convince you to part with the

ste

New colours for Dualit hand blenders (from £45.00) and jug kettles (from £55.00)

Now available in powder blue and pale pink as well as black. These useful, practical and good quality electricals from Dualit will co-ordinate perfectly with the wealth of colourful kitchen accessories on the market (Typhoon and Nigella to name but two). The hand blender comes with whisk and dough blades for added versatility.



Nigella trays, mugs & storage tins and other accessories (from £4.95)

Nigella says, "There's no point having things in the kitchen that simply do their job: if they don't make you feel good as well, that's a waste." Well, her new range of stylish storage solutions, mugs, trays, fridge magnets etc will certainly bring a smile to your face.



Tagines (from £17.50)

We now have a large selection of these North African dishes designed to create beautiful moist dishes. Prices range from £17.50 up to £39.95, plus there's a larger Le Creuset tagine priced at £81.

There's also a mini white tagine at £9.95. Standing approximately 3ins tall, it is perfect for serving salt, mustard, jam, horseradish etc.



DNC lunch bags (various designs, from £7.95)

Whether you're preparing for the new school term or just need solutions for summer picnics, these padded lunch bags are perfect for your little princesses or menaces, from Dr Who to pink gingham and Dalmatians, they're sure to find the design to match their personality!

Dualit Mini Chopper (£39.95)

This compact mini chopper is perfect for chopping small quantities (individual portions), small items (herbs) or for small people (baby food). It's small enough to sit on your worktop without taking up too much space, and comes in a range of colours.



Lock & Lock Cake Storer (£14.95)

This is our best seller in the Lock & Lock range and it's no surprise. The 'four hinge' system with silicon seal will makes the storer 100 per cent airtight to keep your cake (up to 8" square or 9" round) fresh. It's freezer safe and has a fold-down handle for easy transportation.



Epicurean Chopping Boards

(available in five sizes, from £9.25 to £33.95)

Made of wood pulp and resin, Epicurean chopping boards are thin, light, dishwasher-proof, they don't warp and they don't blunt knives. Utterly practical and very popular in our house. (Soon to be available in black).



Oliver Hemming Nio Electric Kettle (£85.00)

This Art Deco-style kettle offers all the sophistication of the 1920s but with the added benefit of electricity! Made from stainless steel with a heat resistant black handle, it holds 1.5 litres. The Nio range also features a teapot, milk jug, sugar bowl and a hob kettle.



premium price that they command, but we're really keen that you at least give them a try.

So we've introduced TLR, a new guarantee scheme which 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.



EASY QUICHES

Continued from page 3



Onion and Leek Quiche: a simple, tasty recipe for an al fresco feast

going to put the quiche together and cook it.

Onion mixture

3 very large onions
1 egg
30 ml cream
Seasoning: salt, pepper, nutmeg

The secret is to have a lot of onions, with enough fat, slowly cooked to a nearly purée stage. I personally like a bit more heat to begin with in order to release the sugars, start the caramelisation process, and then up to 1 hour on a low heat with the lid on. Don't forget that onions need a fair amount of seasoning.

When the onions are ready (a lovely caramel colour), take the lid off to steam off any excess liquid. Then allow to cool a bit.

Add the egg and the cream, beat together and keep until your leek mixture is ready.

Leek mixture

2 or 3 large leeks
1 egg
50 ml double cream
50-100 g grated cheese (optional)
A sauté pan with lid

Take the white stems of three leeks, or two whole leeks (it is more delicate if you only use the white part but sometimes I like the roughage of the green). Wash the leeks thoroughly and cut into chunks of about 1".

In the sauté pan on a moderate heat, put a large knob of butter and add the leeks. The idea is that they'll stew in the water used to wash them, and release their own. So you put the lid on and stir

every now and then, until they are soft and mellow (about 15 minutes).

Season, then take off the heat and add one large egg and the cream. Don't put all the cream in at first as you want a paste-like consistency, not too liquid. Some days, if I have it handy, I add a handful of grated cheese (gruyere type or cheddar).

Pour the leek mixture on one half of the quiche, then pour the onion mixture on the other

half. Put straight into a hot oven for 25-30 minutes.

NB: The same quantities would work for two separate 7" quiches.

Salmon and Asparagus Quiche

This is a favourite of Tricia Morgan, a Cordon Bleu cook from our Cobham shop.



For a 20cm quiche tin
200g shortcrust pastry
30g butter
2 shallots, thinly sliced
250g salmon fillet, poached
125g asparagus spears, blanched
2 large eggs, plus 1 yolk
10fl.oz double cream
Sea salt
Black pepper

Pre-heat the oven to 190°C (375°F). Roll out the pastry and line the tin, gently prick with a fork, line with parchment paper and cover with baking beans.

To bake blind or not to bake blind?

My mother never baked blind, so she never taught me. Admittedly she never made sweet flans. But I found myself quite daunted after working in the shop for a while and hearing about those of you who do. Actually, I don't know if I have met anyone in this country who doesn't (I'd love to hear from you if you're the exception to this rule). It took me a while, but I eventually realised that it's because if you bake a quiche in a Portmeirion,

Pillivuyt or Pyrex flan, the heat conductivity of the pottery or glass is not good enough to cook through the pastry before having burnt the topping. So in this case you DO need to bake blind.

My understanding is that it has become the accepted wisdom: "any quiche should be baked blind". Trust me, you can challenge it if you have the right tin.

Mum always used the tin-plated metal dishes, which do conduct the heat fast enough

to bake the pastry through before the top starts to burn. These have now been replaced by the even better Silverwood tins, made with a special alloy which conducts heat really fast.

Just make sure that you don't let the quiche sit with the topping in it uncooked, because that will make the pastry soggy.

Prepare your topping in a bowl, line your tin, and only put the filling in just before putting in the oven.

Share your recipes with Red Apron

I realise there's an element of 'teaching grandma to suck eggs' in telling an audience with so many seasoned cooks how we make our favourite quiches. But a lot of Red Apron members tell us it would be nice to see some recipes in the newsletter, so this seemed like a good way to start.

Now that we've set the ball rolling, it's your turn. Please send us your favourite recipes so we can share them with other members. They can be as simple or as complicated as you like, designed for any type of meal or occasion.

Email your recipes to info@artoflivingcookshop.co.uk and each entrant will receive 200 points. We will then publish them either in the newsletter or on the website Forum. Please tell us with your recipe how easy/difficult you rate it, and tell us a bit about yourself and the sort of cooking you do.

Pop in the oven for 15 minutes, remove the paper and beans and bake for a further 10 minutes at 180°C (350°F). Brush base with a beaten egg and place in oven again for a further five minutes (to prevent a soggy base).

Soften shallots in butter, add to flaked, cooked salmon, season and spread over the quiche base.

Whisk the eggs with the cream and pour over, arrange the asparagus spears on top

and bake for 30 minutes.

Olive and Tuna Quiche

If you have guests that arrive unexpectedly, this is a nice quiche to make with some basic cupboard ingredients.

Simply make a thickish béchamel sauce, add tuna flakes, a couple of eggs, some pitted green olives cut in half (or capers if you prefer), salt and nutmeg. Taste and add a spritz of lemon if required.

Bake for 25-30 minutes.

Red Letters

Flan-tastic

I made a successful bid at an Auction of Promises for Babette's offer to provide quiches and salads for ten people. On a hot day in June, ex staff from a special needs unit in Reigate sat down with me in my garden to eat a delightful meal prepared by Babette. I am now hoping that

she will share the recipes for the salads and bread.

Carol Everingham

Magimix Magic

Just to say very many thanks to you and all the team on giving our little cookery group such an enjoyable evening yesterday (Magimix Event, see back page). I'm sure you will be receiving more Red Apron forms very soon!

Jo Harris, via email

Earn **500 FREE** points plus 500 for a friend when they join Red Apron on your recommendation

We want all our customers to feel they get good value and service from Art of Living and we know Red Apron members enjoy the extras that they get from membership.

Now that we have our internet shopping facility, you can tell anyone you know, anywhere in the country, about the service we provide. In fact, we'd really like you to do this, so we're offering an incentive.

Recommend Red Apron to someone you know and when they join they will earn 500 FREE Red Apron points for themselves, and a further 500 points for you. All they have to do is tell us who recommended them when they join and we will do the rest.

I can't live without... by Vikki Britain



Vikki is a valuable member of the Reigate team. She joined Art of Living in 2002, having previously worked in the catering industry...

"I bake a lot, so the product I can't live without is the Kitchen Aid mixer. I've used lots of other mixers and processors, but none of them live up to the Kitchen Aid: it looks good, feels solid and is very easy to clean. I can stand back and get on with other jobs while it goes to work - I don't need to stand over it.

"It now comes with a pouring shield, which is a really useful addition. Gone are the days of having to wrap a tea towel around the top!

"Other handy attachments include a pasta roller and cutter set, which allows you to make fresh pasta in just 10 minutes. And you don't need three hands. Brilliant!

"I find it superb for meringues as you can mix even one egg white very effectively, thanks to the dimple in the bowl. With a

hand whisk or even an electric hand whisk, I just can't get the egg white stiff enough.

"My top tips for perfect meringues are to add a little salt to the egg white, but no vinegar or cream of tartar. Never use greaseproof paper because, even if you grease it, the meringue will stick. I use non-stick Teflon liner. Bake at gas mark 1 (50°C) for one hour, then turn the oven off and leave the meringue inside overnight for a perfect crunchy base but gooey inside."

M@ke sure you don't miss out!

We're concerned that some of you are missing out on the special offers we put on exclusively for Red Apron members, so there are two things we ask you to bear in mind: the first is to **remember to tell us you are with Red Apron** when you buy anything from the shop, so that we can make sure you get the deals you're entitled to; the second is to **provide us with your correct email address**, so that we can keep you informed of all the offers we've got coming up.

We like to use email because it's fast, it's environmentally friendly and - let's be honest here - it costs us nothing in stamps. But if you're worried that we're going to bombard you with 'spam' beseeching you to Buy! Buy! Buy!, fear not - we don't work that way. What we do like to do is share news about products that have

captured our imagination, or pass on tips that will enhance the use of the products we sell, or keep you informed of all our special offers and events.

Microplane offer

For example, those of you who are on our email list will have seen the Microplane offer we ran in May. Anyone who bought one of these great graters was offered a second one at half price. Unfortunately not all Red Apron members were able to take advantage of it because they were not on our email list.

So we're asking you again to make sure we've got your correct email address and that your filters are set to permit emails from 'Art of Living'. If you haven't been receiving our emails, please email us at info@aolcookshop.co.uk, putting Confirm Address in the subject line.

Red Apron Event

An evening with Magimix



We had great fun at our Magimix Event, held at the Cobham shop on June 28th. Among others, Tricia, our Cordon Bleu cook from the Cobham branch, made four mouthwatering recipes in the ice cream maker, all of which you can see on the Red Apron Forum on the website.

Special Offers

These offers are exclusive to Red Apron members.

Epicurean Chopping Boards



These tough chopping boards come in a range of really useful sizes. Buy one of the 4 larger boards and get the small size **FREE**.
Normal price: £9.95

Lock & Lock

Buy the Lock & Lock Cake Storer (price £14.95) and we'll give you this 550ml box **FREE**.
Normal price: £2.50



Kitchen Angel

Let Babette help you to make your kitchen a heavenly place to cook

It seems I hadn't thought of everything when I announced my Kitchen Angel service in the last newsletter. The idea was that I would come round and help you sort out your kitchen implements - what to keep and what to throw away - and to make sure you're

properly equipped for the type of cooking you like to do. The idea has been well received, but a number of people have said things like, "Oh I would love you to help me but wouldn't dream of letting you see the state of my cupboards!" Please don't worry about that - we'll de-clutter together.

Meanwhile, a Red Apron member asked me in to teach her how to use a Le Creuset skillet, which food always stuck to when she used it: "We spent two hours trying all sort of things. I learnt a lot and picked up a few tips in passing (grated parmesan in the salad dressing). On top of that it was great fun;



Babette really made me feel at ease and left me feeling much more confident in my own abilities."

So, 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?"), or you just want some feedback or new ideas,

call me for a tailored cooking consultation. We'll discuss your need beforehand and then find a date for me 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.

Zyliss Ice Cream Scoop

Save £2 on one of these superb ice cream scoops in peach. (while stocks last)
Normal price: £8.99.
Red Apron price: £6.99.



Dartington Essentials Range

Buy any six glasses from the range (priced between £5 and £6) and get two of the Burgundy glasses **FREE**. (while stocks last)
Normal price: £12 the pair.



JOBS Always looking for great people

Some of the positions we've recently filled have gone to people we interviewed before a vacancy came up. If you think you share our values, please get in touch.