



I love Autumn and the changing colours on the trees. The dark mornings and nights have returned and everyone is out chopping wood ready for the cosy fireside evenings. There is wonderful produce to be had at this time of year. Lots of different veg for making delicious, warming soups and stews, fruits for crumbles and pies, and such a variety of fish and seafood available at the moment. This month I have two recipes for you, one of which all ingredients are in abundance in Deux-Sèvres right now and the other is something sweet I wanted to share. Enjoy!

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Sweet & Savoury

by Hazel Foster

Goats Cheese with Fig and Walnuts

This is so quick and easy and makes a great starter, cheese course, lunch or something to have with a nice bottle of wine and some crusty bread anytime.

Ingredients

- 1 fresh soft goats cheese (200g)
- 8 half walnuts, chopped
- 1 fresh fig (or you can use dried if you can't get fresh) – thinly sliced

Put cling film into a ramekin, leaving enough around the sides to wrap over the top of the finished cheese.

Spoon one third of the cheese into the bottom of the lined ramekin and squash down make the first layer, leveling the top with the back of a spoon. Top this layer with your sliced fig (I used half and served the other half on the cheese plate).

Add your next third of the cheese the same way, topping this with your chopped walnuts. Then put the rest of the cheese on top and level off, pulling the cling film over the top.

Leave in the fridge until 10 mins before you are ready to serve. Turn the cheese out onto a plate or board and to finish, top off with smoked black pepper, fresh or dried herbs or a drizzle of clear honey. Serve with fruits, walnuts and crusty bread.

Salted Caramel Sauce

This sauce is easy to make. Put it in a jar and it will keep for 2 weeks in the fridge and goes with so many desserts – waffles, pancakes, ice-cream, cheesecake, apple pie etc. Maybe even something to make and give, for those of you who like to make edible Christmas pressies.

Ingredients

- 200g granulated sugar
- 90g salted butter, cut up into pieces
- 120ml heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon sea salt

Heat the sugar in a medium saucepan over medium heat, stirring constantly with a high heat resistant silicone spatula or wooden spoon. Sugar will form clumps and eventually melt into a thick brown, amber-coloured liquid as you continue to stir. Be careful not to burn it.

Once sugar is completely melted, immediately, but carefully, add the butter - the caramel will bubble rapidly when the butter is added.

Stir the butter into the caramel until it is completely melted.

Very slowly, drizzle in the cream while stirring. Since the cream is colder than the caramel, the mixture will rapidly bubble when added.

Allow the mixture to boil for 1 minute.

Remove from heat and stir in 1 teaspoon of sea salt. Allow to cool down before using.

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