

1st December, 11

Two things not to apologise for: Firstly, reminding you about Christmas, which we have to do. Are you going away or do you want double rations? Please would you let us know as soon as possible. Next week we'll send out info and order forms for any of you who want to be even more particular about your veg. We are also reminding you by putting an Earthy leaflet in your box. As veg suppliers extraordinaire we are pleased as punch that the original shop was so highly rated in the Observer awards and the new shop in Portobello has a tremendous produce section. Secondly, giving you **lettuce** again. Bit of a dance of delight and more to come!

Quite amazingly the **lettuce** along with the **brussels sprouts** will allow you to do Ottolenghi's latest brussels recipe, which I scoffed at when I read it, saying the man has not much idea of British seasonality! Anyway reproduced below.

We give you a **brussels sprout stick** for Christmas practice for those of you are new. The stick is better cause it keeps longer (put it outside the door or in a cool spot in a pot of water) allows you to pick off the size you want, and gives you the sweet little cabbage top as a bonus.



Ditto for **red cabbage** which seems just the thing as the weather turns and marries happily with apple, orange, port, redcurrant, cranberries etc either long cooked or vigorously stir fried.

Lots of good early season citrus now, so bags of **oranges** at £2.50 a kilo and clementines at £3 a kilo are available as extras from now on.

We are also trying out **Feijoa fruit** (thumbs up from our packhouse) which though South American by nature are being grown in France. They look like mini avocados and taste a bit guava like. They are extremely popular in New Zealand. The **kiwifruit** come from Italy by the way.



Tatties are all purpose, good size and good baker.

We've been busy in the kitchen too with new batches of **redcurrant jelly, spiced bramble and apple jelly; blonde sloe and juniper jelly**, made with sloes soured in gin(!); more **beetroot and horseradish** and **wintery pumpkin chutney**. Available with cloth tops as tasty presents...



Yotam Ottolenghi's Roasted brussels sprouts with hoisin sauce (V)

From: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2011/nov/18/brussels-sprouts-pork-chops-recipes>

Serves four to six.

750g brussels sprouts, trimmed
2 tbsp olive oil
Salt and black pepper
6 little gem hearts, quartered lengthways
5 garlic cloves, peeled and sliced thin
2 tbsp hoisin sauce
1½ tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp sweet chilli sauce
20g ginger, peeled and finely diced
1 tbsp white-wine vinegar
1 tsp sesame oil
Skin of ½ orange, finely shredded
2 tbsp ready-made crispy fried shallots (optional; get them in Asian food stores, or from Amazon)

Set the oven to 200C/400F/gas mark 6. Bring a pan of water to a boil, add the sprouts and blanch for two minutes. Drain, refresh under cold water and cut in half lengthways. Toss the sprouts in half a tablespoon of oil, half a teaspoon of salt and some pepper, spread out on a baking tray and put in the oven. After 15 minutes, mix the gem hearts with half a tablespoon of oil, add to the tray, cook for three minutes more, then tip everything into a large bowl.

Heat the remaining oil in a small pan and cook the garlic on medium heat for five minutes, until it turns golden. Tip the garlic and oil into a heatproof bowl to stop the cooking.

Mix all the remaining ingredients bar the orange peel and shallots, and drizzle over the sprouts and lettuce. Pour on the garlic and oil, scatter over the peel and shallots, and serve.

Yotam Ottolenghi's Brussels sprouts with caramelised garlic and lemon peel recipe

From: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2009/dec/19/sprouts-caramelised-garlic-lemon-recipe>

A couple of elements in this Christmassy dish will come in handy elsewhere. Caramelised garlic makes a lovely condiment to lentils or roast veg, while candied lemon makes a great garnish for creamy desserts or leafy salads. I always pan-fry sprouts – it retains texture and enhances flavour. Serves four.

4 heads garlic, cloves separated and peeled
About 150ml olive oil
2 tsp balsamic vinegar
50g caster sugar
90ml water
Salt and black pepper
1 medium lemon
600g brussels sprouts
1 red chilli, finely chopped
50g parmesan shavings
20g basil leaves, shredded

Put the garlic in a pan, cover with water and blanch for three minutes. Drain, dry the pan, and pour in two tablespoons of oil. Return the garlic to the pan and fry on high heat for two minutes, stirring, until golden all over. Add the vinegar, a tablespoon of sugar, the water and some salt. Bring to a boil and simmer on medium heat for five minutes, until barely any liquid is left, just the caramelised cloves in a syrup. Set aside.

Use a vegetable peeler to shave off wide strips of lemon skin; avoid the white pith. Cut the strips into 1mm-2mm thick slices, or julienne, and put in a small pan. Squeeze the lemon into a measuring jug and add water to bring the juice up to 100ml. Pour over the strips of peel, add the remaining sugar and bring to a simmer. Cook for 12-15 minutes, until the syrup is reduced to about a third. Set aside to cool down.

Trim the bases off the sprouts and cut them top to bottom into halves. Heat four tablespoons of oil in a large, heavy-based pan, add half the sprouts, season and cook on high heat for five minutes, stirring them once or twice, but not too often, so that they char well without breaking up; add extra oil if needed. They will soften but retain some firmness. Transfer to a bowl and repeat with the remaining oil and sprouts.

Stir the chilli, the garlic and its syrup into the sprouts, and set aside until warmish. Stir in the parmesan, basil and peel (without the syrup), season and add oil if necessary. Serve as it is or at room temperature.