
Get a taste for local food

These recipes use local ingredients available from Skye & Lochalsh Food Link producers

New Leaf Croft

Nettle and Comfrey Soup

Half a carrier bag of young nettle tops approx. 225g-250g (wear gloves when picking)

Good handful comfrey leaves approx. 30g-40g

50 g butter or 3 tbsp olive oil

2 medium onions chopped

2 celery sticks chopped (optional)

1 clove crushed garlic or 2-3 large wild garlic leaves roughly chopped

1.5 litres vegetable stock or bouillon

Pinch nutmeg

Salt and pepper

Garnish with chopped parsley or chives, cream or soft cheese

Wash the nettles in a colander. Sweat the onion, celery (if using) and garlic in the butter or oil over a low heat for 5 minutes. Add the stock, then the nettles and bring to boil. Simmer for 5 minutes. Add the comfrey and simmer for a further 5 minutes. Season with salt, pepper and nutmeg to taste. Puree the soup. Return to pan to reheat, check seasoning then serve garnished with parsley, chives or herb of choice, cream or soft cheese.

This soup freezes extremely well. If a thicker soup is required add 50 g cooked rice before liquidising or add in 2 diced potatoes with the onion and celery. Variations include mixing nettles with watercress or any type of lettuce.

Comfrey leaves/plants are available from New Leaf Croft from April - September, also nettles if anyone is struggling to find a nettle patch!

Wild garlic, lettuce and herbs are all available from other local producers.

Skye Fruit and Fungi

Shiitake mushrooms have a meaty texture, especially those grown on hardwood logs rather than on sawdust. They may be eaten raw or cooked. The following are suggested.

Garlicky stuffed shiitakes

Remove the stalks and place the upturned cups on a baking sheet. Prepare some breadcrumbs, grate some cheddar cheese and finely chop some garlic cloves. Mix together and spoon into the mushroom cups. Add a nut of butter to each and cook in the oven at 200°C (gas mark 6) for about 15 to 20 minutes. Serve with a green salad.

Shiitake pasta with fresh thyme & cream

Boil some tagliatelle in salted water. Finely chop 2 leeks and fry in a little olive oil until soft. Add sliced shiitakes and a chopped garlic clove. Cook for a further minute. Now add some chopped tomatoes, a little tomato puree, salt, a pinch of sugar and a good slurp of red wine. Cover and simmer on low heat for ten minutes. Remove from hob and add a little single cream, some freshly crushed thyme leaves, chopped parsley and a good sprinkling of grated Parmesan cheese. Add the cooked pasta and reheat gently until hot, then serve immediately.

Garlic, herbs & cheese are all available from other local producers



Glendrynoch Garden

Low Calorie Watercress Soup

Make from watercress, onion, root ginger and garlic. 'Sweat' in a little sunflower or olive oil then add water or stock/stock cube or bouillon. Blend when cooked and add lime or lemon juice if liked. Can be sieved for an extra smooth soup. Chopped, reserved leaves may be added as garnish. Season if required.

Watercress Soup

Make from watercress, potato, onion cooked in stock before blending. Add milk or milk and some cream. Season to taste.

Tip: Reserve some uncooked watercress and only add when liquidising to make the colour fantastic!

Watercress Stuffing

Blend or chop finely together, watercress, grated cheese, (parmesan/goat/good cheddar), lime or lemon juice and garlic. Spread on fillets and roll up. Squeeze over a little more citrus juice and a drizzle of olive or sunflower oil. Cover with butter paper, foil or cling film if to be micro-waved. Ideal for stuffing fish fillets, chicken breasts or flat mushrooms.

Watercress Sauce

Concentrated soup or the stuffing makes the basis for a useful and delicious sauce

Garlic, potatoes, onion, fish, mushrooms and cheese are available from other local producers

Robert MacAskill's

Crab, Ginger and Lime Cheesecake

4 portions

For the base:

6 oatcakes
2 oz melted butter
teaspoon heather honey

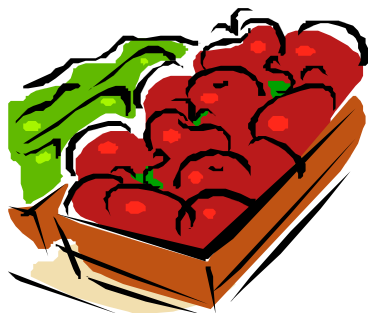
Crush oatcakes and stir in butter and honey. Press in to 4 cutters or an 8in cake tin lined with cling film, chill until required later

For the filling:

2 sheets leaf gelatine – soaked in water until soft, drain excess water, then melt in the microwave
4oz crab meat
4oz cream cheese
zest of 1 lime, finely grated
salt and pepper
½ teaspoon finely chopped ginger

Mix all the ingredients together and put into the cutters or cake tin. Chill for 2 hours until firm.

Crab and oatcakes are available from local producers.



Mike Keen's

Skye Oysters Rockefeller

Shuck 6 fresh Isle of Skye oysters - remove the oyster meat and juice.

In a sauté pan melt 80g of unsalted butter, throw in a good handful of washed baby spinach and wild garlic. Toss around in the pan until the leaves are nicely wilted and coated in the butter - this should take around 60 seconds. Remove, drain & place a good dollop of the cooked leaves in the base of each oyster shell.

Place an oyster on top of each dollop of leaf. Melt 50g of butter in a saucepan, when it's melted add 50g of plain flour and stir around over a medium heat for a couple of minutes, take care not to let it brown. Continue stirring and add the reserved juice from the oysters slowly (about a tablespoon at a time). When the juice has been used slowly add about 8froz double cream, stirring all the time until you have a smooth, shiny sauce. Take off the heat and taste - you'll want to add a touch of salt & pepper. Then add 60g of grated cheese and stir in.

Put a good tablespoon of this sauce over the top of each oyster and finish with a small amount of pecorino style cheese. Throw into a hot oven for about 6 minutes.

On a plate put 6 small mounds of watercress, remove the oysters from the oven and carefully place each one onto the 6 mounds of watercress. They should sit nicely on top. Add a tiny sprinkling of paprika to each oyster and around the plate to garnish and eat with a good helping of freshly baked bread.

Use West Highland Dairy for the cheese – mmmmm

Oysters from Isle of Skye Oysters, spinach and watercress are available from other local producers.

Oakes Marine

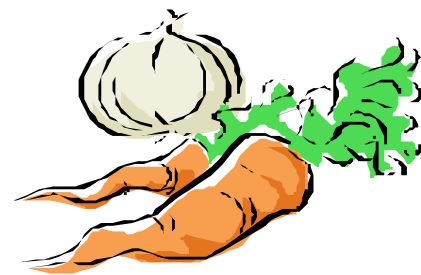
Pesto Scallops

16 scallops
1 large tbsp pesto
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 tbsp olive oil
Juice of half a lemon
Pinch of black pepper

Combine all ingredients (except the scallops) and mix well. Pour over the scallops and toss. Cover and refrigerate for up to 4 hours. Heat grill and grill pan on high heat. Remove scallops from marinade. Place them in the bottom of the heated grill pan, drizzle on a little marinade if you wish (I do). Grill on level closest to the heat (I'm talking electric here, gas might be a bit hotter).

Turn them once. They're ready when the centre of the second side loses its transparency - takes about a couple of minutes each side, especially if they're big juicy Oakes Marine scallops.

Garlic and basil (for fresh pesto) are available from other local producers



A list of local producers is given on page 4 of your newsletter. For more information about Food Link visit www.foodlinkvan.co.uk. For copies of the newsletter or latest producers list email lesley.linley@btinternet.com.