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Opening Extract from...

Mary Berry's Christmas Collection

Written by Mary Berry

Published by Headline

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Mary Berry's Family Sunday Lunches
Cook Now, Eat Later
Mary Berry's Stress-free Kitchen
Real Food – Fast
Mary Berry's New Aga Cookbook

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This edition first published in 2013
by HEADLINE BOOK PUBLISHING

Some of the recipes in this book have previously appeared in *Mary Berry's New Aga Cookbook*, *Cook Now*, *Eat Later* and *Real Food – Fast*. *Mary Berry's Christmas Collection* was first published in 2006.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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Cataloguing in Publication Data
is available from the British Library.
978 0 7553 6441 1

Edited by Jo Roberts-Miller
Designed by Smith & Gilmour
Photography by Martin Poole
Food Stylist: Kim Morphew
Assistant Food Stylist: Poppy Campbell
Printed and bound in Germany by Mohn Media

Headline's policy is to use papers that are natural, renewable and recyclable products and made from wood grown in sustainable forests. The logging and manufacturing processes are expected to conform to the environmental regulations of the country of origin.

HEADLINE BOOK PUBLISHING
An Hachette UK Company
338 Euston Road
London NW1 3BH

www.headline.co.uk
www.hachette.co.uk

DIPS IN MINUTES

V

RED PEPPER AND HERB

Measure 2 canned red peppers, drained, 2 roughly chopped spring onions, a small bunch of fresh basil, and a few sprigs each of fresh parsley and dill in a processor and whiz. Add 8 tablespoons lowcalorie mayonnaise and process again. Season with salt and pepper, put into a serving bowl, cover with clingfilm and chill. Can be made up to 3 days ahead and kept in the fridge.

SPICED MANGO

Combine 225g (8 oz) half-fat cream cheese with 1 tablespoon curry powder, 4 tablespoons mango chutney and the juice of ½ lemon. Season with salt and pepper, put into a serving bowl, cover with clingfilm and chill. Can be made up to 3 days ahead and kept in the fridge.

GUACAMOLE

Peel a large ripe avocado, and cut the flesh into chunks. Coarsely chop 4 spring onions. Peel and deseed 2 large firm tomatoes, put them into the processor with the other ingredients and whiz until smooth. Stir in a dash each of Tabasco, sugar and lemon juice, plus some salt and pepper to taste, and whiz again. Put into a serving bowl, cover with clingfilm and chill. Make on the day of serving.

BLUE CHEESE

Measure 100g (4 oz) Dolcelatte or Stilton cheese into the processor, add a 150ml carton soured cream and a little pepper and whiz. Put into a serving bowl, cover with clingfilm and chill. Can be made up to 3 days ahead and kept in the fridge.

MILD CHILLI

Mix a 200ml (7 fl oz) carton of low-fat crème fraîche with 4 tablespoons bought chilli dipping sauce, stir well, and season with salt and pepper. Perfect with prawns or chicken goujons. Put into a serving bowl, cover with clingfilm and chill. Can be made up to 3 days ahead and kept in the fridge.

GOOD THINGS FOR DIPPING

RAW VEGETABLES

Pencil thickness and about 7.5cm (3 in) long sticks of carrot, red or yellow pepper, courgette, cucumber or celery. Halved baby sweetcorn and tiny mangetout or sugar-snap peas are ideal too.

GARLIC PITTA BREAD

Melt 50g (2 oz) butter and mix with 2 crushed garlic cloves. Brush this over the cut side of 4 large pitta breads, split in half horizontally. Arrange on a foil-lined grill pan and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Slide under the grill and cook for about 5 minutes until golden brown and crispy. Slice into triangles and serve. To cook in the Aga, arrange on a baking sheet and slide on to the top set of runners in the Roasting Oven for about 6 minutes until golden brown.

BREADSTICKS

These are ideal for dipping – but a little boring!



MAKES 8–10 SLICES

HAZELNUT MERINGUE ROULADE WITH PASSION-LEMON COULIS

A meringue roulade with the wonderful addition of hazelnuts. The coulis is stunning!

5 egg whites
275g (10 oz) caster sugar
50g (2 oz) shelled hazelnuts, roughly chopped
300ml (½ pint) double cream, whipped

COULIS
6 tablespoons lemon curd
2 passionfruit

GARNISH
8 Cape gooseberries

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Fan 180°C/Gas 6. Line a 33 × 23cm (13 × 9 in) Swiss roll tin with greased non-stick baking paper, pushing it into the corners.

STEP 1 Whisk the egg whites in an electric mixer on full speed until very stiff. Gradually add the sugar, 1 teaspoon at a time, and still at high speed, whisk well between each addition. Whisk until very, very stiff and all the sugar has been included. Mix in two-thirds of the hazelnuts.

STEP 2 Spread the meringue mixture into the prepared tin and sprinkle the remaining hazelnuts evenly over the top. Bake in the preheated oven for about 12 minutes or until just coloured pale golden. Lower the oven temperature to 160°C/Fan 140°C/Gas 3, and continue baking for a further 20 minutes until firm to the touch.

STEP 3 Remove the meringue from the oven and turn, hazelnut-side down, on to a sheet of non-stick baking paper. Remove the paper from the base of the cooked meringue and allow to cool for about 10 minutes.

STEP 4 When cooled, spread the whipped cream over the meringue. Start to roll from the short end, very tightly at first, until rolled up like a Swiss roll. Wrap in non-stick paper and chill before serving.

STEP 5 To make the coulis, mix the lemon curd with the scooped-out seeds and juice from the passionfruit.

STEP 6 Serve the coulis alongside a slice of roulade. Garnish with the Cape gooseberries.

AGA Cook the meringue on the grid shelf on the floor of the Roasting Oven with the cold plain shelf on the second set of runners for 8–10 minutes until pale golden brown. Transfer to the Simmering Oven for about 15 minutes until firm to the touch.

PREPARING AHEAD The roulade can be made 24 hours before it is needed. Complete to the end of step 4 and keep in the fridge. The coulis can also be made up to 24 hours ahead (this time will also allow the passionfruit seeds to soften slightly). You can also freeze the roulade: wrap in foil at the end of step 4 and freeze for up to 2 months.

TIP You can make lemon curd with the egg yolks left over from the meringue.