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Come on Over!

BIG ON FLAVOUR, BELINDA RANDELL'S DELICIOUS SUMMER RECIPES FEED A FAMILY OR A CROWD

FOOD IS LIKE a conversation in Belinda Randell's home. Dish by dish, family and friends share stories, warmth and love across the table. Randell's natural curiosity about food has taken her on a journey from Canada to Byron Bay; from labouring on a biodynamic farm to selling produce at organic markets in Melbourne; and from her work in "sterile commercial kitchens", to where she finds herself today—in Sydney and running classes on how to cook for people with medical needs.

Inspired by her father—who passed away last year from mesothelioma (asbestos-related lung cancer)—Randell learned that her love could be simmered, stirred and ladled into nourishing dishes.

"I expressed my love for my father by preparing nurturing, nutritional food for him during his illness," she says. "I developed recipes for him when he was undergoing intensive chemo and radiation. I also started cooking for two other people who had cancer, and then I had people calling me to ask if I could cook for conditions, such as autism, or for those going through IVF treatment." When her father passed away, Randell's business, The Organic Cook, was born.

One of her greatest pleasures, explains Randell, is cooking for family. "We try to have a ritual on Wednesday nights—the day my mum babysits my niece Mia. We all come together at her house and I cook—trying out new recipes on them." She fills her saucepans with →

FASHION STYLING STAV HORTIS AT NETWORK AGENCY; HAIR AND MAKE-UP KATIE GOERLACH AT LIZARD MANAGEMENT

YOUR SUMMER GET-TOGETHER MENU



BELINDA RANDELL, chef and educator



Eggplant Dip, Hummus Dip and Beetroot Dip



Organic Meatballs with Tomato-Tamarind Sauce



Persian Chicken



Rocket, Fennel & Orange Salad



Grilled Peaches with Cardamom & Honey Yoghurt



Randell's Organic Favourites

Reduce pesticide intake; add some of these to your list

- Broccoli and cauliflower
- Lettuce and spinach
- Carrots
- Apples
- Stone fruit
- Strawberries

The Brands

- Spiral
 - Demeter Farm Mill
- Both use quality ingredients and healthy food-preparation methods, Randell says.

spices and fresh herbs and emphasises combinations that taste 'clean' on the palate. "My philosophy when creating meals is that they should be bursting with flavour." For inspiration, Randell looks to regions that have strong traditional and cultural rituals connected with food. "I love Mediterranean, Moroccan and Middle Eastern food—it's so healthy. And I also love the spices and flavours in this style of cooking." Whether she's making a meal for clients or cooking for friends and family, Randell chooses local, market-fresh produce. And organic is a must: "I specialise in using organic and biodynamic food—it's healthier, more nutrient-dense and an ethical way of eating," she says. (See box, left, for Randell's organic choices.) Here, she shares some of her favourite recipes. They easily adapt to feeding a crowd. So come on over, pull up a chair and join the conversation.

Eggplant Dip

■ 10 SERVES (50 G SERVING)

- 2 eggplants, cut in halves
- 1 tbs chopped coriander
- 1 tbs tahini
- 1 tbs olive oil
- 1 tsp cumin

PREHEAT oven to 180°C.

LINE a baking tray with baking paper.

PLACE eggplants on tray and roast them for 30 minutes.

PULSE cooled eggplants and remaining ingredients in a food processor until blended.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING

153 kJ (37 cal), 1 g protein, 1 g carbs, 2 g fibre, 4 g fat, 0 g sat fat, 4 mg sodium

Beetroot Dip

■ 10 SERVES (50 G SERVING)

- 2 large beetroots, peeled
- 1 cup biodynamic Greek yoghurt
- 1 tsp cumin
- 2 tbs finely chopped coriander
- 1 tsp rosewater
- Juice of 1 lemon

ADD beetroots to a saucepan of boiling water and cook until soft (about 45 minutes).

BLEND beetroots, yoghurt, cumin, coriander, rosewater and lemon juice in a food processor.

CHILL for 1 hour, then serve.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING

166 kJ (40 cal), 2 g protein, 4 g carbs, 1 g fibre, 2 g fat, 1 g sat fat, 25 mg sodium

Hummus Dip

■ 25 SERVES (50 G SERVING)

- 2 cans organic chickpeas
- 1 tbs olive oil
- 3 tbs tahini
- 1/4 cup filtered water
- 1 garlic clove
- 2 tbs lemon juice

PLACE all ingredients in a food processor and blend well.

CHILL and serve.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING

222 kJ (53 cal), 3 g protein, 5 g carbs, 2 g fibre, 3 g fat, 0 g sat fat, 82 mg sodium



Food to share lets you dip into summer flavours





Succulent drumsticks get fresh with a zesty salad

Persian Chicken

■ PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES + MARINATING
 ■ COOKING TIME: 25 MINUTES ■ SERVINGS: 6

- 1 *tsp ground cinnamon*
- 1 *tsp ground cumin*
- 1 *tsp ground coriander*
- 1 *tsp ground turmeric*
- 2 *garlic cloves, crushed*
- 1 *tsp ground cardamom*
- 1 *tsp ground ginger*
- 4 *tbs olive oil*
- 1 *kg organic-chicken drumsticks*

PREHEAT oven to 180°C and line a baking dish with baking paper.

MIX together all spices, garlic and olive oil in large bowl. Add drumsticks; massage spices into them. Marinate chicken in fridge for 1 hour.

PLACE drumsticks in baking dish and bake until browned and crisp (about 25 minutes).

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER 2 SMALL

DRUMSTICKS 1,613 kJ (385 cal), 29 g protein, 0 g carbs, 0 g fibre, 30 g fat, 7 g sat fat, 160 mg sodium

Rocket, Fennel & Orange Salad

■ PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES ■ SERVINGS: 4

- 2 *bunches rocket, washed and trimmed (about 2 cups)*
- 1 *fennel bulb, very finely sliced (about 1 cup)*
- ½ *cup black kalamata olives*
- 2 *small valencia oranges, peeled and sliced into circles*
- ¼ *cup extra-virgin olive oil*
- 1 *tbs red-wine vinegar*

ARRANGE rocket on a plate, and layer with fennel and olives.

PLACE oranges on top.

MIX olive oil with red-wine vinegar in a bowl, and pour over salad before serving.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING

749 kJ (179 cal), 2 g protein, 9 g carbs, 2 g fibre, 15 g fat, 2 g sat fat, 135 mg sodium



Middle Eastern meatballs add spice to rice

Organic Baked Meatballs with Tomato-Tamarind Sauce

■ PREP TIME: 25 MINUTES ■ COOKING TIME: 25 MINUTES ■ SERVINGS: 6

- 500 g *organic lamb mince*
- ¼ *brown onion, diced*
- 3 *tbs chopped flat-leaf parsley*
- 6 *tsp chopped fresh coriander*
- 1 *egg, lightly beaten*
- 1 *tsp ground cumin*
- 1 *tsp sweet paprika*
- Sea salt and pepper to season (about ½ tsp of each)*
- 3 *tbs olive oil*
- 2 *cans diced tomatoes*
- 2 *tbs tamarind paste*

PREHEAT oven to 220°C.

COMBINE all ingredients listed above olive oil in a large bowl. Mix thoroughly.

ROLL mixture into 5-cm balls. (Having wet hands is helpful.)

PLACE meatballs in a roasting pan with olive oil. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes.

PUT tomatoes and tamarind paste in frypan, add meatballs and cook for 10 minutes.

SERVE with basmati rice or potato mash.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING

982 kJ (235 cal), 19 g protein, 5 g carbs, 1 g fibre, 16 g fat, 4 g sat fat, 347 mg sodium



Lime & Turmeric Basmati Pilaf

■ PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES ■ COOKING TIME: 35 MINUTES
■ SERVINGS: 6

- 1 *tbs olive oil*
- 1/2 *brown onion, diced*
- 2 *tbs pine nuts*
- 2 *tbs currants*
- 1 *tsp ground turmeric*
- 3 *cardamom pods*
- 2 *cups organic basmati rice*
- 4 *cups chicken stock*
- 1 *cinnamon stick*
- Juice of 2 limes*

HEAT oil in frypan and sauté onion until translucent. Add pine nuts, currants, turmeric, cardamom pods and rice; stir.

TRANSFER mixture to a saucepan. Add stock, bring to the boil and stir.

REDUCE heat and add cinnamon stick. Cover saucepan and simmer until all stock absorbs and rice is light and fluffy (about 20 minutes).

REMOVE from heat. Let stand for 5 minutes, then stir in lime juice.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING

1,380 kJ (330 cal), 6 g protein, 60 g carbs, 1 g fibre, 7 g fat, 1 g sat fat, 622 mg sodium



Warm caramelised fruit meets cardamom cool

Grilled Peaches with Cardamom & Honey Yoghurt

■ PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES ■ COOKING TIME: 12 MINUTES ■ SERVINGS: 8

- 1 *cup raw walnuts*
- 8 *ripe freestone peaches*
- 2 *tbs raw sugar*
- 1 *tsp ground cardamom*
- 1 *tbs raw honey*
- 1 *250 g tub biodynamic yoghurt*

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING

830 kJ (198 cal), 5 g protein, 18 g carbs, 3 g fibre, 12 g fat, 1 g sat fat, 20 mg sodium

TOAST walnuts in a frypan over medium heat until golden.

CUT peaches in half, sprinkle with raw sugar, and place under a hot grill until soft (about 10 minutes).

STIR cardamom and honey into yoghurt.

SERVE peaches with yoghurt and sprinkle walnuts on top. **P**