

Meet the planet-friendly chefs!

They run eco-friendly restaurants and say it makes good business sense.

Clare Hargreaves meets three chefs taking the sustainable route

Recipe photographs **Stuart Ovenden**



Pan-fried & raw asparagus with goat's curd & beetroot

At this time of year, English asparagus is fabulous, so it's important to let it shine by keeping things simple. Serving it both pan-fried and raw provides two fantastic contrasting tastes and textures, giving a charred flavour complemented by a fresh sweet crunch.

This is great on its own, but you could also serve it with a bowl of wild rice or some homemade bread.

EASY **FOLATE** **2 OF 5 A DAY** **GLUTEN FREE**

SERVES 2 **PREP 15 mins** **COOK 5 mins**

bunch asparagus (about 10 spears), washed

100g cooked beetroot

150g goat's curd (or use goat's cheese, ricotta or cottage cheese)

baby salad leaves, to decorate (optional)

FOR THE DRESSING

70ml grapeseed oil, plus 2 tsp

extra for grilling the asparagus (alternative oils can be used but may affect the flavour)

zest 1/4 orange, plus 30ml juice

20g pine nuts, lightly toasted

1 First, make the dressing. In a small bowl or jug, whisk the oil, orange zest and juice lightly, then add the pine nuts and set aside.

2 Hold the asparagus at the base and just below the tip, then snap in two - you will feel a natural breaking point where the asparagus becomes a little woody. Save the woody bases for soups or stocks.

3 Shred four spears of asparagus using a mandolin (or slice lengthways with a vegetable peeler). Repeat the process with the cooked beetroot. Put the shaved asparagus in a bowl of cold water and set aside.

4 Heat a frying pan or skillet over a high heat until hot. Coat the remaining six whole pieces of asparagus with the oil and place in the hot pan, moving them around in the pan, and season with a few pinches of sea salt. Allow the asparagus to brown, then remove, draining off any excess oil.

5 Put the roasted asparagus on the plate, then add dollops of the curd. Drain the raw asparagus, then layer it over the curd with the slices of cooked beetroot. Stir the dressing and drizzle over the dish. Add some baby salad leaves to decorate, if you like.

PER SERVING 721 kcal • fat 66g • saturates 18g • carbs 9g • sugars 8g • fibre 4g • protein 21g • salt 1.2g

'We grow most of our veg'

Having cut his culinary teeth at several three-Michelin-starred restaurants in France, Ryan Simpson (above left) joined forces with fellow chef Liam Trotman to open a gastropub in Oxfordshire, which gained a Michelin star after just 18 months. In 2010 they opened Orwells (orwellsatshiplake.co.uk), near Henley, Oxfordshire. Last year it was named Sustainable Pub of the Year runner-up by the Sustainable Restaurant Association (SRA).

'We buy most of our produce from local suppliers,' says Liam, 'and grow more than three-quarters of our veg on our nearby allotment. I often meet our chefs there at 7am to pick it. We keep three beehives there to provide honey, which we sell at the bar.'

'We keep food, energy and packaging waste to a minimum, and if a supplier won't take back their delivery crates to reuse, we won't deal with them. Being sustainable is good business. I believe it's where the future of dining lies.'



Liam's tips

- Don't worry if you char the asparagus in the pan - the more colour, the better. Use a high heat and make sure you season with salt well, as this is important to balance the flavours of the dish.
- You may prefer to buy pre-cooked beetroot, as fresh beetroot will take 2-3 hrs to cook.



'Quality food with a conscience'

This year, ODE (named after its Devonshire postcode) celebrates a decade of offering great food sustainably. Chef-owner Tim Bouget and his wife, Clare, opened ODE restaurant in the fishing village of Shaldon in 2006, and followed it six years later with a family-friendly café. Last year they added a second café at Gara Rock, and a mobile sourdough pizza business (odetruefood.com).

'Making planet-friendly food accessible for all budgets is at our core,' says Tim, 'and fortunately we've seen the rewards – happy customers, profitability and awards. The restaurant was named Sustainable Restaurant of the Year by the SRA in 2012; the café in Shaldon won the same award the following two years.'

'The quality of our food comes first. We're lucky to have superb produce on our doorstep – from south Devon brown crab to organic vegetables and dairy from Riverford Farm. When produce costs more, we absorb this across the business rather than passing it on to the customer.'

'We built the café with an eco-conscious design. It has a sedum grass roof to attract wildlife, hot water is provided by solar-thermal panels, and furnishings are recycled. We use biodegradable compostable takeaway containers, our staff wear organic cotton aprons, and we take our ethos of seasonal eating to local schools. Looking after the environment makes good business sense.'

Crab mac 'n' cheese bake

This seafood twist on a family classic is a regular on our café menu, and it's easy to make at home. It's a great way to introduce kids to crab, one of our most sustainable shellfish.

When buying crab, buy freshly picked meat from a fishmonger and check it's British brown crab that has been pot-caught. Serve with the rocket salad, below.

A LITTLE EFFORT **CALCIUM**

SERVES 6-8 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 40 mins

100g butter, plus extra for greasing
500g macaroni
100g flour
1 litre milk
200g mature cheddar, grated
1 tbsp Dijon mustard
1 tbsp tomato ketchup
1 tsp cayenne pepper or Tabasco sauce
150g fresh, brown crabmeat
FOR THE CRAB TOPPING
150g white crabmeat
100g crème fraîche
juice ½ lemon
½ small pack dill, finely chopped

SUSTAINABILITY TIPS

- If you can buy crab bones, make a stock and use this to replace the milk in the recipe – it will give added depth of flavour.
- When you heat the water to cook the macaroni, make sure you cover the pan with a lid. The water will heat up quicker, plus you'll save time and energy.

- 1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6 and grease a medium baking dish. Cook the macaroni following pack instructions.
- 2 Meanwhile, melt the butter in a thick-bottomed pan and add the flour to make a thick paste, stirring frequently with a wooden spoon. Add the milk, little by little, to the paste, mixing until smooth. Cook over a medium heat, stirring continuously until the mixture thickens.
- 3 Remove from the heat, add 150g cheese and whisk until smooth. Mix in the mustard, ketchup and cayenne. Drain the macaroni and return to the pan. Stir the cheese sauce into the cooked pasta, fold in the brown crabmeat and season.
- 4 Spoon the mixture into the prepared baking dish. Sprinkle the remaining 50g cheese on top and bake in the oven for 25-30 mins until heated through. Remove from the oven and stand for 10 mins.
- 5 Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine all the ingredients for the crab topping with some seasoning. Serve a big spoonful on top of each portion of the bake, then scatter over the dressed rocket (below). *If making ahead, cool completely and leave in the fridge overnight. The next day, cut into slabs and reheat (covered in foil) for 10 mins in the oven at 200C/180C fan/gas 6.*

PER SERVING (8) 623 kJ • fat 29g • saturates 17g • carbs 61g • sugars 8g • fibre 3g • protein 28g • salt 1.4g

Rocket with a charred lemon dressing

EASY **V** **GLUTEN FREE**

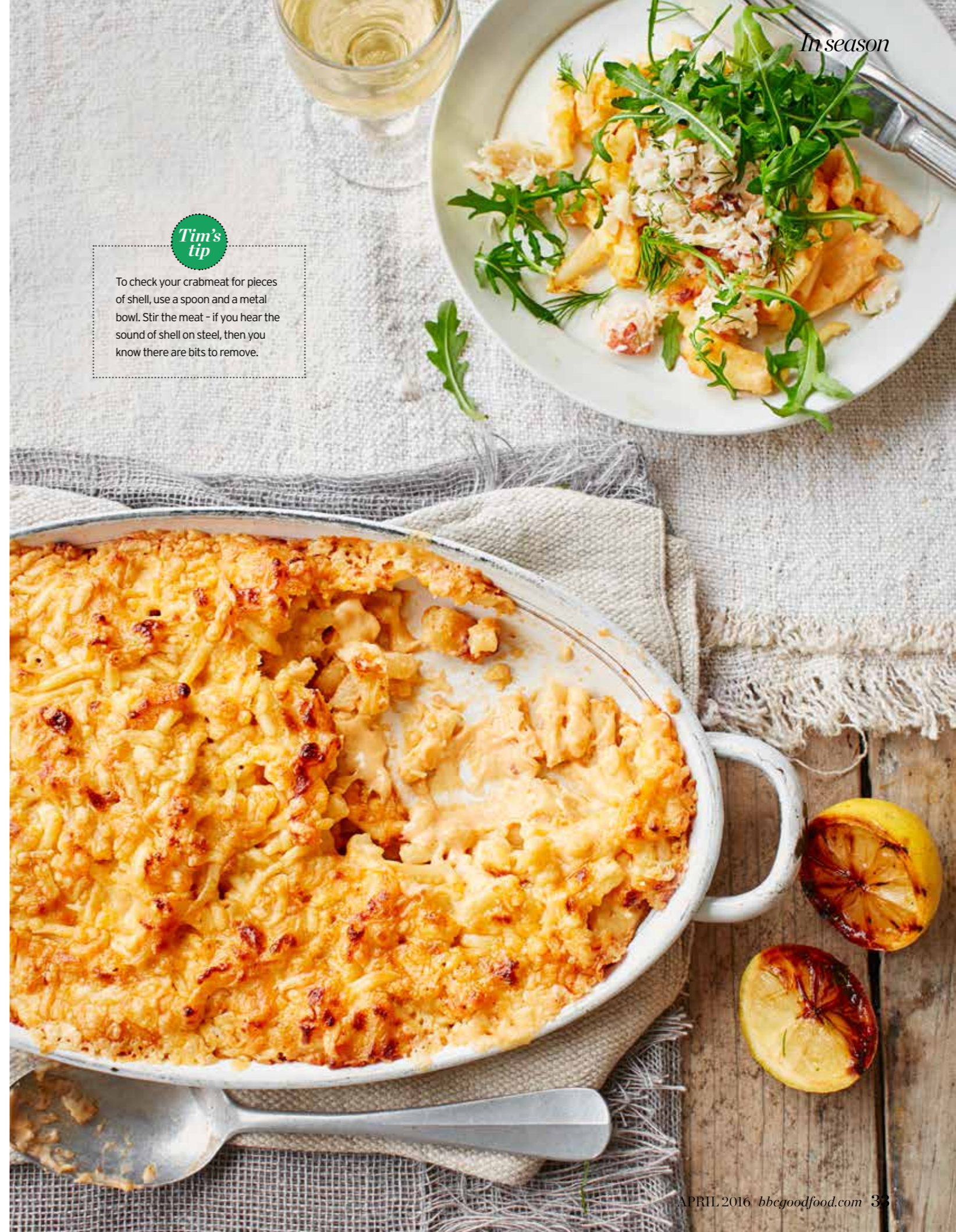
SERVES 6-8 **PREP** 2 mins **COOK** 5 mins

Cut **1 lemon** in half and place, flesh-side down, on a grill or in a pan over a high heat. When browned, squeeze the juice into a small bowl with **50ml cold-pressed olive oil**. Season to taste, then combine with **100g rocket leaves**.

PER SERVING (8) 59 kJ • fat 6g • saturates 1g • carbs none • sugars none • fibre none • protein none • salt 0.1g

Tim's tip

To check your crabmeat for pieces of shell, use a spoon and a metal bowl. Stir the meat – if you hear the sound of shell on steel, then you know there are bits to remove.



Portrait: JASON INGRAM



'Nothing goes to waste'

At Cafe St Honoré, a Parisian-style bistro in Edinburgh's New Town, Neil Forbes delivers modern Scottish cooking with a keen eye on seasonality and food miles.

His approach has won him a raft of awards, including the SRA's Award for Society in 2013 and Sustainable Business of the Year at the 2014 Catering in Scotland Awards (cafesthonore.com).

'Our philosophy is very much nose-to-tail eating,' says Neil. 'We source from small producers, and buy whole carcasses from local organic farmers, like Hugh Grierson (hughgrierson.co.uk), which we butcher in our low-energy kitchen, using almost everything. I see butchery as a fantastic skill to pass on to the next generation of chefs. But it's not just meat that we use every bit of. We scrub rather than peel carrots, for instance, and use the tops for stock.'

'I also see staff welfare as part of being sustainable – we have a profit-share scheme for staff, and we release them to gain experience in other restaurants. I give talks and classes in local schools too.'

Loin of lamb, wilted spinach, carrots & rosemary potatoes

If you can get hold of wild garlic, use it instead of the spinach – it has a wonderful, subtle flavour that will bring this dish together beautifully. Always keep the skin on your tatties – this is where the flavour is. I've used loin of organic lamb, but for cheaper cuts, try a leg or gigot steaks. Serve it pink.

A LITTLE EFFORT FOLATE FIBRE VIT C **2 OF 5 A DAY**

SERVES 4 PREP 5 mins COOK 45 mins

- 8 new potatoes (I used Pink Fir Apple), scrubbed with skins left on**
- 75ml cold-pressed rapeseed oil, or olive oil, for frying**
- 16 baby carrots, washed and scrubbed, leaving about 2.5cm of top on (or 4 medium-sized carrots, scrubbed)**
- 12 garlic cloves, skin left on, bashed**
- 25g butter**
- 4 rosemary sprigs**
- 4 pieces of lamb loin (about 500g in total), sinew removed but thin layer of fat left on (you can get your butcher to do this for you)**
- 100ml red wine**
- 1 tsp redcurrant jelly**
- 500ml lamb or beef stock**
- 200g baby spinach, washed**

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. In a pan, cover the potatoes with cold salted water, bring to the boil and simmer for 5-10 mins until just cooked. Drain and allow to cool slightly, then cut into quarters.

2 Heat a frying pan over a medium-high heat until hot, then add 45ml of

the oil. Add the potatoes, along with the carrots and garlic. Season, toss to coat with oil, then add half the butter and rosemary. Once there's some colour on the potatoes, transfer everything to a roasting tin and cook in the oven for 25-30 mins.

3 Meanwhile, place an ovenproof frying pan over a medium heat and add the remaining oil. Season the lamb all over and, when the oil is quite hot, add it to the pan.

4 Fry the lamb for 1-2 mins each side, using tongs to press down gently to caramelise and render the fat. Season again and put in the oven for 5-7 mins until just cooked. When pressed with your fingers, the lamb should have a bounce to it. Remove from the frying pan and set aside in a warm place.

5 While the lamb rests, make the sauce. Add the red wine to the roasting juices in the frying pan over a medium-high heat. Reduce by two-thirds, then add the redcurrant jelly. Once the jelly has melted, add the lamb stock and reduce until it is the consistency of double cream.

6 Once the sauce is nearly reduced, put a separate pan on a low heat and melt the remaining butter. Add the spinach to wilt and season.

7 To serve, divide the potatoes between four warmed plates. Cut each piece of lamb into about five slices and place next to the potatoes. Arrange the carrots and spinach around the lamb. Spoon the sauce over everything and decorate with pieces of garlic and rosemary. Scatter a pinch of salt over each plate and serve.

PER SERVING 745 kcal • fat 58g • saturates 20g • carbs 20g • sugars 9g • fibre 6g • protein 27g • salt 0.8g

Food styling: JENNIFER JOYCE | Styling: JENNY IGGLEDEN | Portrait: PAUL DODDS

HOW GREEN IS YOUR FAVOURITE RESTAURANT?

Look out for a badge in the restaurant's window indicating membership of the Food Made Good programme, run by the Sustainable Restaurant Association (thesra.org). This rates restaurants with one to three stars – all the restaurants mentioned here hold three.

Some 5,500 establishments in the UK, from Michelin-starred restaurants to fish & chip shops, are signed up to the scheme (foodmadegood.org).