

CARE AND CHOICE RECIPES



**Recipe ideas for carers to cook for
their elderly Clients**



HOME MADE & FRESH



Carer's top tips

by Gwyneth



Top Tip No One: Be sensitive to your client and as you cook for them, see what comes back to you and what is eaten with gusto. Many from an older generation for example cannot easily eat spaghetti! This sounds crazy to most of us, but I have learned that some older people genuinely are baffled by spaghetti and struggle to eat it, wondering whether to cut it up into short pieces or just give up and leave much on the plate!

Chilli is another ingredient to tread carefully with.

Top Tip No Two: learn how to make a good Victoria sponge and a chocolate cake. This means the first afternoon after making it you can offer your client a delicious teatime treat, and thereafter, gosh, not only afternoon tea but this will help you with puddings for well over a week!

Stew some fruit, split a slice of Victoria sponge on a plate and drench with the syrup, arrange stewed fruit around it and serve with lashings of cream, ice cream or custard. Even better, lace it with sherry and you have a simple trifle which is always yummy no matter your age.

Top Tip Three: make a good chocolate sauce. No short cuts, make it with butter, cream and sugar. Not only will this be a fail safe for ice cream and choc sauce, but use it with your chocolate cake to make a version of tiramisu, or with stewed fruit, fresh strawberries and cake...

Top Tip Four: (This is naughty) I take a big bottle of medium cream sherry with me to cook with.

When making a simple stew with venison or beef, deglaze the pan with sherry, add some redcurrant jelly, bay leaves and your work is done..or if serving a plain steak dinner, again deglaze the pan with sherry, add Worcestershire sauce, tomato paste, butter and adjust the flavour with redcurrant jelly to make an instant easy sauce.

This is very tasty.





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Top Tip Five: Cinnamon. I have just read today about the health benefits of cinnamon and I cannot recommend enough keeping a little jar or bowl to hand in the kitchen with a half-half mix of cinnamon and demerara sugar. I don't know how often it has helped me perk up a bowl of rice pudding and fruit, a baked banana, pancake, trifle, chocolate cake and cream the list is endless and it's so simple (baked banana - soft brown sugar and half an hour in the oven. Serve with ice cream!).

Top Tip Six: Poached pears. Oh my goodness. So easy and healthy too: a stick or two of cinnamon, demerara sugar, a bay leaf or two and the zest of one orange, water. Poach until soft, then reduce the water until it's a syrup. Yum. It will keep too, so if made on a Monday, skip a day or so and serve it two or three times with cake, ice cream, cream, chocolate sauce....of course, same applies to apples and plums but pears are the most wonderful in my opinion.

Top Tip Seven: Frozen berries. These are not only very healthy for your client, but so helpful to you as a carer! Stew with demerara sugar, the juice of an orange and the zest (thinly shaved orange peel), a stick of cinnamon, bay leaf if you wish and of course sherry if you wish! Make it once then keep in the fridge for a number of days, even as long as a week. It can be used with rice pudding beautifully, cake, ice cream and if your client likes duck breast, this is easily turned into a savoury sauce by adjusting the seasoning: still sweet, but bring in a little more salt/sweet and add another bay leaf perhaps. Or I have added juniper berries briefly into the simmering sauce, but they are quite strong.

Top Tip Eight: Oranges. I never realised oranges would be a star ingredient for me, until I started caring. Firstly, using the zest adds incomparable flavour so easily, as mentioned above; use it to add to your stewed fruit, fruit sauces, even add to beef stews. Then learn how to segment a good orange with a sharp knife and fan the segments out on a plate - it looks so pretty and fresh, not to mention delicious. It just looks like a treat! This can be served with yoghurt sweetened using honey and finished with a dusting of the cinnamon and sugar mentioned above. Add sliced banana if you wish or other fruit. I also use it with a creamy cardamom rice pudding sometimes and of course the cinnamon sugar..

Top Tip Nine: smoked salmon and scrambled eggs. Say no more. This meal gives you a rest if you are tired and I have yet to meet anyone who doesn't find it delicious.

Top Tip Ten: make sure you can make a super omelette. Cheese and tomato is basic (add some torn basil leaves if you have) and so good. Serve with oven chips and a salad, and again minimal effort if you are worn out from cooking, but so tasty..



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Often it is tiring to think up ideas for two meals a day, each day! (discounting breakfast which is often more routine) and this is when homemade soup comes in: if you are making for one person, finely chop half an onion, a carrot, a stick of celery and garlic then soften with olive oil in a casserole dish. Have a vegetable stock cube on hand, dissolved in boiling water or if you prefer, a jellied stock pot. This is the basis for so many variations: very delicious is to slice a whole small cauliflower into the softened vegetables, add a sprinkle of nutmeg, season with black pepper, pour in the stock then simmer until the cauliflower is soft. Blend, taste for seasoning, and add a swill of cream if you have. Sweet potato makes a divine soup! Same process, slice the potato thinly so it doesn't take long to soften, replace nutmeg with cumin and if you feel like it add a grating of orange zest. Carrot soup with cumin and orange is another good one, and extremely handy is to make cream of tomato soup using the same method as above, but sieving a tin of tomato chunks (don't leave chunks!), add a splash of sherry if you have, season with oregano, soften the acidity by adding a teaspoon of demerara sugar (taste to balance saltiness) and lashings of cream.

The last thing to add is a recipe for chocolate sauce - recipe as follows: 50g cooking chocolate (50% cocoa is okay but 70% is better) 25g butter, 125 ml double cream, 1 tablespoon caster sugar, one tablespoon cognac, coffee liqueur or no prizes for guessing I use sherry! Heat the cream and butter, and add the sugar and alcohol until combined, then the chocolate and remove from the heat and stir until melted, serve warm. If you are cooking for one, this can last for quite a number of servings, kept covered in the fridge but warm it up slowly in a bowl of hot water stirring often. Don't leave it on the heat otherwise it will separate and become oily!







The Perfect Puttanesca

3 TBSP OLIVE OIL
1 ONION, FINELY CHOPPED
2 LARGE GARLIC CLOVES, CRUSHED
1/2 TSP CHILLI FLAKES
400G CAN CHOPPED TOMATOES
5 ANCHOVY FILLETS, FINELY CHOPPED
150G PITTED OLIVES
2 TBSP CAPERS, DRAINED
300G DRIED SPAGHETTI OR LINGUINE
HANDFUL OF PARSLEY, FINELY CHOPPED

Heat the oil in a non-stick pan on a low heat, then add the onion and a good pinch of salt. Fry until soft before adding the garlic and chilli and frying for a further minute.

Stir in the chopped tomatoes, anchovies, olives and capers. Bring to a gentle simmer for 15 minutes before seasoning to taste.

While the sauce is simmering, bring a large pan of water to the boil. Add your pasta of choice and a good dash of salt and cook according to the pasta instructions then drain and toss with the sauce and parsley.



Cottage pie with swede and carrot mash



OLIVE OIL
1 LARGE ONION, FINELY DICED
2 CLOVES GARLIC, CRUSHED
1 BAY LEAF AND 2 TEASPOON CHOPPED FRESH THYME
3 CELERY STICKS, DICED
600G LEAN LAMB MINCE
300G PASSATA
2/3 CUP (150ML) BEEF STOCK
2 TEASPOONS WHOLEGRAIN MUSTARD
1 TABLESPOON WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE
1 SMALL SWEDE (ABOUT 450G), PEELED AND DICED
2 LARGE CARROTS (375G), SLICED
1 CUP (150G) FROZEN PEAS
1/4 CUP (25G) PARMESAN, GRATED



Heat the oven to 190°C/fan 170°C/gas 5. Heat a large non-stick pan set over a medium heat with oil. Add the onion, garlic, bay leaf, thyme and celery and cook for 6–8 min until soft. Add the mince and cook, breaking it up with a wooden spoon, for 5 min or until browned. Add the passata, stock, mustard and worcestershire sauce. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 25 min.

While the filling is cooking, add the swede and carrots to a large saucepan of water and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 20 min or until soft. Drain, then return to the pan and turn off the heat. Using a stick blender, blitz the vegetables into a purée, then season with black pepper.

Stir the peas into the filling, then spoon the mixture into 4 x 450ml pie dishes or 1 x large baking dish. Cover evenly with the swede and carrot topping, then scatter with the parmesan and spray with oil. Bake for 20 min or until the topping is golden.

Remove from the oven and leave to cool for 5 min before serving.





Potato dauphinoise



500ML DOUBLE CREAM
500ML MILK
3 GARLIC CLOVES
8 LARGE KING EDWARD OR MARIS PIPER
POTATOES
100G GRATED GRUYÈRE CHEESE
(OPTIONAL)

Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5.

Tip 500ml double cream, 500ml milk and 3 garlic cloves into a large saucepan and bring to a simmer.

Slice 8 large potatoes very finely, about 3-4mm, add them to the cream and simmer for 3 mins until just cooked.

Gently stir to separate the potato and stop it sinking and catching on the bottom of the pan.

Remove the potatoes with a slotted spoon and place in a wide shallow ovenproof dish so that they are about 5cm in depth.

Pour over the garlic infused cream (discarding the garlic) – just enough to seep through the layers and leave a little moisture on the surface.

Scatter over 100g grated gruyère cheese, if using, then bake for 30 mins until the potatoes are soft and browned – increase the heat for 5 mins if not brown enough.






Lentil and bacon soup


**6 RASHERS SMOKED BACK BACON, RIND
TRIMMED OFF**
1 TBSP OLIVE OIL
1 LARGE ONION, PEELED AND CHOPPED
1 CARROT, PEELED AND CHOPPED
2 CELERY STICKS, CHOPPED
2 GARLIC CLOVES, CRUSHED
150G RED LENTILS, RINSED AND DRAINED
400G TIN CHOPPED TOMATOES
1 LITRE (1 3/4PINTS) VEGETABLE STOCK
CRUSTY BREAD, TO SERVE



Cut the trimmed bacon into 2cm pieces. Put the olive oil in a large saucepan set over a low-medium heat and add the bacon, onion, carrot and celery. Cook gently for 10 minutes, until soft and sweet. Stir in the garlic and cook for 5 minutes more.



Add the red lentils, followed by the tinned tomatoes and stock. Bring to the boil then reduce the heat slightly. Cover with a lid and leave the soup to simmer for 25–30 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the lentils are very soft and the soup has thickened. If it looks too thick or starts to catch on the base, add a little water. Season to taste, remembering the bacon and stock are already quite salty. At this stage you can liquidise the soup, if you like, or leave it chunky.





Duck with plum sauce

2 DUCK BREASTS
1 THYME SPRIG AND 1 STAR ANISE
25G BUTTER
FOR THE PLUM SAUCE
1 SHALLOT, FINELY CHOPPED
1 TBSP OLIVE OIL
250G DARK RED PLUMS, HALVED, STONED AND
CUT INTO SMALL WEDGES
50G DEMERARA SUGAR
50ML RED WINE AND 300ML BEEF STOCK

For the sauce, fry the shallot in the oil for 5 mins or until softened but not coloured. Add the plums and sugar, stirring for a few mins until the sugar has dissolved. Add the red wine and stock, then simmer for about 15 mins, stirring occasionally, until softened and slightly thickened.

Meanwhile, heat the oven to 180C/ 160C fan/gas 4. Score the skin of the duck breasts with a sharp knife and season well with salt and pepper. Heat a non-stick frying pan and place the duck breasts in, skin-side down. Fry for 6-7 mins, then turn and add the thyme, star anise and butter. Allow this to melt, basting the duck with the juices, then transfer everything to a small roasting tin and finish in the oven for 5-6 mins for pink or 10-12 mins for well done.

When the duck is ready, baste again with the juices, then rest for 5 mins while you finish everything else.

To serve, thinly slice each duck breast. and serve with Creamed potatoes, some of the plum sauce and buttered spinach.





Salmon with lemon butter sauce

4 (6 OZ | 170 G) SKINLESS SALMON FILLETS
2 TABLESPOONS FRESHLY SQUEEZED LEMON JUICE, DIVIDED
1 TABLESPOON OLIVE OIL
1 TABLESPOON MINCED GARLIC
2 TABLESPOONS DRY WHITE WINE, (OPTIONAL -- CAN SUB WITH 2 TEASPOONS DIJON MUSTARD))
SALT, TO SEASON
CRACKED BLACK PEPPER, TO SEASON
CREAM SAUCE:
1/4 CUP UNSALTED BUTTER
2 TEASPOONS MINCED GARLIC
2 TABLESPOONS DRY WHITE WINE, (CAN SUB WITH 1 TEASPOON DIJON MUSTARD)
1/2 CUP CREAM (HEAVY, WHIPPING OR THICKENED)
1-2 TABLESPOONS FRESHLY SQUEEZED LEMON JUICE
1 TABLESPOON FRESH CHOPPED PARSLEY, DIVIDE



Heat oven to 425°F (220°C). Lightly grease a baking dish. Pat the salmon dry with a paper towel. Combine lemon juice, olive oil, garlic and wine together in a small bowl. Rub salmon with the mixture and arrange in baking dish. Season with a good pinch of salt and pepper.

Bake for 10-12 minutes, or until salmon is opaque throughout. While salmon is baking, melt butter in a small pot over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant (30 seconds). Pour in the wine and let cook for 2-3 minutes until just starting to reduce. Add in cream and cook until sauce thickens slightly.

Take off the heat and stir through lemon juice and parsley. Pour the sauce over the cooked salmon in the dish to mix through the natural pan juices released from the salmon while baking. Serve and enjoy!





Fish pie

1KG MARIS PIPER POTATOES, PEELED AND HALVED
400ML MILK, PLUS A SPLASH
25G BUTTER, PLUS A KNOB
25G PLAIN FLOUR
4 SPRING ONIONS, FINELY SLICED
1 X PACK FISH PIE MIX (COD, SALMON, SMOKED HADDOCK ETC, WEIGHT AROUND 320G-400G DEPENDING ON PACK SIZE)
1 TSP DIJON OR ENGLISH MUSTARD
½ A 25G PACK OR A SMALL BUNCH CHIVES, FINELY SNIPPED
HANDFUL FROZEN SWEETCORN
HANDFUL FROZEN PETITS POIS
HANDFUL GRATED CHEDDAR



Put 1kg potatoes, peeled and halved, in a saucepan and pour over enough water to cover them. Bring to the boil and then simmer until tender.

When cooked, drain thoroughly and mash with a splash of milk and a knob of butter. Season with ground black pepper.

Put 25g butter, 25g plain flour and 4 finely sliced spring onions in another pan and heat gently until the butter has melted, stirring regularly. Cook for 1-2 mins.

Gradually whisk in 400ml milk using a balloon whisk if you have one. Bring to the boil, stirring to avoid any lumps and sticking at the bottom of the pan. Cook for 3-4 mins until thickened.

Take off the heat and stir in 320g-400g mixed fish, 1 tsp Dijon or English mustard, a small bunch of finely snipped chives, handful of sweetcorn and handful of petits pois. Spoon into an ovenproof dish or 6-8 ramekins.

Spoon the potato on top and sprinkle with a handful of grated cheddar cheese.

Pop in the oven for 20-25 mins or until golden and bubbling at the edges.



Apple Crumble



**575G BRAMLEY APPLE (3 MEDIUM APPLES), PEELED, CORED
AND SLICED TO 1CM THICK
2 TBSP GOLDEN CASTER SUGAR
FOR THE CRUMBLE
175G PLAIN FLOUR
110G GOLDEN CASTER SUGAR
110G COLD BUTTER
FOR THE TOPPING (OPTIONAL)
1 TBSP ROLLED OATS
1 TBSP DEMERARA SUGAR
DOUBLE CREAM, CLOTTED CREAM OR CUSTARD, TO SERVE**

Heat the oven to 190C/170 fan/gas 5.

Toss 575g peeled, cored and sliced Bramley apples with 2 tbsp golden caster sugar and put in a 23cm round baking dish at least 5cm deep, or a 20cm square dish. Flatten down with your hand to prevent too much crumble falling through.

Put 175g plain flour and 110g golden caster sugar in a bowl with a good pinch of salt.

Slice in 110g cold butter and rub it in with your fingertips until the mixture looks like moist breadcrumbs. Shake the bowl and any big bits will come to the surface – rub them in. Alternatively, pulse in a processor until sandy (don't over-process).

Pour the crumb mix over the apples to form a pile in the centre, then use a fork to even out.

Gently press the surface with the back of the fork so the crumble holds together and goes crisp, then lightly drag the fork over the top for a decorative finish.

Sprinkle 1 tbsp rolled oats and 1 tbsp demerara sugar over evenly, if you wish.
Set on a baking tray and put in the preheated oven for 35-40 minutes, until the top is golden and the apples feel very soft when you insert a small, sharp knife. Leave to cool for 10 minutes before serving.

Honey baked plums with mascarpone

6 LARGE RIPE PLUMS, HALVED AND DESTONED
2 TBSP CLEAR HONEY
250G TUB LIGHTER MASCARPONE
1 TBSP CHOPPED PISTACHIOS
3 VANILLA VIENNESE THINS BISCUITS (OPTIONAL)

Preheat the oven to gas 4, 180°C, fan 160°C. Put the plums, cut side up, in a large baking dish. Drizzle over 1 tbsp of the honey and bake for 15 mins until tender.

Drizzle the remaining honey on top and bake for another 5 mins.

Divide the mascarpone between plates and top with the plums.

Drizzle with the juices from the pan, sprinkle with chopped pistachios, then crumble over the Viennese thins to serve, if using.

Tip: Look out for Flavor king plums which are in season in spring as they are delicious in this recipe. Flavor kings are a type of 'pluot' – a hybrid of a plum and an apricot, and are a rich shade of purple with silky sweet golden flesh inside.



Frozen tropical fruit yoghurt

480G FROZEN TROPICAL FRUIT MIX
170G GREEK YOGURT
2 TBSP MAPLE SYRUP OR HONEY
200G DICED TROPICAL FRUIT AND PASSION
FRUIT SEEDS, TO SERVE

TRY THIS GENIUS RECIPE – AS IF BY MAGIC,
THE FROZEN TROPICAL FRUIT FREEZES THE
YOGURT WHEN BLENDED TOGETHER. USE A
FOOD PROCESSOR RATHER THAN A BLENDER

Put everything except the fresh fruit in a food processor and blend. Scoop straight into bowls, or tip into a container and freeze if you want to serve it later. Serve with the fresh tropical fruit and spoon over the passion fruit seeds.



Bread and butter pudding



250ML FULL-FAT MILK
300ML DOUBLE CREAM
1 VANILLA POD, HALVED AND SEEDS SCRAPED OUT, OR 1 TSP VANILLA EXTRACT
3 WHOLE LARGE EGGS, PLUS 1 EGG YOLK
3 TBSP GOLDEN CASTER SUGAR
8 SLICES OF DAY-OLD WHITE CRUSTY BREAD
50G SLIGHTLY SALTED BUTTER, SOFTENED PLUS EXTRA FOR GREASING
75G MIX SULTANAS AND CURRANTS OR OTHER DRIED FRUIT
ZEST ½ LEMON
2 TBSP DEMERARA SUGAR

To make the custard, heat the milk, cream and vanilla pod with its scraped out seeds (if using) together in a saucepan to just below boiling point. Meanwhile whisk the eggs and yolk with the caster sugar in a jug. Slowly pour the warm milk mixture, including the vanilla pod, over the eggs, stirring constantly until smooth. Stir in the vanilla extract now if using.

Lightly butter an ovenproof dish approximately 20cm x 25cm x 5cm. Cut the crusts from the bread slices, then butter both sides of the bread and cut into triangles. Lay half of the bread slices in the bottom of the dish so that they are slightly overlapping. Mix the dried fruit with the lemon zest and sprinkle half of the mix over the bread. Layer the rest of the bread on top then sprinkle over the remaining fruit.

Heat oven to 180C/160C/gas 4. Remove the vanilla pod from the custard then pour the custard over the pudding. Leave to soak for at least 30 mins, or longer in the fridge, if you like. Sprinkle over the demerara and bake for 35-40 mins until golden brown and puffed up.





Rice pudding with poached pears

15G UNSALTED BUTTER
100G PUDDING RICE
25G CASTER SUGAR
1 TSP GROUND NUTMEG
700ML WHOLE MILK

1 L WATER
300G CASTER SUGAR
1 CINNAMON STICK
1 VANILLA POD, CUT IN HALF AND SEEDS SCRAPED OUT
1 LEMON, JUICE
8 RIPE PEARS



Preheat the oven to gas 3, 160°C, fan 140°C. Grease a 1.5ltr shallow ovenproof dish with the butter, ensuring it is fully coated across the base and up the sides.

Add the pudding rice, caster sugar and nutmeg to dish and lightly mix. Pour over the milk, then stir well to combine.

Bake for 2 hrs, checking after 1 hr 45 mins, or until the rice is tender and the top is golden and just set. Serve hot.

Place all the ingredients except the pears in a stainless steel saucepan, do not turn on the heat. Peel the pears, add them to the pan once they are peeled, then place them onto the stove and bring to the boil, then reduce to a simmer and cook the pears

Once cooked, remove the pan from the heat and allow the pears to cool in the sugar syrup. To check if they are cooked, take a paring knife and push it into the middle of the fruit. If the pears feel soft, they are cooked. They can be served hot or cold.





Easy rhubarb fool with shortbread



400G FORCED RHUBARB, CUT INTO 1CM CHUNKS
150G GOLDEN CASTER SUGAR
1 ORANGE, ZESTED AND JUICED
1 TSP VANILLA BEAN PASTE

FOR THE FOOL
200ML DOUBLE CREAM
2 TBSP ICING SUGAR
200G NATURAL YOGURT

150G PLAIN FLOUR, PLUS EXTRA FOR DUSTING
100G BUTTER, CHILLED AND CUBED
50G CASTER SUGAR, PLUS 1 TBSP FOR SPRINKLING

Tip the rhubarb, sugar, orange zest and juice and vanilla bean paste into a saucepan over a medium heat and cook, stirring often, until the rhubarb has completely broken down and you can draw a line through the mixture with a spatula, about 10–15 mins. You can remove a few pieces of rhubarb after 2 mins to decorate, if you like. Once thick, glossy and pink, transfer to a heatproof bowl, cool completely and keep chilled until needed.

For the fool, whisk the cream and sugar together to soft peaks, then fold in the yogurt and most of the rhubarb compote. Divide the rest of the compote between four glasses or bowls, then top with the fool and any remaining compote. Serve with the shortbread for dunking.

For the shortbread, heat the oven 170C/150C fan/gas 3. Put the flour, butter and sugar into a mixing bowl. Use your hands to combine the ingredients until the mixture looks like breadcrumbs, then squeeze until it comes together as a dough.

On a lightly floured surface, use a rolling pin to roll out the dough to ½ cm thick. and place on a lined baking tray. Use a fork to create imprints, then sprinkle with the remaining caster sugar. Remove the shortbread fingers from the oven and cut into fingers, leave to cool on the tray for 10 mins.



Strawberry mousse

250G FRESH STRAWBERRY, HALVED IF LARGE
25G CASTER SUGAR
140G MINI MARSHMALLOW
200ML DOUBLE CREAM



Put all but 2 strawberries into a pan along with 100ml water and the sugar. Over a medium heat, cook strawberries until soft enough to mash, about 3 mins. Take off the heat and squash the berries, using a fork, until pulpy. Add the marshmallows, then stir them into the hot strawberries until they dissolve. Leave to cool.

Whip the cream until it holds its shape. Fold the cream into the cooled strawberry mix, then spoon into one bowl or separate pots and chill for about 2 hrs, or until set. Cut the reserved strawberries in half and use to decorate.

