

TASTE TEST

an eBook preview of Hartbeat Media Recipes

HARTBEAT MEDIA

CORN AND ASPARAGUS: who'd have thought?

Start your vegetarian barbecue adventures simply with two veges - corn and asparagus - that are exquisitely suited to the grill. There are, quite simply, no better first courses or side dishes than these.

FRESH ASPARAGUS

EV OLIVE OIL

BLACK PEPPER

SEA SALT

CHIPOTLE MAYONNAISE

Try this:

First, asparagus - fresh, seasonal, green stalks. Snap the stems and discard the bases or toss them into a stockpot if you have one on the go. Wash and dry what's left.

Now, fire up and prepare a grill - gas or charcoal - for high, direct cooking. Thoroughly oil and season the asparagus with EV olive oil, fresh ground black pepper and sea salt and position them on the grill, perpendicular to the grill bars.

After just over a minute, turn them through a third of a turn and lower the hood. Repeat this after another minute or so. Then give them just a touch longer in any position and lift off the grill on to a serving platter. Let them cool slightly, then offer them around with a dip of chipotle mayo (recipe included in Heat & Smoke).

Other vegetables worth grilling - simply by cutting into rings or splitting lengthways, coating generously with EV olive oil and seasoning well - include pumpkin, eggplant, zucchinis, turnips, parsnips, sweet potatoes, fennel, witlof and, my favourite, radicchio.

In all cases, slice or simply split, brush with EV olive oil, season and grill, turning once on each side through 90 degrees, to achieve perfect grill marks, until cooked through.

Grilled veges are even better served with a splash of chimichurri (recipe included in Heat & Smoke). After all, even vegetarians deserve a little excitement in their sad little lives. (Just kidding ... sort of.)





FIRST, BACON-WRAP YOUR ROCKLING

Cooking a delicate piece of fish on a hot grill can be tricky. Cowards shame the fish by wrapping it in foil, but enlightened grillmasters do no such thing. There is always a better way. And here's mine. I love rockling. It's not a highly flavoured or handsome fish, but neither is it extravagantly priced, And it has a crunchy texture, flakes magnificently, and the fillets are sturdy enough for us to work some magic...

4 ROCKLING FILLETS

12 LONG BACON RASHERS

EV OLIVER OIL

SALT & PEPPER

LEMON

BEST FOODS MAYO

LEMON

GARLIC CLOVE

CAYENNE PEPPER

Prepare four thick, centre fillets of rockling, ideally by sectioning the loin of a large fish. In fact, buy a whole fillet, split the loin from the belly, cut the portions you need from the loin and use the rest of the fish for another dish - a fish burger, perhaps, Thai green curry, fish pie, whatever. But first, prepare four of those single-portion loin fillets by wrapping them in bacon to prevent your grill and the forces of nature from turning them into road-kill.

You need long, thin slices of streaky bacon from a serious butcher. A dozen rashers will do - three for each fillet. To soften these, place six on a dinner plate, the other six on top but perpendicular to those in the first layer. Top them all with a second dinner plate, weighted, and microwave for a couple of minutes to cook the rashers slightly and soften them to make them very pliable. Let them cool.

Place the fillets on a large plate or baking sheet, brush with EV olive oil and season well with salt and pepper. Add some lemon zest also. Now wrap each fillet evenly around the girth with strips of the cooled bacon, as illustrated - locking the ends of bacon in place, under the fillet, with a dollop of Best Foods mayo.

Place the wrapped fillets on a hot, clean and oiled grill and drop the lid. After about five minutes, carefully turn each fillet and roast, lid down, for another four minutes, or until the fish is just cooked through and beginning to flake easily. And that's it.

Serve these tasty fillets on a bed of freshly cooked savoury rice or on a buttery mash. Top each with a generous splodge of the aforementioned Best Foods, but this time livened up a bit: to a cup of mayo, add the juice of a small lemon, a clove of pressed garlic and a generour pinch of cayenne pepper.

MY TOGARASHI RIB-EYE

One of these astounding, Japanese-inflected gems may just be the liveliest steak you have encountered. So, a tip: go to whatever lengths are necessary to source meat worthy of the attention you are about to give it. Seek out a large, dry-aged and handsomely marbled example of this incomparable cut. You deserve it...

2 x 600-700g RIB-EYE STEAKS (SALTED 4 HOURS BEFORE COOKING)
SEA SALT FOR SEASONING
100g UNSALTED BUTTER, SOFTENED
½ tbs SHICHIMI TOGARASHI PEPPER (PLUS MORE FOR STEAK RUB)
FINELY GRATED ZEST OF 1 LIME
LIME WEDGES TO SERVE

First, make your togarashi butter by working the main quantity of shichimi togarashi into the softened butter, along with the lime zest and juice, and another pinch of sea salt. Keep this mixture in a bowl at room temperature until you are ready to apply it to the steak, thus ensuring it is soft - the texture of whipped butter - and ready to melt easily. Let steaks stand at room temperature for around 2 hours before cooking. After the first of those two hours, sprinkle shichimi togarashi over both sides of each steak.

Now, cook the steaks on a very hot (220°C/430°F) and oiled cast-iron grill in a kamado, kettle or similar. Add a couple of small chunks of hickory or pecan to the fire and cook for a touch under 12 minutes in total - placing at 45 degrees to the grill bars and dropping the lid, flipping after 3 min, flipping again after 2 min 45 sec, and slipping and turning through 90 degrees after 2 min 30sec, and finally flipping again after 2 min 15 sec. Remove from the grill and place on a cutting board, slice thickly, roughly parallel to the bone, and place a golf-ball sized blob of togarashi butter on each steak to melt into the meat. Loosely tent with foil and leave to rest for 5-6 min. Eat.

NOTE: Shichimi togarashi, in a slightly gentrified Australian version crafted by the remarkable Harbie's Spices in Sydney, contains: sea salt, chilli, white poppy seeds, unhulled golden sesame seeds, black sesame seeds, orange peel, brown mustard seeds, Sichuan pepper and lemon myrtle. And magic.





RICOTTA HOTCAKES

And speaking of ricotta hotcakes, I suspect we have a certain Mr Bill Granger to thank for the fact they are hard to avoid these days. And inevitably, of the recipes we have tried, we like Bill's the best - but only when made, however, with particularly fine ricotta. Bill serves his hotcakes with honeycomb butter, incidentally, and I have included his recipe for this, although I like a warmed blackcurrent compote almost as much. - Bob Hart

**1½ CUPS FINEST RICOTTA
(IDEALLY BUFFALO)**

¾ CUP WHOLE MILK

4 EGGS, SEPARATED

1 CUP PLAIN FLOUR

1 tsp BAKING POWDER

PINCH SEA SALT

ICING SUGAR FOR DUSTING

**UNSALTED BUTTER FOR
FRYING**

Bill's Honeycomb Butter:

**250g UNSALTED BUTTER,
SOFTENED**

2 tbs RAW HONEY

**100g SYNTHETIC
'HONEYCOMB' CRUSHED
WITH A ROLLING PIN, OR
USE A CHRUCHIE BAR OR
VOILET CRUMBLE**

METHOD

Place the ricotta, milk and egg yolks in a bowl and combine. Sift the flour, baking powder and salt into this mixture and mix again. Beat the egg whites to stiff peaks and fold through the batter into two batches with a spatula. Melt a small amount of butter in a large non-stick pan and drop quantities of the batter - 2 tbs per hotcake - into the pan, three at a time. Cook over a gentle heat for two minutes, or until they become golden, flip, and cook until golden on both sides and cooked through. Serve immediately with a sprinkle of icing sugar, and perhaps some fresh berries on the side. For the honeycomb butter - a disc of which can be positioned on each hotcake - process the ingredients until smooth, shape into a sausage by placing on plastic wrap and twisting the ends. Chill for at least two hours to set.

CHEESE NOTES

Ricotta means "recooked" in Italian, and this popular whey cheese is a perfect example of the practical waste-not-want-not mentality at the heart of traditional Italian cheese-making. All cheese inevitably involves separating milk into curds and whey, and during this process some of the protein and fat remain. This can be recovered by reheating the whey, and adding lemon juice to coagulate the residual solids. Fresh is definitely best and there is nothing quite like warm ricotta fresh from the vat. Try to avoid the many examples bulked out with powdered milk solids. This, also, is definitely a cheese worth making at home. - Will Studd



IF THESE RECIPES HAVE YOUR TASTEBUDS TINGLING,
YOU'LL FIND PLENTY MORE WHERE THEY CAME FROM AT HARTBEAT MEDIA.

[HARTBEATMEDIA.COM.AU](https://www.hartbeatmedia.com.au)