



# Lockdown Cookbook



# THE GREAT QUARANTINE BAKE OFF



Dear MediaCommers,

We know this time has been challenging for everyone and we're proud of how pro-active and quick you've all been to make the best out of a difficult situation. It really is as a testament to the fantastic staff that work here at MediaCom.

One thing that's really struck us is how so many of you have become quite the Mary Berry whilst being stuck at home and we have loved seeing all your bakes that you've sent in to feature in the newsletter.

We thought it would be a good idea to house them all in one place so we've created a digital cookbook featuring all of our favourite recipes.

Please keep sending in your culinary creations to feature in the M People newsletter. We can't wait to have a go at trying out these recipes for ourselves.

Thanks,

MediaCom North





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# Lemon Bars

Carly Trigg



10 min



55 min



Serves 20-40

## Ingredients

### Pastry

250g unsalted butter, at room temperature

112g caster sugar

300g plain flour

$\frac{1}{8}$  tsp salt

### Filling

6 extra-large eggs, at room temperature

675g caster sugar

2 tbsp grated lemon zest (4 to 6 lemons)

240ml freshly squeezed lemon juice

150g plain flour

Icing sugar, for dusting

## Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas 4. To make the shortcrust pastry, in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream the butter and caster sugar until pale. Combine the plain flour and salt and, with the mixer on low, add to the butter until just mixed.

Turn out the dough onto a well-floured board and gather into a ball. Flatten the dough with floured hands and press it into a 23 by 33 by 5cm baking sheet, building up a 0.5cm edge on all sides. Chill.

Bake the pastry for 15 to 20 minutes, until very lightly browned. Remove from the oven and leave to cool on a wire rack. Leave the oven on.

For the filling, whisk together the eggs, caster sugar, lemon zest, lemon juice and plain flour. Pour the filling over the shortcrust pastry base and bake for 30 to 35 minutes, until set.

Remove from the oven and leave to cool to room temperature. Cut into squares or triangles and dust with icing sugar.

### Top Tip

The bars need baking for at least an hour, not the 35 mins stated in the recipe. Follow her advice or you'll end up bitter.



# Vegan Lemon Drizzle Cake

Kerry King



15 min



40 min



Serves 12

## Ingredients

### Cake

75ml vegetable oil  
200g caster sugar  
Zest of 1 lemon  
250g self raising flour  
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda  
220ml soya milk  
1 tbsp lemon juice

### Icing

2 tbsp caster sugar  
4 tbsp lemon juice  
200g icing sugar

## Method

Mix oil, sugar, lemon zest, flour, bicarbonate of soda and milk in a bowl and stir in lemon juice (no need for electric mixer.)

Pour into a lined tin and cook for 35 to 40 minutes in a preheated oven at 170°C until golden.

Meanwhile mix caster sugar and 2 tablespoons of lemon juice.

Take cake out of oven, fork holes in the top and pour over sugary lemon juice and leave to cool.

Once cool, remove from the tin.

Mix icing sugar with remaining 2 tablespoons of lemon juice and drizzle over the cake and decorate.

### Top Tip

This mouth-watering cake featured in the Tesco love stories advert, so Kerry must be on to a winner.



# Bunny Buns

Chris Buchanan



45 min



10 min



Serves 8

## Ingredients

1 package active dry yeast  
128 ml warm water  
2 tbsp sugar  
2 tbsp butter  
1 large egg  
1 tsp salt (plus extra sea salt for ears)  
128g all-purpose flour or bread flour

## Method

### Cake

First, combine yeast, warm water, and sugar. Let stand for 5 minutes.

Next, combine yeast mixture, butter, egg, salt, and half the flour and beat with mixer or food processor just until mixed and smooth.

Gradually add in flour to make a soft dough and a ball is formed.

Place dough in a well-oiled bowl, and turn to grease the top of dough.

Cover in a warm area for about an hour until dough rises and almost doubles in size.

Turn out onto a lightly floured surface and knead a couple of times.

### Making Bunny Rolls

Scoop two similar size small balls of dough (each bunny takes two dough balls).

Take one of the dough balls and tear off a pea-sized piece for the bunny nose – then cut the second dough ball in half for the ears.

Now cut a raisin (we used chocolate) in half and push it into the dough for eyes.

Next, take a sharp knife and cut into the dough to make whiskers and a mouth. Each cute bunny has its own personality!

Beat 1 egg with about 1 tablespoon of water to make an egg wash and lightly paint the dough bread.

Leave to rise again for another 30 minutes before baking.

Bake at 200°C for about 10 minutes, or until golden brown.

### Top Tip

This is the perfect Easter time bake though frankly, we'd eat it all year round.



# Easter Cake

Lily Wong



30 min



25 min



Serves 10

## Ingredients

### Cake

175g unsalted butter, softened, plus extra for the tin

175g golden caster sugar

3 large eggs

50g cocoa powder

100g self-raising flour (or same quantity plain flour with 1 tsp baking powder)

1-2 tsp milk

### Buttercream

50g dark chocolate (or milk chocolate if you prefer)

85g unsalted butter, softened

175g icing sugar, sieved

### Top Tip

Lily decorated the cake with a vanilla butter cream, Cadbury's Mini Eggs and Maltesers Chocolate Bunnies. But you can switch those for any of your favourites.

## Method

Heat oven to 190°C/170°C fan/gas 5. Butter and line two 20cm sandwich tins with baking parchment.

Use a handheld electric whisk or a freestanding mixer to beat 175g softened unsalted butter and 175g golden caster sugar together in a bowl until creamy and light in colour. Add 1 egg, still mixing.

Sieve 50g cocoa powder, 100g self-raising flour and a pinch of salt into another bowl and add a third of that to your wet ingredients.

Once combined, add 1 more egg and another third of the flour mixture and work that in.

Then add 1 more egg and the remaining flour and beat until you have a smooth thick batter. If the batter is stiff, stir in a splash of milk to loosen it.

Divide the mixture between the tins and smooth the top with the back of a spoon.

Bake for 20 to 25 minutes until springy to the touch. Take out of the oven and leave in the tins for 10 minutes before turning out onto a wire rack to cool completely.

Make the buttercream by melting 50g dark or milk chocolate in the microwave, or in a bowl over just simmering water, making sure the base doesn't touch the water. Leave to cool.

Beat 85g softened unsalted butter and half of the 175g sieved icing sugar together until light and fluffy. Add the remaining icing sugar and melted chocolate and mix together. If the icing is runny, chill in the fridge until it is firm but still spreadable.

To assemble the cake, put a small dollop of icing onto a plate and put one of the cakes on top. Spread the top of the cake with half the icing, leaving a 1cm border around the edge.

Put the second cake on top and push down very gently. Spread the remaining icing over the top.



# Kerry's Sweet Potato, Spinach and Bean Curry

Kerry King



25 min



25 min



Serves 4

## Ingredients

600g sweet potato chunks – frozen

150g diced tomatoes – frozen

2 onion – sliced

2 handfuls of spinach

2 tbsp tomato puree

500g passata

400g pinto beans (or any beans)

1 tbsp olive oil

400g coconut milk

1 tsp ginger – frozen

2 tsp garlic – frozen

2 tsp coriander – frozen

1 tbsp curry Powder

2 tsp cumin

3 tsp garam masala

1 tsp cinnamon

## Method

Fry the sliced onion in the olive oil until soft then add garlic, ginger, coriander, tomato puree and the curry spices.

Add the sweet potato chunks, diced tomatoes, tin of coconut milk, passata and simmer on a low heat for 15 minutes.

Add the tinned beans and continue to simmer for a further 10 minutes. Add 2 handfuls of spinach and stir gently.

Serve with rice and a dollop of yoghurt.





# Pineapple Upside Down Cake

Elle Duke



15 min



40 min



Serves 6

## Ingredients

### Topping

- 50g softened butter
- 50g light soft brown sugar
- 7 pineapple rings in syrup, drained and syrup reserved
- 7 glacé cherries

### Cake

- 100g softened butter
- 100g golden caster sugar
- 100g self-raising flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 eggs

## Method

Heat oven to 180°C/160°C Fan/Gas 4.

For the topping, beat 50g softened butter and 50g light soft brown sugar together until creamy. Spread over the base and a quarter of the way up the sides of a 20cm round cake tin. Arrange 7 pineapple rings on top (reserving the syrup for later), then place 7 glacé cherries in the centres of the rings.

Place 100g softened butter, 100g golden caster sugar, 100g self-raising flour, 1 teaspoon baking powder, 1 tsp vanilla extract and 2 eggs in a bowl along with 2 tablespoon of the reserved pineapple syrup. Using an electric whisk, beat to a soft consistency.

Spoon into the tin on top of the pineapple and smooth it out so it's level. Bake for 35 minutes. Leave to stand for 5 minutes, then turn out onto a plate. Serve warm with a scoop of ice cream.

### Top Tip

Eat it warm with a scoop (or two) of ice-cream for the ultimate indulgence.



# Soda Bread

Ffion Turner



5 min



40 min



Serves 10

## Ingredients

500g wholemeal/strong flour

2 tsp sea salt

1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

1 tbsp chopped rosemary (or any other herbs you have)

400ml milk

Juice of 1 lemon

2 tsp honey

## Method

Heat oven to 200°C.

Mix the flour, salt and bicarbonate of soda in a bowl.

Add the chopped herbs.

Mix the milk and lemon juice and wait for a minute as it turns to buttermilk.

Stir in the honey and pour it into the flour mixture.

Stir it for a minute until the whole thing comes together into a sticky dough.

Tip onto a floured surface and shape into a ball.

Place the ball on a floured baking tray and using a sharp knife make a deep cross on top.

Put in oven and bake for 40 minutes.

Cool on wire rack.

It will be at it's best for 24 hours. Like any fresh bread it's best eaten when still warm.



# Soda Bread

Duncan Soutar



5 min



40 min



Serves 10

## Ingredients

500g wholemeal/strong flour

2 tsp sea salt

1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

1 tbsp chopped rosemary (or any other herbs you have)

400ml milk

Juice of 1 lemon

2 tsp honey

## Method

Heat oven to 200°C.

Mix the flour, salt and bicarbonate of soda in a bowl.

Add the chopped herbs.

Mix the milk and lemon juice and wait for a minute as it turns to buttermilk.

Stir in the honey and pour it into the flour mixture.

Stir it for a minute until the whole thing comes together into a sticky dough.

Tip onto a floured surface and shape into a ball.

Place the ball on a floured baking tray and using a sharp knife make a deep cross on top.

Put in oven and bake for 40 minutes.

Cool on wire rack.

It will be at it's best for 24 hours. Like any fresh bread it's best eaten when still warm.

### Top Tip

If you can write a positive message on your bread like Duncan, we want to be your friend.



# Chocolate Orange Cookies

Eliza Whyman



20 min



12 min



Serves 24

## Ingredients

110g butter (salted or unsalted), softened

200g dark or light brown sugar – I prefer the flavour of light brown sugar

1 large free-range egg, at room temperature

1 tsp vanilla extract

165g plain flour

Pinch of salt – only add if using unsalted butter

½ tsp baking powder

½ tsp bicarbonate of soda

30g cocoa powder

200g Terry's chocolate orange, cut into small chunks or 200g of dark or milk (or a mix) chocolate chips/chunks + 1 teaspoon of orange zest

## Method

Preheat your oven to 190°C/170°C Fan/Gas 5. Line 2 to 3 large baking trays with parchment paper or silicone baking mats and set aside.

Cream the butter, sugar and vanilla together until light and fluffy. Add the egg and beat until incorporated.

Add the flour, pinch of salt, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and cocoa powder and mix until a dough comes together.

Finally, finish by adding the chocolate chunks/chips and mix in combine into the dough.

Divide the mixture into balls – I use an ice cream scoop for ease. Spread out evenly on the baking trays. Bake the cookies for 10 to 12 minutes until spread out and with a crackled-top.

Once cooked, allow the cookies to cool on the trays for 5 minutes – in this time they will firm up and will become more easily transferable. After 5 minutes cooling, I like to press an extra Terry's chocolate orange segment on the top of each cookie – this is optional. Then transfer the cookies to a wire rack and allow them to cool.

### Top Tip

Eliza added about 2 teaspoons of orange extract to the wet mixture to achieve the ultimate flavour.



# Steak and Ale Dumpling Stew

Isabel Waxman



30-60 mins



2+ hours



Serves 6

## Ingredients

### Stew

- 2-3 tbsp light olive oil
- 1kg/2lb 4oz braising beef, cut into cubes
- 250g/9oz shallots or silverskin pickling onions, halved
- 2 carrots, thinly sliced
- 200g/7oz button mushrooms, left whole
- 50g/1¾oz plain flour
- 500ml/18fl oz ale
- 150ml/5fl oz beef stock
- 2-3 tbsp onion marmalade
- 1-2 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 3 bay leaves
- Gravy browning (optional)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

### Dumplings

- 175g/6oz self-raising flour, plus extra for dusting
- 75g/1¾oz suet, shredded
- 3-4 tbsp hot horseradish sauce, from a jar
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley

## Method

Preheat the oven to 160°C/140°C Fan/Gas 3.

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a deep ovenproof casserole dish over a high heat. Add the beef in batches and brown all over, adding more oil if needed. Transfer to a plate using a slotted spoon and set aside. Pour another tablespoon oil into the casserole dish, then add the shallots, carrots and mushrooms and fry for few minutes, stirring.

Meanwhile, put the flour in a bowl, whisk in a little ale to make a smooth paste, then whisk in the rest of the ale.

Return the beef to the casserole, then pour in the ale mixture and stock. Stir over a high heat until thickened and boiling. Stir in the onion marmalade, Worcestershire sauce, bay leaves and gravy browning (if using) and cook, stirring, for few minutes. Season with salt and pepper, cover, then bake for 2 to 2½ hours, or until the meat is tender.

To make the dumplings, put the flour and suet in a bowl and season with salt and pepper. Gradually add 150ml/5fl oz water and stir to make a soft, sticky dough. Tip onto a floured work surface and gently knead until smooth.

Flour a sheet of non-stick baking paper. Put the dough on top and roll out to about 15 by 25cm/6 by 8in. Spread over the horseradish cream and scatter with parsley. Roll up the dough, from the long side, to make a Swiss roll shape. Chill for 45 minutes, then slice into eight pieces.

When the beef is tender, remove from the oven and increase the oven temperature to 220°C/200° Fan/Gas 7. Remove the bay leaves and add the dumplings. Return to the oven, without the lid, for 25 minutes, or until the dumplings are golden and puffed up. Serve the beef and ale stew piping hot.

**Top Tip**  
Izzy used suet to make the dumplings, adding to the taste sensation.



# Chocolate Guinness Cake

Fiona Hunt



20 min



1 hour



Serves 12

## Ingredients

### Cake

250ml Guinness  
250g unsalted butter  
75g cocoa powder  
400g caster sugar  
150ml sour cream  
2 large eggs  
1 tbsp vanilla extract  
275 grams plain flour  
2½ tsp bicarbonate of soda

### Topping

300g cream cheese  
150g icing sugar  
2 tsp cornflour  
125ml double cream (or whipping cream)

## Method

Preheat the oven to Gas 4/180°C/160°C Fan, and butter and line a 23cm/9in springform tin.

Pour the Guinness into a large wide saucepan, add the butter - in spoons or slices - and heat until the butter's melted, at which time you should whisk in the cocoa and sugar. Beat the sour cream with the eggs and vanilla and then pour into the brown, buttery, beery pan and finally whisk in the flour and bicarb.

Pour the cake batter into the greased and lined tin and bake for 45 minutes to an hour. Leave to cool completely in the tin on a cooling rack, as it is quite a damp cake.

When the cake's cold, sit it on a flat platter or cake stand and get on with the icing. Lightly whip the cream cheese until smooth, sieve over the icing sugar and cornflour and then beat to combine.

If using double cream, add it and beat until you have a spreadable consistency. If using whipping cream, whisk first to soft peaks, add a couple of spoonfuls into the cream cheese mixture and once this is combined, fold in the rest.

Ice the top of the black cake so that it resembles the frothy top of the famous pint.



# Plum, blackberry and bay leaf friand

Liudmila Russell



1 hour



40 min



Serves 6

## Ingredients

200g blackberries  
4 ripe plums, stones removed, cut into 1cm wide wedges (360g)  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
60g caster sugar  
3 fresh bay leaves  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
60g plain flour  
200g icing sugar, sifted  
120g ground almonds  
8 tsp salt  
150g egg whites (from 4-5 large eggs)  
180g unsalted butter, melted and slightly cooled

## Method

Place the blackberries and plums in a bowl with the vanilla extract, sugar, bay leaves and  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of cinnamon. Set aside for 30 minutes. Don't be tempted to leave them sitting around for longer than this, as the fruit will become too juicy.

Preheat the oven to 190°C fan.

Mix the flour, icing sugar, ground almonds, remaining  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon cinnamon and salt in a separate large bowl. Set aside.

Lightly whisk the egg whites by hand for 30 seconds, so they just start to froth. Stir into the flour mixture, along with the melted butter, until combined.

Tip the batter into a 20 by 30cm parchment-lined baking dish and top evenly with the fruit and juices. Bake for 40 minutes, covering the dish with foil for the final 10 minutes, until the batter is golden-brown and the fruit is bubbling.

Set aside for 10 minutes before serving.



# Thai Basil Chicken

Roxanne Vure



20 min



15 min



Serves 3

## Ingredients

- 4 cloves garlic
- 3 medium shallots, or 1 small onion
- ½ tsp lemongrass paste
- ½ tsp ginger minced
- 500g ground chicken mince
- 4 finely chopped birds eye chillies, or use minced chilli
- 1 big tbsp fish sauce
- 1 tsp palm/ brown sugar
- 1 big tbsp soy sauce
- 1 bunch Thai basil leaves, lower stems removed - roughly chopped
- 1 pint chicken stock
- 1 tbsp sriracha sauce (optional)

## Method

In a wok- fry onions then add garlic, chilli, lemongrass.

Add half of the stock.

Add chicken mince.

Add soy/fish sauce/sugar/sriracha.

Add rest of stock as needed (depends how much broth you want.)

Enjoy on its own or with rice noodles (or rice) squeeze of fresh lime before serving... and a cold bottle of Chang.

### Top Tip

Enjoy on its own or serve it with rice noodles or rice, and a squeeze of fresh lime... not forgetting a cold bottle of Chang.





# Banana Bread

Mark Eccles



10 min



55 hour



Serves 10

## Ingredients

75g melted coconut oil or extra-virgin olive oil or high quality vegetable oil

168g honey or 155g maple syrup

2 eggs

225g mashed ripe bananas (about 2 ½ medium or 2 large bananas)

56g milk of choice or water

1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

1 tsp vanilla extract

½ tsp salt

½ tsp ground cinnamon, plus more to swirl on top

220g white whole wheat flour or regular whole wheat flour

Optional: 115g mix-ins like chopped walnuts or pecans, chocolate chips, raisins, chopped dried fruit, fresh banana slices...

## Method

Preheat oven to 165° C and grease a 9 by 5in loaf pan.

In a large bowl, beat the oil and honey together with a whisk. Add the eggs and beat well, then whisk in the mashed bananas and milk. (If your coconut oil solidifies on contact with cold ingredients, simply let the bowl rest in a warm place for a few minutes, like on top of your stove, or warm it for about 10 seconds in the microwave.)

Add the baking soda, vanilla, salt and cinnamon, and whisk to blend. Lastly, switch to a big spoon and stir in the flour, just until combined. Some lumps are OK! If you're adding any additional mix-ins, gently fold them in now.

Pour the batter into your greased loaf pan and sprinkle lightly with cinnamon. If you'd like a pretty swirled effect, run the tip of a knife across the batter in a zig-zag pattern.

Bake for 55 to 60 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean (typically, if I haven't added any mix-ins, my bread is done at 55 minutes; if I have added mix-ins, it needs closer to 60 minutes). Let the bread cool in the loaf pan for at least 10 minutes. You may need to run a butter knife around the edges to loosen the bread from the pan. Carefully transfer the loaf to a wire rack to cool before slicing.