



A Taste of Home

*Recipes from refugees and asylum seekers
in Lancaster, using local ingredients.
A Global Link project.*



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Development Education Centre



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The “A Taste of Home” project is a small local initiative organised and delivered by Global Link DEC in Lancaster, and funded by Pots of Possibility.

Global Link is a Lancaster-based charity whose main aim is “Creative learning and action for a just and sustainable world”. Operating for more than 30 years in the local area, Global Link has run cultural heritage projects, sustainability projects and, in the last few years, supported refugees and asylum seekers in their journey.

This project is the child of this ongoing work, as cooking is a deeply rooted cultural identity in the lives of most refugees and asylum seekers. This importance of home style cooking can sometimes clash with the global sustainability goals that include using local produce in an effort to reduce food miles. Many from the above group prefer to cook and eat imported food that reminds them of their home.

In May 2023, the Global Link team came up with the idea of running a project that encourages people to create recipes using ingredients grown in our own patch at Claver Hill community farm, while at the same time being inspired by their home cultures. The idea was to enrich the culinary diversity of the local area as well as familiarise the Global Link service users with local produce.

We also made a point of covering recipes focused on produce preservation, as there are many methods used in other parts of the world that have more localised supply chains and depend on produce seasonality. Although the art of preservation is largely lost in modern society, we hope to inspire you to embark on this journey.

The result of this little pilot project, kindly funded by the Pots of Possibility fund, is a collection of stunning recipes, preserves, colours and tastes from all over Europe and the Middle East. The participants boldly experimented, played and created with the available produce, proud to grow it themselves, harvest and cook it.

All the recipes are vegetarian or vegan, most are gluten free and as sustainable as possible, with bold exotic flavours.

We hope that the recipes below also inspire you to try local produce, creatively and sustainably contributing to Global Link's mission of "creative learning and action for a just and sustainable world."

Enjoy!

Nijat's Potatoes with Kale



This session launched our series of “A Taste of Home” workshops with Nijat, who is a wonderful chef. Nijat is an asylum seeker from Azerbaijan and has worked as a chef in many places and countries, bringing his knowledge to Lancaster. His challenge was to create something with kale. This was our most difficult ingredient by far, as many countries do not use it.

Nijat created a beautiful and colorful dish with it, also using potatoes from Claver Hill, a few spices and herbs.

Find the recipe on the next page.

Ingredients (for 4 people)

1 kg waxy potatoes
1 small bunch of kale, the more tender the better
1 teaspoon turmeric
1,5 teaspoon cumin seeds
4 tablespoons chopped dill
Olive oil for frying
Spring onion
Salt and chilli to taste

Method

Chop and parboil the potatoes until they are almost cooked.
In a hot pan, add the olive oil and kale and cook until it is crispy.
Add the spices and cook for 30 seconds until they are fragrant.
Add the potatoes, with the herbs and spring onion and mix until everything is cooked and coated with oil.

Serve warm and enjoy!



Khalil's Pickled Garlic



Khalil has been an instrumental volunteer for Global Link as he has helped a lot with getting established in our new building. He painted, plastered and created a beautiful mural from concrete depicting Lancaster.

In addition to building, Khalil knows how to make pickled garlic, a delicacy that is very tasty and preserves garlic for up to three years outside of the fridge. It is a delicious condiment and side dish that can be added to food or made into a paste to spread on bread, potatoes and many other foods. Find the recipe below!

Ingredients

All the garlic you can spare, skin on

Red wine vinegar

Sugar

Salt

Dill

Method

*Parboil the garlic until it starts to soften but not too much
In a separate bowl add the red wine vinegar (enough to cover
the garlic in the jars you will be using). Add some sugar, salt
and dill until you have a strong taste (the strong taste is
needed to infuse the garlic). Place the garlic in washed and dry
jars, cover with the liquid and store in a dark place. It will be
ready in 2 weeks but can last for years.*



Moslem's Pickled Cauliflower



Moslem joined us from Iran, and he is a multi-talented, multi-skilled asylum seeker. A trucker by profession, Moslem loves to grow vegetables, cook them, preserve them and in between sessions he gives massages to other tired farmers! Moslem is particularly knowledgeable about pickles ('toursia' in Farsi) as he doesn't want any produce to go to waste. Last year he created pickles for us that we continue to use sometimes in our lunch drop-ins.

Ingredients

1 head of cauliflower
3 carrots
1 cucumber
1 tablespoon pickling spices (mustard seeds, coriander seeds, dried chilli
and anything else you like)
2 tablespoons turmeric powder
3 bay leaves
Chilli to taste
Water
Vinegar
Salt

Method

In a pot, add the chopped up vegetables and spices, and add boiling water, just enough to cover everything. Cook very little, until they just start to soften. Drain the water into a pot, measure it and add equal parts of the vinegar. Add salt to taste.

Place the vegetables in the jars and cover with the hot brine.

Keep in the fridge for as long as needed.



Turkish Pickled Red Cabbage



This beautiful recipe comes from Turkey, as the spice profile will tell you. It is bold, sweet, tangy and extremely aromatic, an excellent way to preserve red cabbage (which is higher in sugars than white cabbage anyway). It can then be added to salads like a spiced, colourful coleslaw or even in borscht soups where it complements the other flavours.

Ingredients

1 red cabbage
2 tablespoons salt

Brine Ingredients

4 cups white or apple vinegar
2 cups water
2 tablespoons sugar
8 whole cloves
2 cinnamon sticks
2 tablespoons peppercorns
4 bay leaves
2 tablespoons coriander

Method

Chop the cabbage finely and mix with the salt. Leave in a bowl or colander for 30 minutes or preferably overnight to dehydrate the cabbage.

In a pot add all the brine ingredients and simmer for 10 minutes until the spices have infused the brine. Let the brine cool.

Pack the cabbage in clean jars, fill with the brine and keep in the fridge. The cabbage can last for years in the fridge.

Iranian Mint Sherbet



Another fantastic recipe from Moslem, this time tackling one of the most prolific herbs in the UK: mint.

If you have mint in your garden you will know how fast and wide it can spread with minimal effort. If, like us, you have more mint than you know what to do with, try this excellent mint sherbet recipe that uses concentrated mint and can transport you to another place without ever leaving your garden.

The sherbet can be preserved unsweetened in the fridge for years, and then sweetened with sugar or honey and some ice cubes for a refreshing drink. It can also be added to baked goods that require a mint aroma or to any other dish.

Ingredients

All the mint you want to use, the more the better

Water

Method

In a wide pot, add the mint (no need to chop it up) and just enough water to prevent the mint from burning. Put a bowl in the middle of the pot and a plate above so that the liquid that evaporates condenses at the lowest point of the plate and drips into the bowl.

Simmer for 1,5-2 hours, adding water as needed.

When the bowl is filled with the concentrate, chill and keep in the fridge until consumption. It can last for years.



Middle-Eastern Roasted Eggplant Omelette



This recipe almost didn't make it into the book because of how difficult it is to grow aubergines in the UK. If the gardening gods have smiled on you and you have in fact managed to grow aubergines, don't give this recipe a miss!

Beautiful chargrilled aubergines and tomatoes, cooked onions, garlic and turmeric make the base for this omelette and it is served hot on pita bread.

Ingredients

3 fleshy aubergines
1 large onion
4 garlic cloves
1 large or 2 medium tomatoes
Turmeric to taste
Olive oil
Parsley
6 eggs



Method

Place aubergines and tomatoes over open flame and roast slowly, turning them as they blacken. We are cooking the flesh while burning the outside for a fantastic smoky flavour. Once the flesh is soft, leave on the side to cool and with wet hands start removing the chargrilled skin. In a pan, add the onion, garlic and turmeric with olive oil and cook over medium heat until the onion is translucent. Add the cooked aubergines and tomatoes and simmer until most of the juices have evaporated. Add 6 beaten eggs and cook into an omelette. Garnish with some chopped parsley and serve over hot pittas.

Enjoy!

Fluffy Rice with Spiced Tomato



This recipe is a great way to use surplus tomatoes. Summer allotment tomatoes are sweet, fragrant and very versatile. And they lend themselves to cooking. This lovely recipe stars tomatoes, cooked in spices until they become a paste. Then rice is added to result in a fantastic dish that can serve as a main or a side.

The rice is cooked in the existing juices which concentrates the taste even further. If you don't want to add rice, you can add eggs and make a shakshuka variation or even have it as a spread on pita bread.

Ingredients

0.5 kg basmati rice
2 kg tomatoes
0.5 kg onions
3 cloves of garlic
1.5 teaspoons cumin seeds
1.5 teaspoon turmeric
0.5 cinnamon stick
Oil

Method

Chop the onions and garlic, add to a pot with the spices and oil and fry over low heat until onion is translucent and the spices are fragrant.

Add chopped tomatoes and cook over medium heat, stirring often until the tomatoes completely dissolve and the consistency is thicker. Add washed and drained rice, mix and make a mound. Cover with a lid that is covered by a towel to absorb the extra moisture. Keep simmering on very low heat until the rice is cooked and fluffy. Only add extra liquid if absolutely necessary.

Enjoy!



Middle-Eastern Potato Kofta



For the hashbrown lovers out there, this recipe delivers an extremely aromatic kofta that really shines when using new potatoes. Mint, parsley and dill are added for their fragrance and turmeric for color. Alternatively, if you are not a fan of dill and mint, add cumin seeds for a warm, savoury flavour.

Ingredients

2 kg new potatoes
1 bunch spring onions
5 tablespoon chopped dill
3 tablespoons chopped mint
3 eggs
Oil

Method

*Peel and boil potatoes, then mash coarsely, leaving some chunks.
Chop onions and herbs finely, mix with mashed potatoes and
the eggs. Season with salt and pepper and form into koftas
(small balls).*

*Place koftas in hot oil, but don't overcrowd and fry until golden
on each side. Serve warm or cold.*



Pumpkin Pancakes



This recipe offers a beautiful use for pumpkins, which tend to come in big numbers! Naturally versatile, but essentially sweet, they offer some lovely flesh to be turned into sweets, pies and soups.

On this occasion, we turned them into a lovely breakfast or brunch item: pumpkin pancakes!

Ingredients

1/2 pumpkin

Plain flour

Sugar

Lemon zest

1 cup milk

2 eggs

3 teaspoons baking powder

Vegetable oil

Method

Cut the pumpkin into chunks and place them in the oven at 180° C. Roast until soft. Puree the pumpkin and after it has cooled add the eggs and milk. Then add the lemon zest and enough flour and sugar to make a sweet batter.

Add the baking powder last and mix just until combined. Add a small amount of oil into a hot pan and add some of the batter.

Fry over medium heat until golden on both sides and serve warm.



Romanian Rhubarb Pie



This is a very airy and light dessert recipe that is very versatile as you can add any garden fruit. The possibilities are endless, from berries, poached apples and pears to rhubarb, which is the star of this particular recipe. You can add any spices you like to this recipe, with ginger being a favourite!

The recipe comes from Romania, but it was greatly enjoyed by people from Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria who were mostly used to eating rhubarb with salt as a savoury snack.

Ingredients

5 thin stalks of rhubarb

150 g sugar

6 eggs

1,5 cup flour

1/2 cup milk

4 spoons vegetable oil

Vanilla essence

1 tablespoon baking powder

Juice of 1 lemon

4-5 tablespoons semolina

For the meringue:

6 egg whites

8 tablespoon sugar

A pinch of salt

Method

Peel and chop rhubarb into 2 cm long pieces. Put aside with a bit of sugar sprinkled on them to release their juices.

In a bowl, beat the egg yolks with the sugar until they are almost white. Add the vanilla essence, baking powder and lemon juice to the mix, add the milk, the vegetable oil and lastly the flour. The batter should be thick enough so that the rhubarb pieces do not sink, so add flour accordingly.

Place in a pan on baking paper and place the rhubarb pieces on top. Sprinkle with the semolina and bake at 180 °C for 20 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean.

While the batter is baking, beat the egg whites into a meringue and slowly incorporate the sugar and salt. Once the batter from the oven is ready, take out, spread the meringue on top as smoothly as possible with a knife and return to the oven until golden.

Serve at room temperature and enjoy.

Russian Okroshka Soup with Lettuce



This is a lovely summer soup from Russia, and especially from Natalia's cookbook. It is served cold as a refreshing appetizer. It makes great use of surplus lettuce, especially if it has started to bolt and has become a little bitter.

Other summer vegetables like spring onion, dill, new potatoes and radishes are added, topped off with some boiled eggs and some sour cream for that delicious tanginess. You can also add boiled and pulled chicken pieces to make it more substantial, but that is completely optional.

Ingredients

2 heads of lettuce
1 bunch of spring onions
1 bunch of dill
2-3 boiled eggs
5 radishes
4 boiled new potatoes
Greek yoghurt or sour cream to taste
Salt and pepper
Water
Oil

Method

Chop up the lettuce and dill finely, the radishes in thin slices, the potatoes in bite sized chunks and the boiled eggs as finely as possible and set aside.

In a pot, mix 5 cups of water with 1 cup of sour cream, salt and pepper to taste, oil and a bit of vinegar if you would like it more acidic.

Add the liquid mix over the vegetables and serve cold.

Enjoy!



Broad Beans with Herbs from Crete



This is a mediterranean recipe coming from Crete, in Greece. It is a star of spring recipes as it uses only ingredients that come out in spring to create a very colourful dish that can be served on its own over rice or as a side dish. Broad beans are the base of this dish, tender ones preferably, and the flavour profile is elevated by using spring herbs. Mint, garlic scapes and spring onion.

The dish also needs “aleyrokxydo”, which is a mix of vinegar and flour, to add acidity and a bit of thickening to make it into a lovely thick stew-like consistency.

Ingredients

2 kg tender broad beans
1 kg onion bulbs with their green tops
Green part of 5 garlands or garlic scapes
1 small bunch of mint
Olive oil
Flour
Vinegar
Salt and pepper

Method

Chop up the broad beans into bite sized pieces, and chop the onion bulbs, garlic cloves and herbs finely.

In a wide pan, add olive oil and once hot add the broad beans, onion and garlic. Add salt and pepper to taste. Cook for 10-15 minutes over medium heat until the broad beans are tender but not mushy. Add the chopped herbs and aromatics. Mix flour with vinegar and water (if required) separately in a bowl.

Remove the pan from the heat and add the vinegar mix slowly until it reaches required acidity and consistency.

Serve warm and enjoy!

Fermented Eastern European Vegetables



This is an Eastern European end-of-summer recipe. It makes great use of all the produce that is left over at the end of the summer and doesn't have the time to ripen. Green tomatoes, cauliflower, carrots and celery are lacto-fermented in the crisp autumn temperatures to create a lovely tangy and crunchy result that is full of probiotics, is shelf stable for months and can provide some vegetables in the midst of winter.

The vegetables can then be eaten by themselves as a side or added to stews and curries for a great tangy and crunchy result. Even the brine can be used instead of imported lemons to sour soups naturally, the vegetables can be further dehydrated and powdered to make a condiment...The possibilities are endless!

Ingredients

Firm green tomatoes
Carrots
Celery sticks and leaves
Cauliflower
Horseradish root

For the brine

Salt (non-iodised and without
anti-caking agents)
Bay leaves
Peppercorns
Any other seeds you like

Method

Bring 2 litres of water to the boil with 2 heaped tablespoons of salt and the spices. As soon as it boils, remove from the heat and let it cool.

Strain to remove the spices and place them on the bottom of the jars. Then add the vegetables over the spices (to keep them from floating to the surface). On top of the jars add horseradish root pieces in a cross patterns to keep all vegetables below the brine level.

! Note that anything above the brine will get mouldy; the horseradish also helps prevent mould.

Add the brine, close the jar and keep it in a place with stable temperature. Bubbles and signs of fermentation should appear after one week. After that point, keep tasting the result (using a clean fork each time) until the desired acidity is achieved. Then place in the fridge, or leave outside to complete the fermentation and make it completely shelf stable.

Enjoy!



We hope this little booklet gave you an idea of how much fun we had with our “Taste of Home” workshops so far, and inspired you to try a new approach in your cooking with local ingredients.

The wealth of knowledge, techniques and tastes to be discovered is almost infinite and we only scratched the surface with this pilot project. We are surrounded by people that come from countries where this knowledge is still thriving and being passed down in communities and families, being sustainable without knowing it, being community driven without trying.

This is a vision we have for the future here and we are committed to continue bringing different cultures together and benefit mutually from it, “Creatively Learning for a Just and Sustainable World”.



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foodfutures.org.uk/pots-of-possibility

