

# LIGHT BITES



## BBQ oysters and bacon with a pickled onion salad

SERVES 2

50ml olive oil  
4 slices of white bread, diced  
12 slices of streaky bacon, chopped  
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard  
2 tablespoons pickled onion vinegar  
sea salt and freshly ground  
black pepper  
120g bag mixed salad leaves  
1 red little gem lettuce, sliced  
small bunch of tarragon,  
leaves only  
5 pickled onions, sliced  
12 freshly shucked oysters  
in their shells

Mark Jordan's restaurant on the beach in Jersey tells you everything you need to know about the produce on this incredible island. The tidal stream and weather make this a special place for everything on- and off-land. Even the island itself doubles in size when the tide goes out – yes, doubles! We cooked this dish just outside Mark's place, called *At the Beach*.

Light your BBQ. When the coals are silvery in colour, it's ready to cook on.

Heat a non-stick flameproof frying pan on the BBQ. When hot, pour in half of the oil, add the bread and fry until golden and crisp, tossing a few times so the croutons cook evenly. Transfer to a bowl.

Drizzle the remaining oil into the same pan, then add the bacon and fry until crisp. Drain the fat into a separate large mixing bowl, and transfer the bacon to the bowl with the croutons.

Whisk the mustard and pickled onion vinegar into the bacon fat and season well. Add the salad leaves, lettuce, tarragon and sliced pickled onions to the bowl, toss well, then add half of the crispy bacon and croutons and toss again until everything is well dressed.

Put the oysters in their shells directly onto the coals of the BBQ and cook for 2–3 minutes. Use protective gloves or tongs to remove the cooked oysters from the BBQ, as the shells will be very hot.

To serve, lay the oysters around the outside of a large round plate, top with the remaining bacon and croutons and pile the dressed salad in the middle.





## Crab beignets with lemon mayonnaise

SERVES 4

### FOR THE MAYONNAISE

3 egg yolks  
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard  
200ml vegetable oil  
pinch of sea salt  
juice of 1 lemon

### FOR THE BEIGNETS

85g salted butter, chopped  
115g plain flour  
2 eggs, beaten  
100g white crab meat  
50g brown crab meat  
zest of 1 lemon, plus lemon halves for serving  
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper  
1–2 litres vegetable oil, for deep-frying, plus a little extra for greasing

This recipe uses a classic choux-pastry base, which is appropriate as Guernsey, where we cooked this, definitely has a French feel to it. The idea with the beignets is not to have the oil too hot, otherwise they become quite doughy in the centre. The great thing about them is that they work with veg like courgettes too.

Start by making the mayonnaise. Whisk the egg yolks and mustard together in a large bowl until smooth. Slowly pour in the vegetable oil, starting with a little drizzle and whisking well. This is easiest to do with an electric hand whisk. Continue to drizzle in the remaining oil, whisking all the time, until the mixture has thickened. Season with a little salt and lemon juice. Spoon into a bowl and set aside.

To make the beignets, put the butter into a medium saucepan and pour in 200ml water. Place the pan over a low-medium heat and cook until the butter melts, then bring to a rolling boil, add the flour and beat in with a wooden spoon. Take the pan off the heat and let the mixture cool slightly for a couple of minutes, then beat in the egg, a little at a time, until the mixture is soft and drops easily from the spoon. Fold in all the crab and the lemon zest and season with salt and pepper.

Heat the vegetable oil in a deep-fat fryer to 170°C/340°F or in a deep heavy-based saucepan until a breadcrumb sizzles and turns brown when dropped into it. (Note: hot oil can be dangerous; do not leave unattended.) Line a large plate with kitchen paper.

Dip a metal tablespoon in oil to grease it (this helps the mixture slide off easily), then scoop up 5 separate spoonfuls of the crab mixture and carefully drop them into the hot oil. Fry the beignets for 1–2 minutes until golden brown, then lift out with a slotted spoon to drain on the kitchen paper and sprinkle with salt. Repeat until you've used up all the mixture (it should make about 20 beignets).

Serve the hot crab beignets with the mayonnaise on the side and lemon halves for squeezing over.



## Soused mackerel with beetroot salad

SERVES 4

2 mackerel, filleted and pin-boned  
50ml gin  
6 pink peppercorns  
juice of 1 lemon  
pinch of sea salt

### FOR THE SALAD

3 tablespoons redcurrant jelly  
50ml red wine vinegar  
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard  
sea salt and freshly ground  
black pepper  
2 large cooked beetroot  
(not pickled in vinegar), diced

### TO SERVE

1 pickled onion, thinly sliced  
50g thick crème fraîche  
small handful of micro herbs

**This dish relies on the freshest mackerel and, in my opinion, it's one of the most underrated fish out there as well as one of the cheapest. We surprised all the cameramen when I went mackerel fishing and – within 30 seconds of dropping the line in – we pulled up nine! Simply prepared, this is a magical dish.**

Put the mackerel on a board, flesh-side down, and use a sharp fish knife to cut through the skin in a criss-cross pattern.

Place the gin, peppercorns, lemon juice and salt in a shallow, non-metallic tray or dish and stir together. Lay the mackerel fillets on top, flesh-side down, and set aside for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat the redcurrant jelly and vinegar together in a small pan to dissolve the jelly. Bring to the boil, then simmer until reduced by half. Put the mustard into a bowl, season, then pour the redcurrant sauce into it and whisk well. Add the diced beetroot and toss everything together.

To serve, divide the beetroot salad between 4 plates. Drain the mackerel from the marinade and place on top of the beetroot. Top each with sliced pickled onions, a quenelle of crème fraîche (see tip) and the micro herbs.

### JAMES'S TIP

To make a quenelle, use two metal teaspoons: scoop up half the crème fraîche with one spoon, scrape the other spoon against the crème fraîche to lift it off the first spoon, then do the same again to make a smooth oval.





## Dill blinis with Scottish smoked salmon and scrambled eggs

SERVES 4

**FOR THE BLINIS**

175g plain flour  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
2 eggs, separated  
150ml full-fat milk  
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper  
small bunch of dill, chopped  
25g salted butter

**FOR THE SCRAMBLED EGGS**

4 eggs  
50ml double cream  
25g salted butter  
4 slices of smoked salmon, chopped

**TO SERVE**

8 slices of smoked salmon  
100ml crème fraîche (optional)  
1 lemon, cut into wedges (optional)

I cooked this dish in one of the most beautiful settings I have been in: Loch an Eilein (Loch of the Island). The stunning surroundings of forest and hills and the castle ruins that sit in the middle of the loch on a small island have recently been voted Britain's favourite picnic spot; it's no wonder. You need to go!

Heat a large flat griddle pan (or a heavy-based frying pan) over a medium heat until hot.

To make the blinis, put the flour into a large bowl, add the baking powder, egg yolks and milk. Season well and mix together.

In a separate clean and grease-free bowl, whisk the egg whites until stiff (you can use an electric hand whisk or balloon whisk for this), then fold into the batter along with the dill.

Dot the butter over the griddle pan. Once it is melted and foaming, spoon on the batter to form 8 discs. Cook for a couple of minutes until each one has puffed up and you can see bubbles appearing, then flip over and cook until golden on the other side. Lift onto a plate and set aside.

To make the scrambled eggs, whisk the eggs and cream together in a bowl. Heat the butter in a non-stick frying pan over a medium heat, then pour the egg mixture into the pan and cook gently, stirring occasionally, until just set. Stir through the chopped salmon and season with black pepper.

To serve, pile the slices of smoked salmon onto a serving plate with the blinis and serve the scrambled eggs alongside, with crème fraîche and lemon wedges on the side, if you like.



## Scampi with lovage mayo

SERVES 2

### FOR THE LOVAGE OIL

2 large bunches of lovage,  
stalks removed  
200ml grapeseed oil

### FOR THE MAYO

3 egg yolks  
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard  
1 teaspoon white wine vinegar  
juice of 1 lemon

### FOR THE SCAMPI

1-2 litres vegetable oil,  
for deep-frying  
250g self-raising flour  
350ml sparkling water  
1 teaspoon sea salt  
300g raw peeled langoustines  
or tiger prawns (about 12-14 tails,  
if bought in the shell)

### TO SERVE

1 lemon, halved

True scampi should be made with langoustines, though there was a point when it was made with prawns or monkfish, due to the skyrocketing price of the langoustine. Sadly, like many ingredients from the UK, British langoustines are nearly all exported these days.

Lovage looks like celery leaves, but has a unique taste that can be used in soups, cordials and salads. When mixed with oil, it produces this amazing-coloured mayonnaise. Buy it at your local garden centre and grow it at home.

To make the lovage oil, bring a large saucepan of water to the boil. Fill a bowl with cold water and ice and set nearby. Blanch the lovage in the hot water for 10 seconds, then plunge into the bowl of iced water. Lift out and squeeze out any excess water, then place the lovage into a food processor along with the oil and blitz for 2 minutes.

Line a sieve with muslin and rest over a bowl. Tip the oil mixture into the muslin and strain – don't stir, just let all the oil slowly drip through.

Next, make the mayo. Whisk together the egg yolks and mustard in a bowl until smooth. Slowly drizzle in the lovage oil, whisking continuously. This is easiest to do with an electric hand whisk. Continue drizzling in the oil and whisking until the mixture has thickened, then whisk in the vinegar and lemon juice. Season to taste and set aside.

Heat the vegetable oil for the scampi in a deep-fat fryer to 180°C/350°F or in a deep heavy-based saucepan until a breadcrumb sizzles and turns brown when dropped into it. (Note: hot oil can be dangerous; do not leave unattended.) Line a large plate with kitchen paper.

Sift the flour into a large bowl, then pour in the water and add the salt, and mix together. Add the langoustines and toss to coat completely in the batter.

Use a large slotted spoon to lift the langoustines out of the batter and fry in batches until golden. Lift onto the kitchen paper to drain and season with salt.

Pile the scampi into a basket, spoon the mayo into a small bowl and serve with the lemon halves on the side for squeezing over.







LIGHT BITES

## Manx kipper soup with homemade bread

SERVES 4

600ml full-fat milk  
3 Manx kippers  
25g salted butter  
1 shallot, finely diced  
25g plain flour  
25ml white wine  
100ml double cream  
200g cooked potato, diced  
sea salt and freshly ground  
black pepper  
small bunch of flat-leaf parsley,  
chopped

### FOR THE BREAD

500g strong plain bread flour,  
plus extra for dusting  
2 teaspoons table salt  
7g sachet quick yeast  
3 tablespoons olive oil

### TO SERVE

small bunch of chives, chopped  
extra double cream and olive oil,  
for drizzling

Moore's Smokehouse stayed open for me to have a look round when we finished filming in Peel. It's well worth the trip, as smoking fish here has a long history thanks to the abundance of spawning herring once caught in large volumes around the island but which are now also bought in fresh from further afield. Spawning fish aren't great to eat fresh; curing and smoking results in a far tastier product. You can buy these kippers online too. Eat grilled with butter, or make this soup.

Start by making the dough for the bread. Place all the ingredients into the bowl of a freestanding mixer, fitted with a dough hook. Pour in 300ml water and knead on a medium speed for 5 minutes until the dough is smooth and comes together in a ball. You can also do this by hand: mix everything together in a large bowl with the water, then knead lightly on a floured surface for 8–10 minutes until smooth.

Lightly dust a clean work surface and a baking sheet with flour. Shape the dough into a round, then place on the prepared baking sheet and leave to prove for 1–2 hours until doubled in size.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan)/400°F/gas 6.

Bake the proved dough for 30 minutes.

Pour the milk into a large, wide pan and add the kippers. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to low and poach the kippers for 3 minutes. Scoop the fish out onto a plate, reserving the poaching milk, and let cool a little. When cool enough to handle, flake the fish off the bones and set aside (discarding the head and bones).

Heat the butter in a large pan over a medium heat, add the shallot and fry for about 2 minutes until starting to soften. Stir in the flour and cook for 1 minute, then pour in the wine and bring to the boil. Whisk in the poaching milk and cream, then simmer over a low heat for a few minutes until warmed through, stirring continuously. Add the potatoes and flaked kippers to the pan, cover and cook for a further 2–3 minutes, then season well and add the parsley.

Use a ladle to divide the soup among 4 warm bowls. Sprinkle over the chives and drizzle with extra cream and a little extra olive oil, if you like. Serve with the homemade bread on the side.

# Newlyn Harbour fried fish with chipotle dressing and deep-fried parsley

SERVES 6

100ml dry white wine  
 750g mussels, cleaned  
 (see tip)  
 1-2 litres vegetable oil, for frying  
 200g semolina  
 100g plain flour  
 1 tablespoon cayenne pepper  
 sea salt and freshly ground  
 black pepper  
 1 egg, beaten  
 8 small monkfish fillets  
 (about 100g each)  
 4 megrim fillets, trimmed

**FOR THE DRESSING**

200ml crème fraîche  
 1 tablespoon chipotle paste  
 sea salt and freshly ground  
 black pepper

**TO SERVE**

small bunch of flat-leaf parsley,  
 thoroughly dried with  
 kitchen paper  
 2 limes

This dish is as quick to cook as it was to eat it in the amazing setting of Newlyn Harbour, surrounded by fishing boats delivering their catch, and dodging the ever-increasing number of seagulls above our heads. Smoky chipotle paste is widely available these days and is ideal for making this punchy dressing.

Heat a large non-stick saucepan with a lid over a medium heat until hot, then pour in the wine. Add the mussels and immediately pop the lid on the pan and cook for 3-4 minutes. Strain the cooking liquor through a fine sieve and into a bowl. Cool the mussels a little, then pick the meat out of the shells and put in a bowl.

Meanwhile, heat the vegetable oil in a deep-fat fryer to 190°C/375°F or in a deep heavy-based saucepan until a breadcrumb sizzles and turns brown when dropped into it. (Note: hot oil can be dangerous; do not leave unattended.) Line 2 large plates with kitchen paper.

In a large shallow bowl, mix the semolina, plain flour and cayenne pepper and season well. Whisk the egg into the mussel liquor to combine, season and whisk again. Dip the mussels, monkfish and megrim into the egg mixture, then coat them in the semolina mixture.

Deep-fry the fish in batches, starting with the monkfish, and cook for 3 minutes. Next, do the megrim and cook for 2 minutes, and finally cook the mussels for 1 minute. Use a slotted spoon to lift each portion of fish onto the kitchen paper to drain and season with salt.

Meanwhile, whisk together the dressing ingredients in a bowl, season to taste, and set aside.

Finally, deep-fry the parsley for 30 seconds until crisp and remove with a slotted spoon to drain on the kitchen paper.

To serve, pile the fish onto a warm platter, drizzle the dressing over the top and scatter over the parsley. Use a fine grater to grate lime zest over the dressing, then cut the limes in half and serve alongside.

**JAMES'S TIP**

Fresh mussels need to be alive before you cook them. To prepare them, pull off the stringy beards, knock off any barnacles and give the shells a scrub in fresh water to clean. Throw away ones with broken shells or any that don't close tightly when you tap them.



## Beachside surf and turf wraps

MAKES 3-4

500ml Greek yogurt  
 1 tablespoon baharat  
 1 teaspoon ras-el-hanout  
 1 teaspoon ground cumin  
 1 teaspoon ground coriander  
 5-cm piece fresh root ginger, grated  
 sea salt and freshly ground  
 black pepper  
 450g sirloin steak, cut into  
 4-cm cubes  
 6 scallops, cleaned, roes removed

### FOR THE SALAD

½ red cabbage, thinly sliced  
 1 red chilli, sliced  
 50ml white wine vinegar  
 1 teaspoon sea salt  
 2-cm piece fresh root ginger, grated  
 a few sprigs of coriander, chopped  
 a few mint leaves, chopped

### TO SERVE

3-4 soft white flatbread wraps  
 a few extra fresh coriander and  
 mint sprigs

I put this steak and scallop combo in a wrap, as it's a practical way to eat them while down at the beach; you can use any meat or shellfish combination here. In Cornwall, the meat is as good as the fish, as the pasture is sublime. If you want to taste it as its best, try Paul Ainsworth's places: The Mariners and Paul Ainsworth at Number 6. They showcase top-class cooking using the best of Cornish produce.

Baharat and ras-el-hanout are easily bought in larger supermarkets or Middle Eastern grocers.

If using wooden skewers, place them to soak in a bowl of water for 20 minutes before cooking. Light your BBQ. When the coals are silvery in colour, it's ready to cook on.

To prepare the skewers, put 300ml of the Greek yogurt into a large bowl, then add the spices and grated ginger. Season and mix well. Add the chopped steak and scallops, toss to coat thoroughly, then thread the cubes of steak and scallops onto the skewers.

Place the skewers on the BBQ and cook for 3 minutes on one side, then turn and cook for a further 3 minutes on the other side, until the meat is well charred.

Meanwhile, make the salad. Mix all the ingredients in a bowl and set aside until the skewers are cooked.

To serve, spread each wrap with the remaining Greek yogurt. Remove the steak and scallops from the skewers and divide among the wraps, spoon some of the salad on top and scatter over the extra coriander and mint sprigs.





NEWLYN HARBOUR, CORNWALL

