

# Old Mole's Cranberry Sauce



Well winterfest / thanksgiving was a blinding success with lots of homemade fayre and good cheer. One of the stars of the day was [Luke's](#) amazing cranberry sauce, so cheekily I asked if I could have the recipe in return for the fame and fortune that goes with having it on the blog (you remember Luke, our American friend whom we made brownies for way back at the start of the blog).

It's a proper tangy sauce which went well with everything on the menu. Indeed Luke (Old Mole himself) has said,

“Good on its own, with cheese, on sandwiches, in porridge, etc... Eat it with scabby dog if that takes your fancy.”

So without further ado – here is the recipe for

## **Old Mole's Fiery Cranberry Sauce**

### **Ingredients:**

- 250 g fresh cranberries (Frozen is OK, but not dried.)
- 50 ml port
- 50 ml water
- Zest and juice of 1 orange
- 150 grams light brown muscavado sugar
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2-3 inches fresh stem ginger
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger (optional)
- pinch salt and pepper to taste

1. Start by peeling the ginger. You can use as little or as much of this as you like. The more you use the more fire your sauce will have.

Slice the ginger into thin circles. Then chop them finely, reserving a few slices to go in whole or roughly chopped to add to the texture.

2. Use a peeler to slice off 1/3 of the zest of the orange. Try to avoid as much of the white pith beneath the surface as possible as it can add a bitterness to your sauce.

Slice the zest as finely as possible into long slivers.

3. Juice the orange and discard the rest.

4. Combine all ingredients in a pot, mix well, and bring to a boil for 2-3 minutes.

5. Turn the temperature down and simmer for 5 – 10 minutes, or until thickened with soft berries. Stir occasionally. I tend

to use a wooden spoon to mash some of the berries against the side of the pot. Ideally you want a split combination of whole cranberries and a ruby mash for a nice texture.

6. Pot or jar and allow it to cool.

Note: Adjust the sweetness to your own taste by adding or subtracting 50g of sugar. Some people like their cranberry sauce sweeter than others.

You can look out for recipes, homemade projects and other such delights at Luke's own blog – <http://makingmoleend.wordpress.com>

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**Our first official beer review**



At the beginning of December I sent some beer away as part of a brewers secret Santa, where beer from one brewer could be anonymously reviewed by an other brewer.

It was a bit nerve-wracking but I sent out a couple;

- Hello Dolly, (which is the first blog post I wrote telling you about how I make beer) and
- Cinderella's Ruin, our pumpkin ale.

It took a couple of months get the first review back but it was worth the wait and it has definitely given me confidence in our beer. We're just waiting on the second review now.

Hello Dolly tasting notes.

A very interesting brew, this one, with excellent clarity, colour and head retention, superior to other extract brews I have had (and made, for that matter). The crystal malt gave some very good, rich colour and balanced nicely with the hop flavours (both bitterness and dry hop). The label said this was the brewer's first attempt at extract – in which case, well done, and I look forward to trying the next one!

Tal

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# “Oose” On A Stick (candyfloss)

We made candy floss! We made candy floss! We made candy floss!



When Kate was little, she called candyfloss “Oose on a stick”. Oose being the Scottish word for fluff or lint and when we go on holiday it’s become a bit of a fun thing that we have to go get Oose on a stick.

Christmas however gave me the perfect opportunity for a bit of a silly present that would raise a smile, a candyfloss machine :0)

It's a baby pink bowl with a halogen heater in the middle and you just add a tablespoon of sugar and it spins the heated bowl in the centre basically making spun sugar – candyfloss. You would be absolutely amazed how much fun a 46 year old and a 38 year old can have with this. In fact Kate is currently on the internet researching how to make “better” candyfloss.

I'd say that present was a success then? (Should point out, you do actually get way more candyfloss than you can see in the pic but I kept eating it as she went – he he he he he he)



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**Lots of snow, so this weekend's project will be**

# indoors



Musselburgh was hit yesterday afternoon by the snow storms that have been travelling around the UK, so it doesn't look like much garden work will get done this weekend.

Instead I have a little indoor project. I'm going to build a brewing thermostat controlled power supply... yup, I am. :0) It will basically be a thermostat which switches power on and off determined by temperature, if it's too hot power goes to one plug switching on maybe a fridge, if it's too cold power goes to the plug with the heater. Simple concept. I'll use it to regulate the temperature my beer is fermenting/conditioning at.

You can buy these things for about £80 but I'm going to make one and save myself around £50.

**Step one – all the bits I need:**



- Casing to mount it all too – £13
- 3 core cable – £2
- Gromit to be neat – £1.50
- Wire connectors – £2.50
- Digital Thermostat – £17

I had made one error which I didn't realise until today, I bought a double socket but I actually needed two separate sockets so that they could be wired separately, so a wee trip to B&Q later and I was all set. (another £2.49 spent)

First thing to do was drill and cut the wholes in the box to fit the wires, the thermostat and the sockets, that made quite a mess but wasn't as difficult as I thought, although the finished product isn't all perfectly neat and symmetrical... but I don't care I made it and it works!!!!

One all drilled out, I fixed the sockets and thermostat into place and then wired all the different bits and pieces together using the cable connectors. I've been planning this project for a few weeks so had lots of time to research and get wiring diagrams from the web or help from the friendly people at various brew forums I use.

And once all wired, I switched on and hey presto... no bang!

I set it to switch heating on at 19 degrees and cold on at 23 degrees and then tested it with a glass of water and my now very warm hands (I got quite excited). It all works perfectly and am I feeling smug??

Hell yeah!!!!!!

**Finished product**



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## **Kate's Springfest Ale**

Winterfest has been and now spring has sprung... so... next comes Springfest :0)

Springfest is our celebration of spring and friends and we'll be hosting a wee shin dig at ours in March. A shindig at ours means a beer for the occasion so Kate got to work creating her first beer recipe based on some of the beers she likes and little tweaks she'd like to make to them. So she came up with a recipe for a pale ale bursting with hoppy goodness.

It's a bit of an American Pale Ale in style light and refreshing, perfect for a spring party, and we'll be serving a keg of this to friends.

Kate has previously helped me with some kit brews, but she

hasn't seen much of my all grain brews, except today she helped every step of the way, so this beer is her idea, her recipe and she helped brew it too.

**If you want the recipe it's below.**

Amt	Name	Type	#	%/IBU
4.20 kg	Pale Malt, Maris Otter (5.9 EBC)	Grain	2	98.8 %
0.05 kg	Crystal Malt (135.0 EBC)	Grain	3	1.2 %
10.00 g	Perle [9.37 %] – Boil 60.0 min	Hop	4	11.3 IBUs
10.00 g	Citra [14.40 %] – Boil 30.0 min	Hop	5	13.4 IBUs
0.25 tsp	Irish Moss (Boil 10.0 mins)	Fining	6	–
10.00 g	Cascade [8.20 %] – Boil 10.0 min	Hop	7	3.6 IBUs
5.00 g	Citra [14.40 %] – Boil 10.0 min	Hop	8	3.2 IBUs
10.00 g	Cascade [8.20 %] – Boil 5.0 min	Hop	9	2.2 IBUs
10.00 g	Citra [14.40 %] – Boil 5.0 min	Hop	10	3.5 IBUs
10.00 g	Cascade [8.20 %] – Boil 0.0 min	Hop	11	0.0 IBUs
10.00 g	Citra [14.40 %] – Boil 0.0 min	Hop	12	0.0 IBUs
1.0 pkg	Ringwood Ale (Wyeast Labs #1187) [124.21 ml]	Yeast	13	–
25.00 g	Cascade [8.20 %] – Dry Hop 7.0 Days	Hop	14	0.0 IBUs

25.00 g	Citra [14.40 %] – Dry Hop 7.0 Days	Hop	15	0.0 IBUs
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So as usual here is a quick blurb of what happened today with some pics.

## The Mash



The first thing we did was weigh out our grains and make a porridge out of them with hot water. I looked after the water and temperatures as Kate has less experience of this, but she was right in there mixing it up.

We mashed at 66 degrees Celsius. Once it was all mixed and at the right temperature, we left it for an hour to allow all the sugars to come out of the grain.

As is now the tradition of my brew days, while the mash was going, I made some bread for dinner tonight (we're having pulled pork – yum! Recipe will be on here soon).

We also had a little bit of unexpected help today, you've maybe heard of the Scottish brewers "Brew Dog"? Well we had Brew Cats...



You turn your back for two seconds and these two are in to everything to see what they aren't involved in.

Shame I can't actually put them to work!

**The Boil**



So, mash done, bread made and time to get the boil going, and true to her word, Kate measured out all the hops and added them at the intervals. Lots of citra and cascade, so this should be a nice, fresh, zingy beer.

Once the boil was over and cooled, I had a wee taste, and so far it's spot on.

It's a nice pale beer as well, which was Kate's request – I have a tendency to make copper or ruby beers because that's my preference. This time we made sure she got her request and this is a nice gold.

## **Fermentation**



So last thing, all chilled, we transferred it to the fermenting bucket and added the yeast. Using Ringwoode yeast again as I was really pleased with this last time. So fingers crossed it doesn't disappoint me this time round.

So that was Kate's first all grain brew day :0)

I promise we'll update you with the beer once it's finished and also with stories and pictures of Springfest.

## **UPDATE**

The beer is absolutely lovely!!!



Kate's first beer – her own recipe and she helped to make it.

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## Fun with a pasta machine

Well this week has been a week of fun with the pasta machine, and just how versatile is a pasta machine?



Well let me tell you. We'll start with pasta...

## **Ravioli with butternut squash filling**

Ok firstly, for those of you who fancy making pasta, it is dead easy, like so easy it's almost disappointing. You don't even need a pasta machine to roll it; you could do it with a normal rolling-pin. However a pasta machine just makes life a little easier.

So what do you need?

### **Ingredients for pasta (serves 2)**

- 100 grams pasta flour
- 1 egg
- salt & pepper to taste

Yup it's that simple, just mix it together to form a ball of dough, wrap it in cling-film and then leave it in the fridge for half an hour. Then roll it out as thin as you can.

### **Ingredients for the butternut squash filling**

- 200 grams butternut squash
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1/2 small red onion
- 20 grams manchego cheese (or your choice maybe pecorino)

- pinch nutmeg
- salt & pepper

## **Ok, here's what we did.**

Cut the squash into chunks of about an inch and then toss in a bowl with the oil and salt and pepper to get them all coated. Then roast them on an oven tray at about 180/200 for fan, for 25 mins.

After the 25 min mark, scatter the thinly sliced onion over the top and roast for another 10 mins before putting aside to cool before blitzing it in the food processor and adding the cheese and nutmeg to make a thick orange puree. Easy peezy!

## **Ok now for the fun, making up the ravioli.**

Ok once the dough has been sitting for half an hour, it will be ready to roll. Whether you use a pasta machine or a rolling-pin, the idea is to get two, long strips of pasta dough as thin as you possibly can. Take your time over this as the pasta being too thick can ruin your dish, you want **THIN!**



Did I emphasise that enough?

Ok so you should end up with two long strips of pasta, about the width of your ravioli, or slightly wider. Now is the time to decide how big your pasta is going to be so that you can

work out how far apart to put your filling before laying the other strip on top to make the little parcels of nom.

Now start spooning a little filling onto one of the strips, don't put too much on there, about a teaspoon full does.

Once you have your filling spooned onto the pasta, the actual work begins Use a little water to go around the edges of the pasta (filling) to help it all stick together. Then carefully lay your second strip on top of the first.

You need to go around each little lump of filling and carefully press down the pasta making sure to get all the air out and seal the two pieces together. It's worth taking your time here because you don't want pasta filling leaking out. That would be a horrible waste.

Then once you are happy, use a knife or a cutter and cut out your little parcels of pasta. Tah Dah! Dead easy.

To cook, just get some salted water boiling and cook them for about 2 or 3 minutes and then add the sauce of your choice.

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**More fun with a pasta machine  
– Chinese dim sum**



Well we already told you about making pasta, but that's not the only thing you can use a pasta machine for. We also made Pot Stickers.

Pot stickers are little Chinese dumplings (won ton) which are fried on one side to get them all brown and crunchy and then steamed to cook the filling and the rest of the outer casing. This way giving you a mixture of textures and flavours.

You can serve them with all sorts of dipping sauces, we've even eaten them with salad but this week we served them with a noodle soup. (We love Chinese food so have a few recipes under our belt that we'll share with you, if you're good).

So how do you make them?

## **Ingredients for won ton wrappers (serves 2 – 4)**

Well essentially, the wrappers are just pasta. You'll see some recipes with water some without but we used the same recipe as we used for our pasta.

- 100 grams pasta flour
- 1 egg
- salt & pepper

Mix it together into a ball of dough and then chill in the fridge for half an hour wrapped in cling -film. Once chilled,

you need to roll it out as thin as you possibly can and then cut your little wrappers. We used a cookie cutter.

## **Ingredients for the chicken and leek filling (serves 2 – 4)**

- 200 grams minced chicken
- 2 tablespoons of finely chopped leeks
- 1 finely chopped spring onion
- 2cm piece of peeled ginger, finely chopped
- 2tsp sesame oil
- 1 tsp shaoxing rice wine
- salt & pepper
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 tbsp ground nut oil (for frying)

Combine the chicken, leek, ginger, spring onion, shaoxing, sesame oil, salt & pepper. If need be you can use a little egg white to combine.

## **Making the pot stickers**



Take one of your won ton wrappers and place it in the palm of your hand. Then add a tea-spoon of filling to the centre.

Just like with pasta you want to brush around the edge with water or beaten egg yolk to help stick the wrapper together

and stop your filling from escaping. Next fold the wrapper over and start pinching the edges together to seal.

To stop them sticking while you make the others, we usually sit them on a floured board.



## **Cooking your pot stickers**

As I said earlier, pot stickers are both fried and steamed, so here's how you get that mix.

Heat the ground nut oil in your wok over a medium heat then add your pot stickers arranging them around the bottom and lower sides. Fry for about 30 – 60 seconds, just enough to

begin to go golden.

Then pour around 200 ml of water into the pan to create steam and cover the pan. Allow them to steam for around 5 – 8 minutes. (Don't let the pan dry out, top up the water if you have to).

## **Our favourite dipping sauce**

To make a dipping sauce for the pot stickers, mix together 2 tbsp of runny honey and 1 tbsp light soy sauce with 1 tbsp chopped chives.

Serve your pot stickers crispy side up, heaped on a plate and let your dinner guests help themselves.

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# **Commissioned – making a Kolsh**

I won't say scary but definitely I will say that today's brew day is slightly more of an anxious one than usual.

Today I'm not making beer for Kate and me. Today I'm making a special beer at the request of a work colleague.

Now I say special beer because this one is a very traditional beer made in cologne. It's protected by the European committee people that dictate what you call a product. I'm sure they have an official title.

So like Arbroath smokies can only be made in Arbroath and Stornoway black pudding can only be made in Stornoway... A Kolsh beer can only be made in cologne.

So today I'm making a Kolsh style beer.

All the beers I've made so far have been straight forward ales. That is to say that they are brewed at room temperature or there about. And the yeast does well at these temperatures. The Kolsh however is a tricky one to describe.

It's brewed at a much lower temperature, 14 Celsius and then it goes through a process called lagering which means it's left to clear and "condition" in a fridge at close to 0 Celsius for a long time.

But it's made using a type of yeast traditionally used for ales so I'm not sure whether to say it's a lager or a beer.

I should probably go along with the German way and say beer rather than defining things further.

All the temperature and time are important. This all has an impact on the flavour, which is very much like a lager but much softer on the mouth.



So I did the brewing today, and it's now sitting in the big brew fridge at 14 degrees where it will stay for a couple of weeks before I lower the temperature to 2 degrees for a few months.

Gonna have to be patient to see how this turns out.



Update

The finished beer.



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## Eating what you sow

This week we thought we'd do you a wee update on the food we get from the garden rather than just lots of pictures of plants, although we will also be including pictures of plants of course

The exciting news this week is that we are seeing our first tomatoes. This is quite a big deal as last year we had so many tomatoes and it left us go wild in the kitchen with pasta and salads etc. So we're both quite excited about this prospect again. Obviously the tomatoes are only small and green just now, but it's a sure sign of things to come.



So what do we do with tomatoes from the garden? Well this recipe is a big favourite of ours.



## Summer Pasta

### Ingredients

- Lots of tomatoes – all different types
- Garlic – raw – 6 cloves
- fresh basil – handful of shredded leaves
- olive oil – 6 table spoons
- spaghetti cooked

### How to make

It's really simple.

Cut up your tomatoes into bite sized pieces, mince the garlic and mix this all with the olive oil. Cover with cling film and leave in the fridge for a few hours.

Cook some spaghetti and then mix the garlicky tomato goodness through it.

Add your basil and some seasoning to taste... and serve.

Don't be put off by the idea of the raw garlic, it's not actually as overpowering as you think, it's more of a warm hum when added to the tomatoes and basil.

Serve with a nice glass of chilled white wine in the garden.

So what else do we have?

Well the courgettes yet again are growing up a storm, we've already had one meal from this plant and there are clearly more to come. So what do we like to do with the courgettes?

## **Kate's Lemon Thyme Chicken with Courgettes.**



### **Ingredients**

- Courgettes – sliced
- Chicken breast – cooked and sliced
- crème fresh
- lemon thyme

## How to

Again a dead simple meal made with fresh ingredients from the garden.

Fry off the sliced chicken breast with the courgette slices until cooked.

Add the crème fresh and some lemon thyme from the garden, give it a good stir and a heat through, season and serve in a big bowl with homemade bread.

A big favourite of mine is beetroot and before you screw your nose up – real, fresh beetroot is completely different from the pickled stuff in jars we were fed as kids. Trust me.



Kate does the most amazing roast beetroot tart, which this beetroot is destined for next week – although I haven't told Kate that yet. But she also does lovely roasted beetroot with rosemary. We blogged the recipe last year so [click here](#) and go make some.

Now rather than bore you with loads more of our recipes, here are some baby lemons... awwwwwwww



Now this rhubarb is destined for a rhubarb and ginger crumble... I promise I'll blog it when I make it. Yum!



And lastly lunch last weekend. Baked Camembert with broccoli spears from the garden to dip into the gooey cheese.



Life is hard being me and Kate!!!!

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## Lunch for the aged parents

Kate's mum and dad are visiting for lunch today so we thought we'd treat them to some garden delights (since they are blog fans). So today's lunch will be stuffed chicken breast wrapped in Parma ham with baby carrots, sautéed potatoes and asparagus (asparagus not from the garden).

So pictures? Silly question.



Ok so maybe more like teenage carrots than baby. However we did have an interesting find when we were pulling the carrots...



How's that for cuddling carrots?

Next... potatoes...



Our potatoes have been a big hit, especially as Kate's potato salad, I'll get her to blog her secrets recipe.

Lastly, the herbs for dinner.

