



The Edible Garden with Alison Alexander

The Queensland citrus season has started, and the first Imperial mandarins arrived in the markets last week. Gayndah, Mundubbera and Emerald are the main growing areas, but many people also have great success with citrus trees in the back yard. The crops on my trees vary annually and 2021 is proving, so far, to be a good year with good numbers of fruit on most trees. The one tree that has performed poorly is my cumquat which makes such a superb marmalade so it will be a combination of cumquat and lime marmalade for us this year.

I was once asked if I were stranded on an island and could have one fruit tree, what would it be? I did not hesitate to say it would be a lime tree. It will give me juice for drinking, and this will avoid scurvy, hopefully I will catch some fish and although I am not good at lighting fires the lime juice will “cook” the flesh and I will be constantly on the lookout for a bottle of gin to land on the beach that I can enjoy with my lime juice.

Of course, there are many different types of limes and the above type I am talking about is the Tahitian lime which is at its best for marmalade when ripe but green but as it ages it will turn yellow and this is when it will give maximum juice which can be frozen for later use.

Kaffir lime, or more correctly named now as Makrut Lime, is commonly used in Thai and other Asian cuisines, mostly for the zest. I have a tree that year after year gives a large crop and I do make some curry pastes, but I am lost for more ideas of how to use it. It is not good on its own for marmalade or pickles as the flavour is strong. I do use the juice, especially in curries but am still left with lots of fruit. Please let me know if you have any other ideas of how to use the fruit. Given my choice, I would use a lime over a lemon anytime.

The native Finger Lime has become popular in recent years as more varieties have been developed and we can now have fruit that has different coloured flesh from pale cream through to green, orange, pink and deep red. It is a perfect accompaniment to any seafood, but I have used it with great success in mango chutney and just love a glass of soda water on a hot day and a squeeze of bush lime pearls – very refreshing. The bush limes freeze well.

Haloumi Cheese with Lime and Caper Vinaigrette –

adapted from a recipe by **Delia Smith**.

- 1 haloumi cheese
- 2 tablespoons plain flour
- sea salt flakes
- freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

Lime and Caper Vinaigrette:

2 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
juice and zest of 1 lime
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 heaped tablespoon baby capers, rinsed and drained
1 tablespoon white wine or cider vinegar
1 heaped tablespoon finely chopped coriander
1 teaspoon wholegrain mustard
sea salt flakes
freshly ground black pepper

1. Cut the cheese into 8 even slices. Combine flour, salt, and pepper in a shallow bowl.
2. Place all the dressing ingredients in a small bowl and whisk until well combined.
3. Heat oil in a fry pan over medium heat. Press each slice of cheese into seasoned flour to coat it on both sides, dust off the excess then place in a single layer in the pan and cook until golden. Turn over the cheese slices and cook on the other side then place on a serving plate.
4. Spoon over the dressing and serve immediately.

Chermoula Marinated Quail with Chickpea and Olive Salad

Chermoula:

1 cup fresh coriander leaves
1 cup fresh Italian parsley leaves
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon ground paprika
juice of 2 limes
finely grated zest of 1 lime
2 tablespoons olive oil

6 butterflied quail (see below for other options)
2 tablespoons olive oil
400g tin chickpeas, drained and rinsed
4 Roma tomatoes, roughly chopped
1 small red onion, finely diced
½ cup chopped roughly chopped coriander
⅓ cup halved green olives
100g baby spinach leaves (large handful of leaves)
finely grated zest of 1 lime
sea salt flakes
freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons lime juice

1. Pre-heat oven to 180°C.
2. Place all chermoula ingredients into a food processor and process until mixture is a smooth paste.
3. Place quail in a large bowl and pour over the chermoula, mixing well to coat off the meat. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight.
4. Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a frypan and brown the quail in a single layer on both sides then place on a large baking tray. Finish cooking the quail in the oven for 8-10 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, make the salad by combining chickpeas, tomatoes, onion, parsley, olives, lime zest and seasoning in a mixing bowl. In a small bowl whisk together the lime juice and olive oil and pour over the salad and stir to coat well.
6. Place the quail on a serving plate and the salad in a bowl and serve with good bread.

Note:

- Chermoula can be used on chicken, lamb and fish, particularly oily fish such as Spanish mackerel, barramundi, and salmon.