

In the kitchen

Inspiring seasonal ideas and recipes



LOVE IN THE POST

Seeking a special gift to send to a friend, Caroline Stafford combined her passion for baking with her love of inspiring quotes. She now bakes and hand-stamps iced vanilla biscuits from her Rutland farmhouse. Available in different sizes, each bears an edible message of love and encouragement. These can be personalised. Ingredients are sourced locally where possible or are Fairtrade.

Hand-stamped iced biscuits from £6.95,
www.the-kitsch-hen.co.uk



SALTY AND CRISP

Marsh samphire, *Salicornia europaea*, thrives in estuaries and wetlands. With a short season, it is at its best from mid-June. The vibrant crisp stems have a salty taste and make an ideal accompaniment to fish. Often stocked by fishmongers, it is bought as needed, as it does not keep well. Bright, fresh plants with no wilting are chosen and washed in cold running water before use. Although it can be eaten raw, samphire is more popularly boiled or steamed and served simply with butter.

SPREADABLE SUNSHINE

In season from May, velvety soft apricots are an excellent source of vitamin A, and a good source of vitamin C, copper, fibre and potassium. Slightly under-ripe specimens are easily turned into a delicious jam. To make: wash and stone 1.5kg of fruit and put through a mincer or food processor. In a preserving pan, combine the apricots with the juice of 1 large lemon, 1 tsp of finely grated rind and 1.35kg sugar. Leave for 1-2 hrs for the sugar to draw out the juice of the apricots. Once this happens, place the pan over a low heat and stir frequently until the sugar dissolves. Raise the heat to bring the mixture to the boil. Stir frequently until the jam thickens and setting point is reached. Skim off any scum that may form, and cool slightly. Pot up into sterilised jars, seal and store in a cool place. Refrigerate jars once opened.

