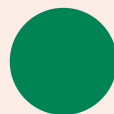


# CIRAVE

THE  
EXTRA  
BITE

**ED SMITH**

Photography by Sam A Harris



**an e-cookbook with 12 bonus recipes  
and other flavour-focused titbits**



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EXTRA  
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**an e-cookbook with 12 bonus recipes  
and other flavour-focused titbits**

*Hardie Grant*  
QUADRILLE



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## Introduction

### Hello!

If you're reading this it means that, in an act of blind faith, you've gone ahead and ordered my new cookbook *Crave* – without flicking through a hard copy of it; without the prospect of getting the actual book in your hands for weeks or months; and quite possibly without seeing any of the recipes within it, or even knowing much about the concept.\*

To which I say:

- (a) thank you;
- (b) are you mad?; and
- (c) you deserve some extra recipes.

So, here are those recipes. A dozen additional dishes. You've basically made your version of *Crave* ten per cent bigger. Nice one. Please go forth, browse, read, make and eat. I hope that they satisfy whatever you're craving when you choose to cook them, and that they whet your appetite for the book itself (which looks and feels very nice – I think you'll like it).

### A little bit about *Crave*

I'm trying to avoid repeating the official introduction in *Crave*... but I do want to give you a taste of the book, and also need to put these twelve recipes in useful context.

So, in brief:

My feeling is that we're overloaded with instruction and inspiration when it comes to meal planning. Essentially, we've got the internet, television, the papers and magazines, cookbooks, shouty chefs, celebs, social media and general food trends all *telling us* what we *should* be aspiring to cook. There's so much noise, and so many possibilities, that quite often the result is either paralysis and reversion to one of our five or six stock recipes; or an evening spent cooking something that may well be objectively great, and yet it comes nowhere near to satisfying our subjective needs at that time.

I think we should turn things around a little bit and, well, cook what we want.

That's not meant as a glib statement. I just think we could make things easier, and mealtimes more successful, by simply asking ourselves what we're craving, and then using that answer to narrow the search.

And to make things a little more focused (and therefore easier still), let's categorize our cravings into an admittedly imperfect but also not terrible shortlist of cravings. Specifically, a shortlist of flavour profiles that'll cover most bases. These are:

- Fresh and fragrant
- Tart and sour
- Chilli and heat
- Spiced and curried
- Rich and savoury
- Cheesy and creamy

When you get your copy of the book you'll see that (a) it's divided into six sections, one for each of those flavour profiles; and (b) I cover each in more detail (including why 'heat' is correct to include as a 'flavour' profile and 'curried' is not, but why I've used it...), discussing some of the reasons as to why and when we might crave them. Aside from brief comments in the individual introductions to the recipes that follow, I'll leave you to read those more detailed thoughts in the actual book. It's not a particularly rigorous or involved thesis, largely because the real point is that the recipes, the concept, the message... are about trusting your intuition.

(That said, \*spoiler alert\* I know that, ultimately, reasons for cravings are personal – one person's comfort food might be mellow roast chicken, another's a fiery laksa. Accordingly, the recipes are not presented as prescriptive solutions to particular moments. They're just good things to cook when you're craving the relevant flavour.)

## The Extra Bite

This little ebook follows the same format as the book: six flavour profiles to choose from, depending on your cravings, with (in this case) two recipes under each profile. There are appetizers, meals for two (easily scalable), a few family-sized mains, and a couple of sweet things too.

At the end I brain-dump a few ideas for quick fixes, things to read, and larder items that, if you have them in your cupboards, fridge or freezer, will mean cravings are easily sated.

That's it. Now have a scroll. I really hope you enjoy the dishes and, of course, your copy of the book when it arrives. Please feel free to spread the word about *Crave*, and also about this extra bite.

Thanks for your support,

Ed

\* There's a chance you're reading this because someone forwarded you the pdf. In which case: hi, welcome, my name is Ed Smith – [@rocketandsquash](#) on all the socials – I'm a cook and food writer, and within this ebook are a dozen recipes based around six flavour profiles that I think we all crave. If you like them, maybe you'll consider buying the actual book when it's out, and telling other friends to do the same? That'd be nice. In fact, while you're adding it to an online basket, or maybe even picking up a copy in an actual, physical, post-lockdown shop, perhaps you could add my first cookbook *On the Side* to your basket, too? Do that and we can call it quits.



# fresh and fragrant

Think: herbs, salad leaves, fresh cheeses, steamed fish, lemon juice and olive oil, vegetables that snap and crunch and refresh. On which note, you might want this kind of food when it's hot, or bright, or you're happy. Or, in fact, when it's cold, or dull, or you're glum, and you need food that is energizing and makes you feel good.

Anise-roasted tomatoes with fennel  
and ricotta toast

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Lamb rump, spring veg and herbs

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## Anise-roasted tomatoes with fennel and ricotta toast

I love good things on toast. In fact, charred sourdough topped with sliced and salted tomatoes and a grassy olive oil is one of the best and freshest lunches. But the tomatoes need to be excellent – which is only the case in winter months with a couple of niche varieties, and then in late summer. The rest of the time, I think it's better to use tomatoes that have been slowly roasted, to intensify their flavour.

In any event, although the tomatoes are certainly not irrelevant here, the 'fresh' in this dish is really about the fridge-cold, pure-tasting ricotta and how it contrasts with the tomatoes and toast. And 'fragrant' is the anise from the fennel seeds and tarragon the tomatoes are roasted with, plus the crisp, fennel, lemon and tarragon salad.

The recipe makes more than two persons-worth of tomatoes, but leftovers are good for repeating this brunch/lunch/supper/snack the next day, or can also be warmed and dragged through pasta.

*Serves 2 (with leftover tomatoes)*

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### *For the tomatoes*

600g (1lb 5oz) medium-sized tomatoes, halved  
1 garlic bulb, halved across its middle  
1 tsp flaky sea salt  
1 tsp caster (superfine) sugar  
1 tsp fennel seeds, ground to a powder  
2 tsp red wine vinegar  
3–4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
6 sprigs of tarragon  
500g (1lb 2oz) cherry tomatoes

### *For the fennel salad*

½ fennel bulb  
Pinch flaky sea salt  
½ lemon  
½ tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
Leaves stripped from 1–2 sprigs tarragon

### *To finish*

2–3 tbsp ricotta

Heat the oven to 160°C/140°C fan/325°F.

Find a roasting tin that looks big enough to fit the halved tomatoes and cherry tomatoes in one layer. Arrange the halved larger tomatoes in the tin, cut-side facing up, plus the two garlic halves cut-side down. Sprinkle a few flakes of salt onto the surface of each tomato. Combine the sugar and ground fennel seeds, then dust the tomatoes with most of that. Add a drop or two of vinegar to each tomato, then drizzle 2–3 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil over the top.

Slide the tin into the middle of the oven and cook for 45 minutes, during which time the tomatoes should puff up a bit, then begin to dry out while still retaining their form. After that, add the tarragon and the cherry tomatoes, along with another tablespoon or two of olive oil, then cook for a further 30–40 minutes, until the cherry tomatoes are split and shrinking, and the juices in the tin have turned from watery to glossy. Turn off the heat, but leave the tomatoes in the oven – more (but not all) of the juices will evaporate and the tomatoes will continue to intensify and soften, without being reduced to a mush.

Meanwhile, slice the fennel bulb from root to top into fine shavings (best done with a mandolin), add a pinch of salt and mix. Cut wafer thin slices of lemon (this is easiest if you slice thin discs from a whole lemon, until you've taken one third), discard any seeds, then chop finely until almost like a paste. Add this to the fennel, plus the olive oil, then mix and leave to stand for 20 minutes. Stir the tarragon through just before serving.

Toast your sourdough, spread each slice with ricotta, then spoon the soft, lukewarm tomatoes over the top. Add a light dusting of the remaining ground fennel seeds, and serve the fennel salad on the side.







## Lamb rump, spring veg and herbs

There aren't many meat-heavy dishes in the fresh and fragrant chapter in *Crave*; fish and vegetable-led recipes feel more appropriate to appetite, mood and moment associated with such a craving. However, lamb works particularly well here alongside the other key elements, all of which are indisputably fresh and fragrant: a yoghurt base; wilted wild garlic and radishes; and an asparagus and mint leaf vinaigrette. It's a really bright, vibrant, energizing spring-summer plate.

If wild garlic is over, or you can't get it, add a little minced garlic to the yoghurt.

Serves 2

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### For the lamb

10 wild garlic leaves (if available)  
150g (5½oz) asparagus, chopped in 2–3cm (¾–1¼in) pieces  
400g (14oz) baby potatoes  
1 tbsp neutral cooking oil  
400g (14oz) lamb rump  
20g (¾oz) salted butter  
8 breakfast radishes, halved (but with leaves intact)  
Flaky sea salt and ground black pepper

### For the asparagus dressing

2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
2 tsp moscatel vinegar  
½ tsp caster (superfine) sugar  
Leaves picked from 3 sprigs mint

### To finish

5 tbsp Greek yoghurt  
Zest and juice ½ lemon  
10g (¾oz) Parmesan, finely grated  
½ small clove garlic, minced (if no wild garlic)

Heat oven to 220°C/200°C fan/425°F.

Bring a saucepan of shallow water to the boil. Add the wild garlic leaves for 15 seconds then use tongs to remove and drape them over a clean cloth or paper towel to drain. With the water boiling again, drop-in the asparagus and cook for 90 seconds, then remove those with tongs and chill under a cold running tap. Set to one side. Put your potatoes in the water and simmer energetically for around 20 minutes until tender.

Measure the oil into a cold, ovenproof frying pan. Place over a medium-high heat then render and sear the lamb, fat side down for 3–4 minutes, seasoning the exposed flesh with salt and pepper while you do so. Add the butter to the pan and brown the remaining sides of the lamb for around 60 seconds on each side. Add the radishes to the pan, roll in butter, then place the pan in the hot oven for 6–8 minutes, or (if you have a temperature probe) until the thickest part of the lamb is around 52–54°C/125–129°F. Transfer the meat to a warm plate to rest. Leave the radishes in the pan and add the wild garlic to it, to languish in the warm, buttery juices.

In a medium-sized bowl, whisk together the olive oil, vinegar, sugar, and a pinch each of salt and pepper until emulsified, then add the asparagus and mint leaves and toss until glossy.

In another bowl, combine the yoghurt, lemon zest and juice, a pinch each of salt and pepper, and the Parmesan (and garlic if using).

Dollop the yoghurt onto the middle of two plates. Slice and arrange the rested lamb on top. Add the warm radishes and wild garlic, then spoon over the asparagus and mint vinaigrette. Serve immediately with the boiled new potatoes.



# tart and sour

Think: pickles, ferments, sharp fruits like gooseberries, red currants, grapefruit and damsons, vinegars, magic things like pomegranate molasses, tamarind and dried berry powders, the lactic tang of certain types of dairy. These things are jolting. They're perky, and provide a pick-me-up, or keep already positive times going.

Soused mackerel and browned butter egg salad 19  
Sour fruit mess 21

## Soused mackerel and browned butter egg salad

This is based on a Swedish dish called *Lerpottasill* – pickled salted herrings served with chopped eggs, onions, potatoes, plenty of dill and sizzling brown butter. It offers gentle comfort through the potatoes, eggs and browned butter, and a calming fragrance from the dill. And yet the stand-out feature (to me, at least), is the striking, metallic-skinned, sharp, oily fish, which calls out like an exclamation mark, keeps your fork diving back onto the plate, and ensures that, on balance, this is a perky and cheering plate of food.

*Serves 4 as an appetizer or as part of a light meal*

*For the mackerel*

4 mackerel fillets (as fresh and fatty as you can find), pin-boned  
 1 tbsp table salt  
 5 tbsp of caster (superfine) sugar  
 ½ tsp cloves  
 6 black peppercorns  
 2 sprigs fresh thyme  
 2 bay leaves  
 300ml (1¼ cups + 1 tbsp) white wine vinegar  
 50ml (3½ tbsp) water  
 ½ small red onion, finely sliced

*To complete the salad*

400g (14oz) Jersey Royal potatoes  
 4 medium eggs  
 ½ small red onion, very finely diced  
 50g (1¾oz) salted butter  
 Fronds picked from 4–5 sprigs dill  
 Ground black pepper

Lay the mackerel flesh-side up and sprinkle with the salt and 1 tablespoon of the sugar. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours, then gently wash that cure off with cold water and pat dry.

Measure the dry spices and herbs into a medium-sized saucepan set over a low-medium heat and gently toast until fragrant. Add the vinegar, water, red onion and the remaining sugar, and bring to the boil. Stir to ensure the sugar has dissolved, then remove from the heat and leave to cool.

Arrange the fillets flesh-side down in a shallow dish into which they fit snugly. Pour the pickling liquor over the top, cover and refrigerate for 24 hours.

The next day, when you're ready to eat, halve and boil the potatoes until tender; boil the eggs for 8 minutes, then cool in cold water, peel and quarter them; and slice the mackerel into 2–3cm (¾–1¼in) strips across the breadth of the fillets. Arrange all the elements on a platter or divide between individual plates, then spoon the chopped red onion around the salad and season everything with black pepper.

Put the butter in a frying pan over a high heat. Allow it to melt and foam. When the foam begins to calm in the centre of the pan, and the butter smells nutty, it is 'browned'. Remove from the heat and immediately spoon over the fish and potatoes – if you're quick, the butter will still be so hot that it will fizz and bubble as it sears the surfaces it touches.

Finally, let dill rain down on top of everything, using far more than you think you need. And tuck in.



## Sour fruit mess

Something to consider if you're after a crowd-pleasing pudding that doesn't send you all to sleep.

This is basically just a smashed pavlova or a-kind-of-Eton mess, which uses Greek yoghurt instead of whipped cream, and so carries a sprightly tang, rather than a snooze-inducing, velvet cushioning quality. The pud is finished with a freeze-dried berry powder (if you are UK-based try [souschef.co.uk](http://souschef.co.uk) or [spicemountain.co.uk](http://spicemountain.co.uk)), which you'll find to be the very essence of the relevant fruit in sherbet form. You could also use sumac (which also happens to be a dried berry powder).

While the yoghurt and berry powder are sharp, the star will most likely be the fruit compote, made from whichever tart fruit is in season at the time you fancy it: forced or (better still) field rhubarb, gooseberries, red currants, blueberries, passion fruit, apricots, damsons, cranberries. Just something to pucker the lips a little.

Serves 4

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### For the meringue

2 large egg whites  
Pinch flaky sea salt  
150g (5½oz) caster (superfine) sugar

### For the compote

Approx. 200g (7oz) sour fruit (field rhubarb, gooseberries, blueberries, redcurrants, apricots, damsons)  
10% of the fruit's weight (approx. 20g/¾oz) caster (superfine) sugar

### To finish

300g (10½oz) Greek yoghurt  
1–2 tsp raspberry (or other berry) powder

Heat the oven to 170°C/150°C fan/325°F.

Set up a stand mixer and ensure the bowl and whisk are spotless. Put the egg whites and pinch of salt in the bowl, turn the machine to a medium-fast pace and whisk to stiff-peaks. At this point, increase the speed of the machine and add the sugar to the whites in a slow but steady stream. Once added, continue to whisk at high speed for a further 10 minutes. The meringue is ready when you can no longer feel any sugar granules if you take a pinch and rub it between thumb and forefinger.

Line a baking sheet with baking parchment or a silicon mat. Use a large metal spoon to heap the meringue into four evenly-sized mounds. Place in the middle of the oven, close the door and immediately reduce the temperature to 140°C/120°C fan/275°F. Bake for 60 minutes, then turn the oven off, leaving the meringues to cool inside for 30 minutes. Store at room temperature in an airtight container until required.

To make the compote, cut (if necessary) your chosen fruits into 2–3cm (¾–1¼in) pieces, combine with the sugar, plus 2 tablespoons of water, then gently simmer for 7–10 minutes until stewed. Taste and add more sugar if necessary, though be sure to keep it more lip-puckering than saccharine. Leave to cool then decant to an airtight container and refrigerate.

To serve, break open the meringue and arrange on a platter or individual plates, as if it had just been smashed. Spoon the compote into the middle, the yoghurt on top of that, and then liberally dust with the berry powder.



# chilli and heat

Think: things that burn, without actually burning you. A vast array of chilli peppers, all with different flavours and degrees of heat – sometimes dried, sometimes fresh, sometimes as an ingredient, other times as part of a condiment, be that 'nduja or hot sauce. Also mustard, wasabi, horseradish, and Sichuan and sanshō peppercorns – chilli and heat is about numbing and lip-buzzing sensation as well as taste.

There are so many reasons you might crave this flavour profile; thrill-seeking stimulation is one of them. Perhaps you need to wake up and recalibrate, banish a mood (or hangover), recall a trip, or tap into memories of home.

Crab and asparagus aguachile

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'Nduja and honey potatoes with fried eggs and sage

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## Crab and asparagus aguachile

Aguachile translates to “chilli water”. Chilli as in spicy, not chilly as in cold. And this puddle of a marinade-come-dressing-come-sauce does what it says on the tin. It’s one part refreshing and one part fiery (provided your serrano chillies are of the right power). As such, I find aguachile dishes among the most cleansing and energizing things you can eat. Cool yet eyebrow-raising and lip-buzzing at the same time.

Rather than try to keep this totally Mexican, texture comes from the asparagus, prince of British spring and early summer, and the seafood element is the white meat from a brown crab. Thinly-sliced raw mackerel, bream or scallops are superb alternatives, though they should sit in the aguachile for a few minutes to ‘cook’ before plating.

*Serves 2 as an appetizer, 4 as a small plate alongside other bits*

### *For the aguachile*

1–2 serrano chillies, deseeded  
1 medium tomato (or a tomatillo if available)  
½ large cucumber, peeled and cut into chunks  
1 celery stick, roughly chopped  
The stalks from a 30g (1oz) bunch of coriander, chopped  
Juice of 1 lime  
1 tsp flaky sea salt

### *To assemble*

130g (4½oz) asparagus (4–5 medium-sized spears)  
½ large cucumber, peeled, deseeded and cut in 2mm (⅛in) crescents  
1 celery stick, sliced wafer thin  
Pinch flaky sea salt  
60g (2¼oz) white crab meat  
¼ small red onion, very finely sliced  
1 serrano chilli (optional), sliced into fine circles  
Corn totopos

Put one chilli plus the rest of the aguachile ingredients in a blender, pulse and blitz thoroughly. Taste, and if you’d like more fire add some or all of the second chilli, then blitz again. Set a fine sieve over a jug, decant the blended liquid into it, then leave it to drip-strain through, leaving most of the solids in the sieve (discard those) – it could take ten minutes or so.

Snap off and discard the woody parts from the asparagus stalks. Cut the tops from the stalks and slice the tops in half lengthways. Cut the remaining stalks into 1cm (½in) thick pieces. Combine in a bowl with the sliced cucumber and celery and add a good pinch of salt. Mix well and leave to sit for five minutes.

Spoon the asparagus and co. onto a platter, or divide between two shallow bowls, and arrange so that everything sits more or less in one layer. Dot the crab meat around the vegetables, add the red onion and chilli (if you fancy it), then spoon over enough of the aguachile to create a generous puddle – more than a dressing, less than a broth.

Eat straight away, using spoons and those crunchy corn totopos to scoop, with cold beers nearby.



## 'Nduja and honey potatoes with fried eggs and sage

A good 'nduja initially draws you in with the bright and fruity flavour of red Calabrian chilli peppers, the saltiness of the cured pork fat, and then, boom, you're hit with a near-volcanic eruption of heat over your tongue, up to the roof of the mouth, and then down to your chest.

The trick here is that we keep the bright edge of the 'nduja by merely melting it into a glaze, so that it coats and infiltrates little baked potatoes once they've been cooked. Honey added at the same time tempers the fire a little, but also ensures the result is incredibly moreish; and so, the rumbling cycle of sweet then heat continues.

These potatoes work as a side dish alongside many things (chicken dishes, pork chops, pork belly, white fish), but fried eggs and crisp sage are (a) an excellent match; and (b) co-create a relatively quick, low-key yet extremely successful way to satisfy a craving.

*Serves 4 for brunch*

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### *For the potatoes*

600g–700g (1lb 5oz–1lb 9oz) pink fir apples, ratte, anya or similar 'new' potatoes  
1 tbsp cold pressed rapeseed oil  
60g (2¼oz) 'nduja  
2 tbsp runny honey

### *To finish*

40g (1½oz) butter  
A dozen or so sage leaves  
4 medium eggs  
Oil or butter, for frying the eggs

Heat the oven to 220°C/200°C fan/425°F.

Wash and pat dry the potatoes, then transfer them to a roasting tin into which they comfortably fit in one layer. Add the oil and tumble all the potatoes, so they've a slight sheen. Bake for 45 minutes until golden, slightly crisp skinned and soft within.

Meanwhile, melt the butter in a pan and fry the sage leaves until they are dark and beginning to crisp. Transfer the leaves to a cool plate and set the pan with browned butter to one side.

Once the potatoes are cooked, turn the oven off and place the roasting tin on the hob or a heat-resistant surface. Cut the potatoes in half on a slant to maximise the surface area of potato inner. Divide the 'nduja into about 6 pieces and dot those around the tin, directly on the metal, then drizzle over the honey. Return to the warm (but turned-off) oven while you fry the eggs.

When the eggs are ready, take the potatoes from the oven again and roll them around in the now melted, glossy, angry-looking red paste, coating the spuds as best you can.

Divide the potatoes and fried eggs between plates, then scatter over the crispy sage leaves and spoon the aromatic browned butter over the eggs.







# spiced and curried

Think: fragrant, intoxicating, sweet, aromatic, sometimes hot, sometimes not. Mughal cuisine is probably the foundation of what many of us think of when using the term 'spiced', but its influence has spread so that this is now a truly global flavour profile.

Why and when do you want something spicy? You tell me. Sometimes spice brings warmth and comfort, others an enlivening perfume, some dishes suit hot days, others are ideal for cold, gloomy nights.

As a side note, 'curried' is not a flavour profile – it's a cooking technique or style, a description of gravy-based dishes. But it is evocative and craved, hence its use here.

Vaavishkaa-inspired lentils and mushrooms  
with eggs

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Barbecued bream with chaat masala  
cucumbers and cumin and pepper potatoes

35

## Vaavishkaa-inspired lentils and mushrooms with eggs

The starting point for this was a dish of spiced ground beef and broken eggs labelled 'Vaavishkaa' in Yasmin Khan's book *The Saffron Tales*, which is a wonderful exploration of Iranian food, culture and history. That book and the cuisine it presents answer multiple cravings, however I often turn to them when in need of spice – the saffron in the title is one clue; and you need look only a little deeper to learn of Persia's role in Medieval spice trade, and influence on what became Mughal cuisine.

I thought I'd try substituting lentils and dried mushrooms in place of the beef in Yasmin's dish, tweaked the spices a little to balance that change, and loved the result. It's excellent with rice and a crunchy salad, though I particularly enjoy this as a lightly-spiced brunch/lunch dish, served with yoghurt and flatbreads. You could make the lentil and mushroom mix the night before, finishing with the egg stage the next morning.

*Serves 2–4 depending on appetite*

30g (1oz) dried porcini (or a wild mushroom mix)  
2 tbsp cold-pressed rapeseed oil  
1 small onion, finely chopped  
130g (4½oz) puy, dark green or dark brown lentils  
500g (1lb 2oz) tomatoes, roughly chopped  
½ tsp coarsely ground black pepper  
½ tsp cayenne pepper  
½ tsp ground coriander  
½ tsp ground cumin  
½ tsp ground ginger  
1 tsp flaky sea salt  
2 medium eggs  
1 spring onion (scallion), finely chopped

### *To serve*

Yoghurt and flat breads; or white rice and a crunchy, chopped salad (for example a Persian Shirazi or Indian Kachumber)

Put the mushrooms in a small bowl or mug, submerge under 200ml (scant 1 cup) of just-boiled water, cover and leave for 15 minutes. Drain (keeping the stock) and chop very finely to a mince.

Place a medium-sized saucepan over a medium-high heat. Add 1 tablespoon of oil and the onions and cook gently for 5 minutes, so they soften and sweeten a little, but don't colour. Add the lentils, turmeric and 500ml (2 cups) of water and simmer for around 30 minutes until the lentils are plump and tender.

Meanwhile, place a sauté pan or large, high-sided frying pan over a medium heat. Add the second tablespoon of oil, the tomatoes and remaining dry spices, stir and cook that down for 15 minutes until thickened. Now add the chopped mushrooms and their stock, and simmer for another 10 minutes to reduce to a viscous consistency. Add the cooked lentils and their liquid to the tomatoes and cook for a few moments longer.

Give the pan a shake – the aim is for a loose ragu, ideally where lentils move as one in a wave, like a thick pot of frogspawn (not appetizing, I know), rather than something that's stodgy and stiff. Add water or cook out as necessary, then break the eggs into different halves of the pan, and simmer with lid on for 3–4 minutes until much (but not all) of the whites and yolk are solid. At this point, use a spoon or fork to break and drag the egg through the sauce, turn off the heat, cover and leave for another 2–3 minutes until all whites are set and yolk semi-firm. Scatter with spring onions and serve with bread and yoghurt, or rice and a salad.



# Barbecued bream with chaat masala cucumbers and cumin and pepper potatoes

I write in *Crave* about how the noun 'spice' is inadequate, given the multitude of flavours, dishes, cuisines, and also moods and moments it covers. For example, while some 'spiced' dishes are musty and earthy and suit moments when comfort and warmth are required (think dals and heavy, rich curries), these three dishes are sprightly and invigorating, ideal for sunny days and warm evenings.

The dusting of chaat masala on cucumbers is particularly interesting, with the distinctly sulphuric nose coming from Himalayan black salt, then muskier cumin and pepper, all of which are cleansed when you fully bite through the cucumber.

Serves 4

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#### For the fish

20g (¾oz) butter  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
10g (¾oz) ginger, minced  
½ tsp ground cumin  
½ tsp ground turmeric  
½ tsp Kashmiri chilli powder  
Finely grated zest of 1 lemon  
6 tbsp plain yoghurt  
2 large bream, whole, cleaned

#### For the potatoes

600g–700g (1lb 5oz–1lb 9oz) baby potatoes  
1–2 tbsp cold-pressed rapeseed oil  
½ tsp flaky sea salt  
½ tsp ground cumin  
½ tsp coarsely ground black peppercorns

#### For the salad

2 large cucumbers, peeled and sliced into ½cm (¼in) thick pieces  
1 tsp chaat masala

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At least a couple of hours before you wish to eat, melt the butter for the fish in a small pan over a medium heat. Add the garlic and ginger and let that bubble (but not burn) for a minute, before adding the dry spices and lemon zest. Turn the

heat off and stir in the spices. Leave to cool for a couple of minutes, then stir the paste through the yoghurt.

Use a sharp knife to make 3 slashes diagonally into the skin on each side of the fish. Rub the yoghurt marinade all over and inside both. Place on a tray, cover and refrigerate for 2–8 hours.

Before cooking the fish, parboil the potatoes until nearly tender, about 15–20 minutes. Drain and cool under a cold running tap.

Heat the oven to 250°C/230°C fan/485°F. Tumble the potatoes in oil and then gently squash them onto a baking sheet that fits the potatoes with plenty of room around them. Roast for 30 minutes until golden and crisp. Alternatively, if you have a flat top for your barbecue, roll the potatoes in oil, then squash the potatoes directly onto the hot metal, cook until golden and crisp, only flipping them a few times to avoid breakages.

Sprinkle the potatoes with most of the salt, cumin and pepper, return to the oven for 5 minutes (or leave on the plancha for a few minutes more) until the spices are fragrant, then tip into a serving bowl, adding a little more seasoning if you think it necessary.

Arrange the cucumbers on a platter so they're not more than 2 layers deep. Give them a liberal dusting of chaat masala while the fish is cooking.

To cook the fish, make sure the coals of your barbecue are white hot and no longer flaming, then grill the bream for 4–5 minutes on each side, resisting the urge to turn the fish more than once unless you absolutely have to. Ideally the temperature of your barbecue is such that the skin of the fish is blistered and charred, but not incinerated, and flesh succulent and flaking. If you have a fish basket, the process will be easier.

The cucumbers are ready, the potatoes can stay warm, serve up as soon as the fish is cooked. A watercress salad is a good addition.



# rich and savoury

Think: rich and heavy beef or lamb stews and braises, jet black squid ink, intense mushrooms, umami; but also (as this is definitely a rich *and/or* savoury profile) soothing beige things, chicken soup, buckwheat noodles, white bean broths and lentils.

When does this flavour come calling? Weather is a fundamental driver, I think, with autumn and winter key months, but also grey or wet days outside those seasons. Rich and savoury is also called for when you're in a melancholic, uncertain or bothered mood (which, incidentally might be influenced by the weather, but also might not) – this food is steadying.

Pot-roast chicken with chickpeas,  
romanesco and tahini broth

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Cuttlefish and cavolo nero stew with potatoes

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## Pot-roast chicken with chickpeas, romanesco and tahini broth

Roast chicken, poached chicken, chicken soup, chicken-stock-powered broths laced with dried legumes... these are some of the most steady, comforting, gratifying dishes around. It is food to retreat to.

This pot-roast slots nicely into that genre – you can tell by just looking at the various golden-brown components as they wallow in the mesmerizingly beige pond. It doesn't hit the savoury spot; it floats gently and reassuringly safely onto it. The little Beldi lemon and spoonfuls of tahini stirred through at the end provide background seasoning, while fregola and chickpeas exaggerate the comfort-factor further. Serve in shallow bowls with spoons nearby.

Serves 4

–  
Small free range chicken (1.3–1.5kg/3–3lb 5oz)  
4 tbsp cold-pressed rapeseed oil, plus extra to garnish  
2 echalion shallots, peeled and halved from root to tip  
1 bulb garlic, cloves unpeeled but separated and squashed  
125ml (½ cup) dry white wine  
750ml (3 cups) water  
4 bay leaves  
1 small preserved 'Beldi' lemon, diced  
1 x 400g (14oz) can chickpeas, drained  
75g (2½oz) fregola (alternatively giant couscous, moghrabieh, or maftoul)  
½ romanesco broccoli (around 400g/14oz)  
2–3 tbsp tahini  
1 tsp moscatel or sherry vinegar  
Flaky sea salt

–  
Heat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/400°F.

Find a lidded, oven-proof dish into which the chicken fits fairly snugly – an oval Dutch oven is ideal. Place this over a medium-high heat and add 2 tablespoons of rapeseed oil. Allow this to warm for a minute, then brown the chicken for 2–3 minutes on each side, beginning with the breast, then base, then each side. Towards the end of this process, place the shallots cut-side

down in the chicken fat along with the garlic and allow to brown while you manoeuvre the chicken for a moment more to catch a few of the paler areas.

After the chicken has been browning for 10–12 minutes, transfer to a plate with a rim. Keep the heat on and add the wine to the pot, allowing this to bubble, reduce and deglaze the pan for 60 seconds. Pour in the water, add the bay leaves and preserved lemon, then return the chicken to the pot, breast-side up. Bring to a boil, place the lid on top (or cover tightly with foil) then place in the hot oven for 40 minutes. Once 40 minutes has elapsed, remove the lid, scatter the chickpeas and fregola into the liquid around the chicken and then return to the oven for 35 minutes more (with the lid off), by which time the chicken should be golden but still succulent, and the fregola tender.

While the chicken is cooking, trim and reserve any leaves from the base of the Romanesco. Cut the florets away, then cut each floret in half from point to base. Place a large frying pan or wok over a medium-high heat, add the remaining 2 tablespoons of rapeseed oil, then char the cut face of the romanesco for 5 minutes or so. Flip the florets onto their backs, reduce the heat to very low, add the reserved leaves and leave to gently warm through for 5 minutes more. Set to one side until the chicken is cooked.

Once the chicken has been cooking in the oven for a total of 75 minutes, remove it from the pot and leave to rest in a warm place for 10 minutes. Stir two tablespoons of tahini into the broth in the pot, then add a good pinch of salt and the vinegar. Taste and add more tahini if you wish – you should notice its savoury nuttiness, but that should not dominate. Add the romanesco, mix well and return the lid or foil to the dish while the chicken rests.

Cut the chicken into portions. At the table, spoon the broth (with its beige and green bits) into pasta bowls then add the chicken on top. Finish with a little glug of the cold-pressed rapeseed oil.



## Cuttlefish and cavolo nero stew with potatoes

*"Well yes that looks nice but I'm not sure I've ever craved a cuttlefish stew."* Said my Mum as she spied on our dinner via FaceTime. Although she quickly retracted her typically blunt observation (a trait I have inherited), it actually proved a useful reminder to me about the concept behind *Crave*. You might not crave a cuttlefish stew specifically, but you will occasionally crave the rich intensity of this type of dish. It is the kind of thing you might stumble upon once you've realized rich and intense is what you're looking for, and focus your search accordingly.

This stew is the kind of robust meal you need on dull days; also, on days that are perfectly bright, but which require a bold meal and a glass or two of red wine so as to draw a line under what has gone before. Similar, I suppose, to things like beef bourguignon, or short-ribs braised in port, but also more appropriate in warm months, partly because of the slow-cooked and therefore soft sea creature at the centre of it. It's forthright but, underneath it all, tender. Just like Mum (and me).

Serves 4

1.5kg (3lb 5oz) cuttlefish (yielding 600g–750g/1lb 5oz–1lb 10oz usable flesh and tentacles), gutted and cleaned by your fishmonger if possible  
3 tbsp neutral cooking oil  
1 onion, finely diced  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
3 bay leaves  
4 cloves  
3 medium-sized tomatoes, roughly chopped  
4 sun-dried tomatoes in oil, chopped to a rough purée  
250ml (generous 1 cup) red wine  
1 tsp red wine vinegar  
1 tsp caster (superfine) sugar  
¼ tsp ground black pepper  
2–3 sprigs fresh rosemary  
800g (1lb 12oz) charlotte potatoes, peeled  
100g (3½oz) cavolo nero, leaves stripped from the tough stalks  
Extra virgin olive oil  
Flaky sea salt

If you didn't ask your fishmonger to gut and clean the cuttlefish for you then cut the tentacles away from body and remove the central beak. Discard any entrails. Pull out the bone, rub and pull away at the membrane to remove it then rinse everything.

Split the body open, then score a cross-hatch on the inner side (for sauce- and attention-grabbing texture), then cut into squares a bit bigger than bite-size. Cut the tentacles into manageable pieces.

Put the oil in a large, lidded casserole or heavy-bottomed saucepan. Place over a medium heat, add the onion and a pinch of salt and soften without colouring for 5–10 minutes.

Add the cuttlefish to the pan, cook for five minutes, stirring occasionally, then add the garlic, bay and cloves. Sauté for 1 minute more, stirring frequently, before adding the tomatoes – both fresh and sun-dried – and cook for 5 minutes so that they break down. Finally, add the wine, vinegar, sugar, black pepper and rosemary. Bring to a low simmer and let it blip away with the lid ajar for 60–75 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the cuttlefish is soft.

With around half an hour to go, place the peeled potatoes in a saucepan of cold, well-salted water, then bring to the boil and cook until tender.

Just before serving, add the strips of cavolo nero to the cuttlefish stew and allow to wilt for 5 minutes, then check and adjust for seasoning. Ladle the stew into shallow bowls, adding a few potatoes and a glug of extra virgin olive oil to each portion.



# cheesy and creamy

Think: well, er, of cheese and cream. Molten, bubbling cheesy things, and silken, ambrosial, creamy things. There's actually a huge amount of variety, with cheese in particular providing extraordinary nuance and layers of flavour. Best of all, it rarely takes much effort to make dishes taste good when they are predominantly cheese- or cream-based.

When and why do you crave cheesy and creamy? It *might* be because you're in need of vitamin D and calcium, and this craving is your body calling. But, then again, there's a chance you simply know you'll derive pleasure from eating it. In theory, the call comes all-year-round, but I can tell you from experience that testing two dozen cheesy and creamy recipes during a summer heatwave isn't as fun as would be in mid-winter.

Grilled fonduta with confit garlic

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Bananamisu

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## Grilled fonduta with confit garlic

This is kind of outrageous. But don't think about the ingredients (or the calories) and enjoy this for what it is (a wonderfully creamy, nutty, salty, fondue-like dip), the craving it just sated, and the bonkers dreams it will provoke.

Bread is a necessary partner, and the cold, crunchy and fresh-tasting fennel scoops provide an outstanding contrast to the salty ooze of molten cheese, so don't miss those. Keep any surplus chilled in a small tub, ready to slice or scoop and use as a Welsh rarebit-style toast topper (see page 54).

*Serves 4 as an appetizer, or 2 for lunch with leftovers for toasting*

### *For the garlic*

4 plump bulbs garlic  
2 sprigs rosemary  
2 bay leaves  
300–500ml (1¼–2 cups) extra virgin olive oil

### *For the fonduta*

125ml (½ cup) whole milk  
1 tsp cornflour  
3 egg yolks  
50g (1¾oz) butter, cubed  
125ml (½ cup) double (heavy) cream  
200g (7oz) Fontina cheese, diced  
(or 100g/3½oz each of Taleggio and Gruyere)

### *To serve*

Sourdough toast  
1 fennel bulb, segmented

Heat the oven to 150°C/130°C fan/300°F.

To cook the garlic, cram the bulbs into a small casserole or lidded ovenproof dish into which they fit snugly. Push the herbs into any gaps you see, then cover completely with olive oil. Place on a low-medium heat then, once the olive oil is nearly simmering, cover with a lid and place in the hot oven for 50–60 minutes. Once the cloves are completely soft, remove from the oven and leave to cool. To serve, use a serrated knife to cut the root end from the bulbs and pick or squeeze out the soft cloves. You'll use 2 bulbs for this dish, so store the remainder in a sterilized jar or two, covered with the flavoured oil. It will keep in the fridge for a few months.

For the fonduta, whisk together 2 tablespoons of milk and the cornflour until completely smooth. Add 1 egg yolk, whisk, then add the other 2 yolks and whisk again. Set to one side.

Gently melt the butter in a small saucepan. Add the remaining milk and the cream, then warm over a gentle heat. Add the cheese, one handful at a time, stirring with a spatula or wooden spoon and ensuring each addition of cheese has melted before adding the next.

Transfer two tablespoons of the molten cheese mixture to the egg mixture, stir, then another two, and another, then pour that back into the saucepan. Beat together, then continue to cook very gently for 4–5 minutes, stirring continuously, until it looks and feels fairly stiff and viscous.

Decant the mixture into a small, oven-proof dish with about a 350ml (1½ cup) capacity (a low-sided tapas bowl or gratin dish is ideal). Cool and refrigerate until required (or grill straight away).

To finish, place the fonduta under a hot grill, around 5cm (2in) below the element, for 5–8 minutes, until golden, crusted and bubbling. Heap 2 bulbs-worth of confit garlic cloves on top, then scoop away with fresh bread and chunks of fennel.





# Bananamisu

I thought I'd mark the end (hopefully) of our various lockdowns by bringing together two of the most made and instagrammed sweet things of the past year – banana bread and tiramisu. Don't hate me. It's just that this is an appropriately creamy and cheesy finish for this little batch of bonus recipes. Also, it's delicious.

There's just one layer of banana and caramel, so it does not dominate (this is not a banoffee pie). It's a slightly tongue-in-cheek addition, but in fact provides a not unwelcome hint of texture amid the glorious pillow of whipped egg yolks, cream and mascarpone.

Incidentally, a reference to or image of tiramisu is normally my trigger for craving creamy, cheesy desserts. If you're the same: enjoy.

Make this 6–24 hours before you plan to eat it.

Serves 6

–

3 egg yolks  
50g (1¾oz) caster (superfine) sugar  
60ml (¼ cup) dry Marsala  
250g (9oz) mascarpone  
300ml (1¼ cups + 1 tbsp) double (heavy) cream  
300ml (1¼ cups + 1 tbsp) strong black coffee (not instant coffee)  
2 large (or 3 medium) firm bananas  
1–2 tbsp dulce de leche  
4 tsp bitter (unsweetened) cocoa powder  
20–24 Savoiardi biscuits (lady fingers)  
20g (¾oz) dark chocolate (80–90% cocoa solids)

Whisk together the egg yolks, sugar and one tablespoon of Marsala, until the mixture is light in colour and texture and has more than doubled in volume; it'll take a few minutes of vigorous effort and should look and feel like a thin mayonnaise.

In a separate bowl (or stand mixer), combine the mascarpone and double cream then whisk together until just past ribbon stage but not yet at soft peaks – it should be airy and stiff-ish but luscious. Use a large spoon or spatula to fold-in the egg yolk mixture, then a balloon whisk to briefly whip it back by hand to that not quite-soft peak stage (it will set further once in the fridge and a little ooze is preferable to over-whipped).

Brew and cool the coffee. Combine in a small, flat-bottomed dish with the remaining Marsala.

Slice each banana into 4 thin lengths. Grab the dulce de leche.

Now, to assemble:

Dust the base of a 2-litre capacity serving dish with one teaspoon of cocoa powder.

One by one, soak half the biscuits so that they're wet and flavourful but not soggy and then transfer directly to the dish until the base is covered. (I hold a biscuit flat in the liquid (without letting go), say "and one", then move it to the dish.)

Lay the banana slices on top, spoon and spread over the dulce de leche, then dust with another teaspoon of cocoa powder.

Spoon and spread half of the creamy mascarpone mixture on top. Then repeat the layers of soaked biscuits, cocoa powder and cream. Cover and refrigerate for 3 hours or more. Just prior to serving, dust with a final, generous teaspoon of cocoa powder, then finely grate the chocolate over the top.



## A miscellany of quick fixes

In *Crave* you'll see a few relatively focused pages with 'Quick-Fixes' responding to specific flavour cravings. There's also an alternative directory at the back of the book to suit non-flavour-based cravings (similar to the directories in *On the Side*, for those of you in the know). Plus, a short list of recommended reading. It's all fairly succinct, and also fairly well-thought through.

In contrast, what follows is a bit of a jumble, a brain dump, a miscellany. Little will be revelatory. That's fine – that means we're on the same page. I'm just hoping there are one or two new gems or reminders with which to whet your appetite.

### Fresh and fragrant

– One way (the best way?) to satisfy this craving is to grab a fridge-cold gem, sweetheart or cos lettuce, split it in half, then soak\* it with an emulsified dressing made using (for 1 lettuce) 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 1 teaspoon water, ½ teaspoon of caster (superfine) sugar, plus a pinch of salt (\*as in, applied liberally between the leaves, not just drizzled over the top).

– On the lettuce theme, anything cupped or picked up by lettuce leaves always leaves me feeling refreshed – crab meat, Thai and Laotian laab-style mixes, Korean Bossam, Vietnamese Bánh xèo.

– In fact, Vietnamese cuisine is a direction I tend to look when fixated with this flavour profile. Look to Uyen Luu's new *Vietnamese: simple Vietnamese food to cook at home*.

– I suspect their liberal use of herbs is a key reason Vietnamese cuisine hits the fresh and fragrant spot. Also consider herb-heavy dishes like Persian sabzi khordan: where tarragon, mint, dill and parsley are used more like salad leaves than a garnish, alongside radishes, walnuts, feta and lavash or other flat bread. This could be a grand sharing platter thing. Though I like to recreate it while stood at fridge door, tearing and shoving components straight in.

– I have a feeling this isn't done enough: steam a flat fish or two (on the bone or filleted, as you wish), prepare a tomato salad (room temp, salt, peppery olive oil) and add not basil but tarragon or chervil. Mop the oils and juices from the plate using leaves of a soft lettuce (butterhead or similar).

– Also, have you heard of fruit? Fresh, very often fragrant and, when ripe and at peak season, essentially unimprovable.



## Tart and sour

– No need to reinvent the wheel. Just find yourself a jar of giardiniera, cornichons, sauerkraut, piccalilli or pickled walnuts and fill your boots.

– For subtler sharpness, quick-pickle crunchy things using Japanese rice vinegar and eat them as a snack, accompaniment or generous garnish next to rice and/or fish and fatty meats. This is often referred to as *tsukemono*-style, although I think people might actually mean *asazuke*.

My approach is to use a mandolin to slice daikon, beetroot (particularly fancy non-purple ones), radish (particularly fancy non-red ones), turnip, fennel, cucumber, kohlrabi to a thickness that suits my mood (sometimes you want pliable, wafer thin slices, other times a nuggety bite). Add a pinch of salt, toss, walk away for 10 minutes, then add 1 tablespoon rice wine vinegar and 1 teaspoon mirin, and walk away for another 10 minutes to an hour.

– Do you know much about Burmese, Filipino, Thai and Laotian cooking? All cover a variety of flavour profiles, but they offer particularly compelling ways to satisfy cravings for tart and sour. Places to begin: MiMi Aye's *Mandalay*; Amy and Emily Chung's *The Rangoon Sisters*; Nicole Ponseca and Miguel Trinidad's *I Am a Filipino*; and David Thompson's *Thai Food*.

– Are you reading this during an early summer heatwave? Watermelon salads are (rightly) always mentioned. Gazpacho too. But I think the best thing is salted lemonade – akin to Indian *nimbu pani*. It's capital F Fresh, but is in this section because it should also be lip-puckering. Just water, ice, loads of squeezed lemons (enough to make that water sour, not just lemony), and about a teaspoon of flaky sea salt per 350ml (1½ cups) water.

– Condiments you should have in the cupboard: tamarind (in block form); sushi ginger; pomegranate molasses, date molasses; sumac, berry fruit powders; moscatel, sherry, basic white and red wine, cider, balsamic (cheap, expensive and white) vinegars; fresh limes.

## Chilli and heat

– What's your favourite hot sauce? There are few quicker or, in fact, better ways to add a bit of heat than with a bottle of pureéd, mashed, blended (and often fermented) chilli peppers. The best boast layers of distinctive flavours – they're not blunt instruments. Indeed, as with olive oil, vinegar and honey, it's legit to maintain a small range to suit your mood and the dish you're splashing the sauce on. Personally, I rotate between Crystal Hot Sauce, Tabasco (original), Encona, a Bajan-style yellow Scotch-bonnet number, and a Sriracha.

– Similar but different are chilli oils which, once addicted, you'll find accompany most rice, noodle and egg-based meals. Really you need a good Sichuan chilli oil; one with crispy bits (Lao Gan Ma style); and a savoury-garlic-y chiu chow chilli oil. All three will improve your weekend fried egg and avocado toast routine.

– Re fresh chillies: the kind you use are important. It's not simply a red or green thing. So, if a recipe specifies serrano or birds-eye, scotch bonnet or ancho chilli peppers, be aware a substitution won't have the impact nor taste as intended.

– You'll get on well with *Crave* if in your cupboard, fridge and freezer you keep: 'nduja, tins of chipotle in adobo, Kashmiri chilli powder, Calabrian chilli flakes, Aleppo pepper, Cayenne pepper, Gochugaru flakes, Shichi-mi tōgarashi, and birds-eye chillies (freezer).

– Don't forget non-chilli-pepper-based nostril ticklers: mustard, wasabi, horseradish.

– And my current late evening vice is to alternate bites of guindilla chilli peppers with anchovies and/or blocks of mature cheddar... those guindillas are also excellent chopped over grilled cheese on toast. They've a very pleasing heat level – the tongue swells and nose begins to run, but not uncomfortably so.

## Spiced and curried

– Core things to have in the spice rack: cumin, coriander, fennel and mustard seeds; cinnamon sticks, cassia bark, nutmeg, star anise, green cardamom pods, cloves; ground turmeric, ginger, cardamom and Spanish paprika; saffron; fresh turmeric, ginger, lemongrass (freezes well) and garlic, plus a few pre-mixed pots of: garam masala, a 'medium curry powder', chaat masala, and a cumin-heavy dukkah.

– Also, please get a bruiser of a pestle and mortar; not one of those little ceramic or glass ones.

– On which note, although some assume otherwise, it isn't much bother to cook spiced meals from scratch. That said, pre-made pastes can speed things along, particularly for South East Asian-style curries. And that's fine, so long as they're good; which is usually the case where the paste has been hand-pounded, and so relatively artisan. You're still starting from scratch it's just that someone's done most of the work for you. If you're UK-based, look on [pezu.com](http://pezu.com) for laksa pastes by Sambal Shiok, Rendang and Penang curry pastes by Nonya Secrets, the entirety of Rempapa Spice Co's pastes, plus Som Saa's red, green, jungle and massaman curry pastes.

– A quick fix? Chai is a wonderful solution to a spice craving, in part because of the drink itself, but also (surely mostly) because of the aroma that fills the room while it brews and beyond. With permission, here's a 2-large-mug approximation of my friend Asma Khan's recipe for Adrak Masala Chai: combine 750ml (3 cups) of water and 125ml (½ cup) whole milk, add a couple of ½cm- (¼in)-thick slices of ginger, 20g (¾oz) soft light brown sugar, 1 piece cassia bark, 3 green cardamom pods, 4 cloves. Simmer for 20 minutes, then add 1 tablespoon of a strong black loose leaf tea – 'a Kenyan or Assam Orthodox' – boil for a minute, simmer for two, then bring to boil again and strain.

## Rich and savoury

– Beige food rules; provided savoury and/or rich is what you are craving.

– When in the mood for this sort of thing, my first port of call is Nigel Slater and his myriad recipes and ideas for brothy beans, sausage casseroles, soups, stews and root vegetable gratins. Simon Hopkinson, Richard Olney and Rachel Roddy are also excellent. As I look at those names I realise it's not merely their food, but that their writing provides comfort too – the context they set their recipes in, their methods and their references.

– I mention this in the further reading section of *Crave*, but think it's okay to note with more words here that the ultimate guide to quick fixes for rich and savoury cravings is *Good Savouries* by a food writer/*bon viveur* of the 1930s: Ambrose Heath. Essentially a pamphlet in extent, yet it is filled with over 200 recipes and ideas. Most are classified either as 'Hot Savouries' or 'Cold Savouries', though there are also a few pages each on 'Savoury Butters' and 'Savoury Soufflés'. (You can find re-prints of it online.)



### Cheesy and creamy

– Reinforcing the comment in the fonduta recipe on page 45: this mix works incredibly well as a Welsh-rarebit-style toasted cheese topping. Just follow the recipe until the point at which it suggests to decant the fonduta into a small gratin or tapas dish, and instead scrape it into a small tub and chill. Then cut  $\frac{1}{2}$ cm- ( $\frac{1}{4}$ in)-thick slices from that, lay on part-toasted bread and grill.

– Same theme but as a side dish: bake potatoes, slice in half, sprinkle with finely chopped spring onions, then cover with  $\frac{1}{2}$ cm- ( $\frac{1}{4}$ in)-thick layer of the fonduta and grill.

– A good cacio pepe-style pasta dish always seems to hit the spot.

– When whipping double (heavy) cream, do so with the bowl sat on a bag of ice or frozen peas. It whips quicker and also feels particularly light and voluminous.

– Separately but not unrelated, if making a pavlova, a fool, Eton mess, or simply a sweetened cream to sit next to a pudding, then less is more. I don't mean in terms of quantity (where more is more). Rather, the level of whipped you take the cream to. You want luscious ribbons, not stiff, tense, grainy, over-whipped cream, which to my mind does little to satisfy a thirst for dairy.

– Finally, you may have seen this 'hack' for frozen shards of mascarpone [on my Instagram account](#). If not, one of the best ways to add a creamy, cheesy perk, is to use a palette knife to spread mascarpone cheese about 2mm ( $\frac{1}{16}$ in) thick onto a silicon baking mat. Freeze that mat for a couple of hours, then break the resulting sheet into palm-sized shards, and store until required in a tupperware in the freezer. Use as a garnish for any pudding you might add cream or ice cream to, or simply as a snack.

## Suppliers and support

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There's no doubt that working with good ingredients and quality equipment helps your food taste great, and ensures the act of cooking is a pleasure. I'm pleased to recommend the following suppliers, all of whom I am a paid-up customer of, though some of them have also helped out on various photoshoots too. Many of them (possibly all...) are also kindly donating prizes for *Crave*-related competitions over the coming months. Check out their websites – all deliver across the United Kingdom, some beyond. For competition announcements follow [@rocketandsquash](#) on Instagram.

- [Crane](#)  
Cast iron and tri-ply stainless steel cookware
- [Netherton Foundry](#)  
Spun iron cookware
- [Natoora](#)  
Specialist fruit, vegetables and deli supplies
- [Swaledale Online Butchers](#)
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Mediterranean and Middle Eastern larder ingredients
- [Sous Chef](#)  
Specialist and unusual ingredients

If you are reading this because you purchased a copy of *Crave* and claimed *The Extra Bite* by submitting a proof of receipt by email, then you are already entered into a competition to win one of two saucepan bundles from Crane, who make practical, durable, paired-back, yet remarkably beautiful cookware; some of my favourite things to cook and serve food in.

Through June 2021, you can win one of five 'peak season' hampers from Natoora, by simply cooking something from *Crave* and tagging both [@rocketandsquash](#) and [@natoora](#) in a social media post about it. Natoora work with over 600 small-scale growers in Europe and the US, they have built a transparent supply chain which is actively changing the way food is being farmed. Use their (very usable) app for home delivery or find the produce on [Ocado.com](#).

### Thanks

Thanks to those at Quadrille and Hardie Grant who allowed me to convince them that producing this was a good idea. In particular, thanks Emma Marijewycz for facilitating this, and for all your help more generally with spreading the word about *Crave*. Laura Eldridge, thanks for working with me on this and across various marketing and social media requests, and especially for setting-up the behind-the-scenes process that enabled this ebook to be sent out. Thanks Sabrina Tong for your help with the design, and for all your other work across marketing images. And Harry Webster for, once again, reading, tidying, culling and correcting my words.

And, on the little shoot for this: Sam A Harris and Rose MacKean. A fun day with great results! Cheers both.

–  
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