

## Christmas Pasteli (Sesame seed slab)

### Ingredients

1 kg sesame seeds

4 tablespoons of white caster sugar

1.5 - 2 cups pure honey

½ -1 cup roughly chopped unsalted roasted nuts of your choice (optional)

½ small sachet of vanillin sugar or the scrapings of a half a pod of vanilla (optional)

You can add a handful of nuts you like to this including, pistachios, cashews, peanuts or walnuts, almonds. You can also add dried fruit including cranberries, figs, sultanas and currants and/or a sprinkle of spices such as cinnamon and orange rind, to make it more festive!

You can drizzle chocolate on top too if you want to make it extra fancy or sweet.

The recipe below is a basic recipe to build on. You can also break it up, rustic style, or cut it into Christmas themed shapes with cookie cutters. Your choice of honey will also influence the flavour of this sweet treat!

### Method

1. Heat a deep pan on a low-medium flame.
2. Add the sesame seeds and begin to toast. They take a little while to heat up. Using a flat ended spoon or spatula, stir the sesame seeds constantly, making sure none remain in the corners of your pan for too long as they may burn.
3. When the sesame seeds have taken on a light golden colour, add in your nuts and keep stirring until the seeds are a deeper golden colour and the nuts have lightly toasted.
4. Add in your sugar, vanilla and honey and keep stirring until the seeds begin to stick to the back of your spatula. (You can test a little batch by spreading about a teaspoon of the mixture on a cold plate to see if it goes solid rather quickly).
5. Turn off the flame but be cautious that the pot will keep toasting the mixture for some time after removed from flame. The mixture is extremely hot.
6. Spread two long strips of baking paper into a large shallow rectangle baking dish (if you don't have one you can just spread a long strip of the paper onto your bench). Place another equally sized piece on top, and using a rolling pin evenly pat down and roll out your mixture to about 1.5 cm height. Even out the rough edges with a long wide knife.
7. Carefully peel back the top paper. You can sprinkle and lightly press in flaked toasted almonds, or leave as is.
8. Slice while still a little warm.
9. Let cool and enjoy!

*Although you need to stay with your pot the whole time, it doesn't take long before you have a simple sweet that is packed with the goodness we all need!*

## Mango Chicken Salad

This simple salad is spring and summer in Australia with its green, red and gold at the same time. Lovely to serve on a platter.

**Servings:** 4

### Ingredients

4 cups arugula (rocket or salad greens)  
1 mango, peeled and sliced into 1-inch-long pieces  
1 red pepper, trimmed, seeded, and sliced into 1-inch-long pieces  
1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil  
1/2 tsp. balsamic vinegar  
Sea salt  
2 tsp. honey  
1 tsp. Dijon mustard  
2 boneless chicken breast (about 4 ounces)  
1/4 cup slivered almonds

### Directions

In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, vinegar, and a pinch of salt. Set aside.

In another small bowl, stir together the honey and mustard.

Cut or tear the chicken fillets into strips.

*This way they will cook through easily and in no time. (Hint: meats are best to hit the pan after sitting out from fridge for at least 10-15 minutes so that it does not lower the temperature of the pan. This way, the meat sears and seals, allowing its juices to remain inside and not end up in the pan. The result is a more tender piece of meat.*

Season chicken with salt and pepper and rub all over with olive oil. Heat your pan to a high to medium heat and place chicken strips onto hot pan making sure the pan is not crowded.

They should cook in 8 to 10 minutes, turning once halfway through. Transfer to a cutting board or plate and let sit for 2-5 minutes.

In the meantime, lay the greens out on platter/plate, scatter the red peppers across greens. Place mango slices in a nice patter and then sprinkle the salad with a little balsamic, salt and olive oil. Place the chicken pieces on top evenly and drizzle with mustard honey mix. Sprinkle over the almonds and then give a final drizzle of oil and balsamic for effect.

Enjoy!

## Smoked Salmon and Mango blinis

### Ingredients

- 1 cup self-raising flour
- 1/2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 egg lightly beaten
- 35 g butter melted
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup sour cream, to decorate
- 1 packet smoked salmon cut into strips
- 1 mango chopped
- 1 bunch fresh dill, to garnish
- Thinly sliced lemons, to serve

### Method

1. In a large bowl, sift self-raising flour with bi-carb soda and a pinch of salt. Add one lightly beaten egg, melted butter and milk, whisking until smooth.
2. Heat a little oil in a non-stick frying pan. Cook teaspoonfuls of mixture in batches, about the size of small pikelets. Cook until golden and set.
3. Allow to cool, then top blinis with sour cream, chopped mango, strips of smoked salmon and dill sprigs.
4. Option to serve with thinly sliced lemon.

## Smoked Salmon Wreath



This quick and easy festive no-cook salmon wreath makes a perfect starter and is ready in around 20 minutes!

### Ingredients

- 1 large fennel bulb, trimmed, core removed
- 3 limes
- 2 green shallots, trimmed
- 3 large ripe avocados
- 250g baby cucumbers, peeled into ribbons
- 200g (1 bunch) radishes, trimmed, washed, thinly sliced
- 400g sliced smoked salmon
- Extra virgin olive oil, to drizzle
- Crème fraîche, to serve
- Salmon roe, to serve (optional)
- Fresh dill sprigs, to serve
- Micro herbs, to serve (optional)
- Gluten-free crackers or crusty bread, to serve

### Method

#### Step 1

Use a mandolin to thinly slice the fennel lengthways. Place in a large bowl with the juice of one lime. Add a large pinch of salt, toss to combine and set aside to pickle.

#### Step 2

Cut shallots into 8cm lengths and thinly slice lengthways. Place in a bowl of iced water for 2-3 minutes or until lightly curled. Drain well. Roughly mash the avocados in a bowl. Add the juice from the remaining limes, season and stir to combine.

#### Step 3

Drain fennel. Arrange avocado in a heaped circle around the edge of a large plate. Arrange

pickled fennel, cucumber, radish, shallot and salmon over the top. Drizzle with oil and season with pepper. Dollop on crème fraîche and salmon roe. Scatter with the dill and micro herbs. Serve immediately with crackers or bread, and enjoy!

## Vietnamese Prawn Rice Paper Rolls

Vietnamese rice paper rolls make for a great addition to a Summer BBQ or picnic gathering. The Vietnamese peanut dipping sauce that accompanies the rice paper rolls is also sensational and totally addictive!

### Ingredients

#### Rice Paper Rolls

7 - 14 sheets of round rice paper  
11 cooked prawns  
50g dried vermicelli noodles  
7 lettuce leaves  
14 mint leaves  
1 cup bean sprouts

#### Vietnamese Peanut Dipping Sauce

2 tbsp peanut butter  
2 tbsp Hoisin Sauce  
1 1/2 tbsp lime juice  
1 garlic clove, minced  
1/2 tsp crushed chilli, sambal oelek or other chilli paste, adjust to taste (optional)

### Instructions

1. Combine the peanut dipping sauce ingredients. Mix until smooth. Set aside.
2. Place vermicelli noodles in a bowl and cover with hot water for 2 minutes, then drain.
3. Peel and devein the prawns if necessary. Slice in half, lengthwise.
4. Remove the crunchy core of the lettuce leaves.
5. Place some vermicelli noodles and bean sprouts in a lettuce leaf, then roll it up.
6. Fill a large bowl with warm water. The bowl doesn't need to be large enough to fit the whole rice paper in one go.
7. Submerge a rice paper into the water for 3 seconds.
8. On the top part of the rice paper, place 3 prawns with a mint leaf in between.
9. Place the lettuce bundle with the seam side down onto the middle of the rice paper.
10. Fold the left and right edges of the rice paper in, then starting from the bottom, roll up to cover the lettuce bundle. Then keep rolling firmly. The rice paper is sticky, it will seal itself.
11. Your rice paper rolls should present beautifully with the prawn and mint leaves on the smooth side of the roll and the seam on the side or underside of the roll.
12. Serve fresh with the peanut dipping sauce.

*A peanut free sauce alternative is sweet chilli sauce.*

Enjoy!