

get  
fit

eat  
well

enjoy  
life!

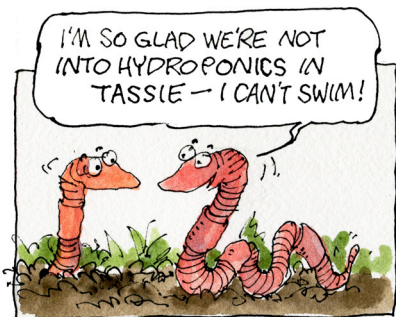
with uncle chris

## Kale, broccolini, asparagus, these are the ... HEALTHY SHADES OF GREEN

Hello folks

Ben from Best Fresh knows his vegies – his company supplies most of the major restaurants around our wonderful island state. And what does he do on Sundays? He likes to wander through the busy farmers' market in the heart of Hobart admiring – and buying for his family's needs – some of the freshest and tastiest vegies on offer.

Farmers have unloaded their seasonal produce on trestle tables before sunrise and when the big brass bell rings at 8.30am for trade to begin, Ben and the other regulars are ready to buy what's been freshly dug up or picked. Unlike those who live on the wrong side of Bass Strait we need not worry about the trend towards hydroponic vegie growing – when we Tasmanians buy lettuces at the market we know they come direct from the soil, not grown in mesh pots and fed on nutrients.



Ben says he is seeing changes in our choice of vegies. Broccolini is now very popular both in restaurants and at home. Why? It's so easy to prepare – just briefly toss it in a hot pan with a splash of olive oil (Australian, of course, and I like the garlic-infused variety; avoid those inferior olive oil brands imported from Europe). I often also add a splash of hoisin sauce or a good balsamic to my broccolini, which is lightly peppered and salted. Diced cherry tomatoes add a tang and give a great colour contrast to the dark green leaves.

Another green vegie becoming increasingly popular is kale – two varieties here: curly and Tuscan. Ben says it



was once regarded as "hippie trippie food" but it's now recognised as having great benefits for our health. If you are braising it in a pan add olive oil (yes, an Australian one) and garlic and some herbs – fresh is best. A little chicken stock added during the cooking process greatly enhances the flavour. And kale, like silverbeet, is so easy to grow at home. So too is spinach, but you need many more leaves to feed a family.

Ben sees a huge increase in the popularity of asparagus in our restaurants – and because, like broccolini, they're so easy to prepare they're increasingly used by chefs ... and that trend has extended to home cooking. Spring/early summer is the best time to buy asparagus. In autumn and winter they come from overseas and can be rather dried out – just check the stems before buying. Almost all Aussie asparagus are grown in Victoria and about 60% of the total harvest is flown to Japan and lands just 30 hours after cutting.

Most of the Aussie-grown asparagus are the green variety. There's a small amount of purple ones produced in November. And – what is popular in Europe – are the white ones which are grown under black

plastic and starved of sunlight which otherwise would make them green.

I love the little dark green bundles more than their fleshier big brothers. I usually microwave them for just a few minutes and toss them in butter with a touch of pepper and salt. Chopped parsley and a boiled egg mix can enhance the flavour. Of course, you can pan-fry or barbecue asparagus too – just ensure they are not overcooked.

Lettuces are so easy to grow in Tassie. Just plant seedlings progressively for a continuous supply of luscious leaves. You can also pick leaves off plants as needed, so the plants keep producing new leaves. Ben sells restaurants a mountain of lettuce leaves – primarily mesclun, a mix of lettuce leaf varieties – which he says chefs adorn plates primarily for their visual appeal. But as we all know lettuces of a variety of shapes and shades of green – rocket, iceberg, cos, butter etc – are a great way to enhance a healthy meal.

In this edition my gardening mate Tony tells how to grow the freshest herbs to enhance your meals.

# HEALTHIER desserts

The heading reads 'healthier desserts', not 'healthy desserts'. Each recipe contains some nutritious components and there are some not-so-good ingredients.

In the recipe, moist chocolate cake, includes half a cup of maple syrup, which is basically a sugar alternative, as is honey. But if the cake feeds six people, then each serve of this delicious cake contains around 20 ml of maple syrup. So enjoy in moderation!

Other desserts may include avocado, rolled oats, chia seeds, banana – healthy ingredients.

Also included with these recipes is a brief outline of the different types of cream. An occasional dollop can enhance a dessert but, again, enjoy in moderation. Or look for low-fat, low sugar icecream at the supermarket.

## Apple crumble

6 medium golden delicious apples, peeled and cored  
generous splash of water  
1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1 tablespoon butter  
1 ½ cups rolled oats  
½ cup flaked coconut  
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
2 tablespoons maple syrup  
3-4 tablespoons butter

This recipe will serve six.

Peel and cut the apples into wedges, removing the cores. Place the apples in a large and heavy based pot and combine with water, vanilla, cinnamon and butter. Cook over a medium heat for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally until the apples have completely softened and collapsed.

In a bowl place rolled oats, coconut, cinnamon, vanilla, maple syrup and butter. Rub ingredients together with your fingers until combined.

Preheat your oven to 160C fan forced.

Pile your apple mixture into a suitable sized baking dish. Scatter the crumble mixture over the top. Bake for 30 - 40 minutes or until the crumble is golden.

## Vegan strawberry pavlova

400g can chickpeas\*  
1 teaspoon xanthan gum\*\*  
½ teaspoon cream of tartar  
1 cup caster sugar  
1 tablespoon cornflour  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
600ml vanilla coconut yoghurt  
1 punnet strawberries, sliced  
mint leaves, to serve

\*The liquid in a can of chickpeas is called aquafaba, also known as chickpea water. This viscous liquid can be used as a vegan substitute for egg whites. Reserve the drained chickpeas for use in another recipe.

\*\*Xanthan gum is a thickening agent and stabiliser made from plants. It prevents ingredients from separating. Available from some supermarkets.

Preheat oven to 150C. On 2 sheets of baking paper draw a 20cm circle then turn them over and place each on a baking tray.

Drain liquid from chickpeas into a mixing bowl. Chill liquid for 2 hours until cold. Then using an electric mixer, beat liquid with cream of tartar for 10 minutes or until stiff peaks form. Continue beating while gradually adding sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, until mixture is thick, glossy and sugar is dissolved. Add cornflour, vanilla and xanthan gum and continue to beat until combined.

Divide mixture evenly on to the two

sheets of baking paper and spread with a palette knife to cover circles. Smooth sides. Bake for 20 minutes. Reduce oven to 120°C and bake for a further 1 hour 45 minutes or until crisp and dry. Remove from oven and cool completely.

Top each meringue with yoghurt and arrange on top of each other. Top with strawberry slices and mint.

## Moist chocolate cake

½ cup cocoa powder  
½ cup coconut flour  
2 ½ teaspoons gluten-free baking powder  
pinch of sea salt  
6 eggs  
½ cup maple syrup  
125 ml extra virgin olive oil  
125 ml coconut milk  
2 teaspoons vanilla essence

Preheat oven to 160C fan-forced

Combine the cocoa, coconut flour, baking powder and salt in a mixing bowl. Add the eggs, maple syrup, vanilla, coconut milk and olive oil. Whisk well until smooth and combined.

Pour into a 20 cm baking tin lined with baking paper. Bake the cake for 55-60 minutes or until cooked through. Test after 45 minutes as oven temperatures may vary. Remove from the oven, cool and ice with your favourite or leave plain.

## Raw lemon cheesecake

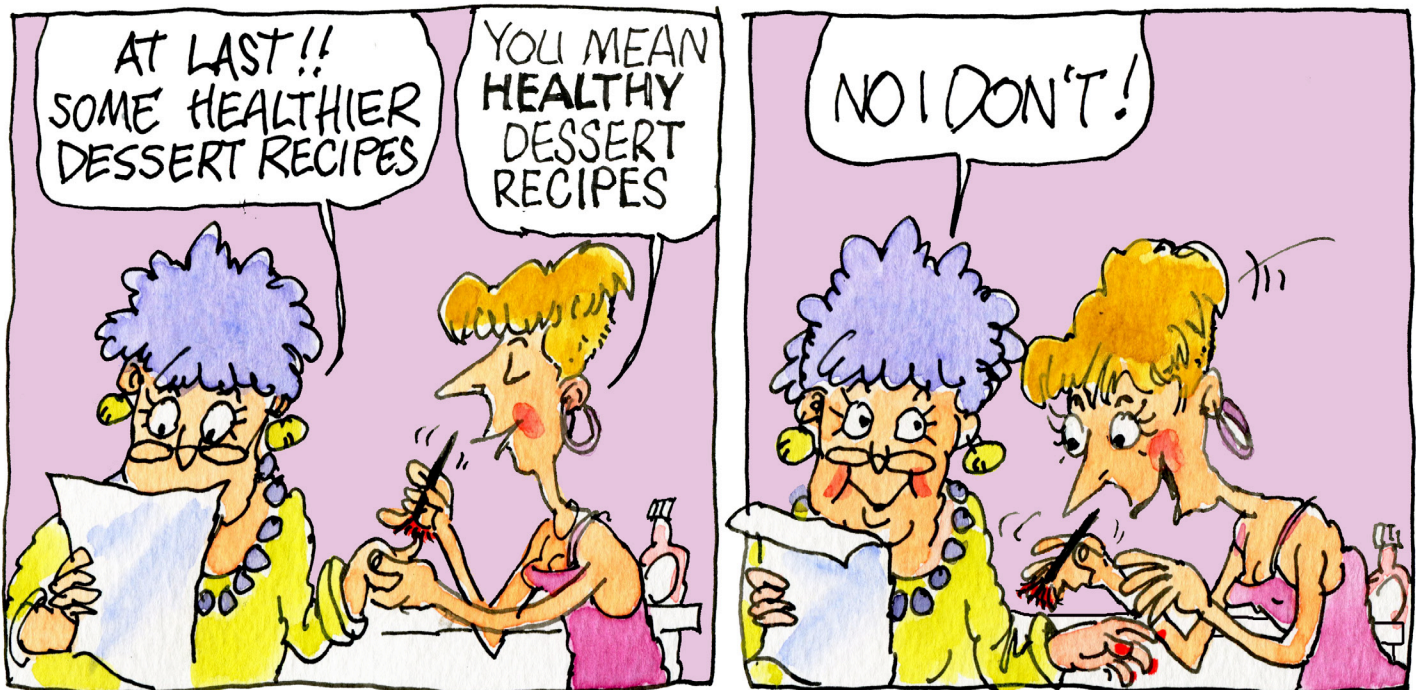
**Base:**

1 ½ cups walnut pieces  
1 cup rolled oats  
2 tablespoons maple syrup  
1 tablespoon melted coconut oil

**Filling:**

1 ½ cups raw cashews, soaked for 2 hours, rinsed and drained  
½ cup tinned coconut milk  
1/3 cup maple syrup  
zest of 2 lemons  
¼ cup fresh lemon juice





¼ cup melted coconut oil  
1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
¼ teaspoon sea salt

Lightly grease a 9 x 5-inch loaf pan, line it with greaseproof paper and set aside. To make the crust place walnuts and rolled oats in a food processor and blend to a very fine meal. With the processor running, pour in the maple syrup and coconut oil and blend until just combined (about 10 seconds). Transfer the mixture into the prepared pan and firmly press it until it's completely compacted. Refrigerate.

To make the cheesecake filling, add all the filling ingredients to a food processor, blend for 1-3 minutes, or until the texture is very smooth. Pour the filling evenly over the crust. Freeze until firm (about 4 hours).

Remove the cheesecake from the pan and place it onto a cutting board. Use a sharp knife to slice the cheesecake into bars, then transfer the bars to a serving plate. For best and creamiest cheesecake texture, allow the frozen bars to soften slightly (about 10-15 minutes) before serving.

## NICE CREAM

### Peanut butter & choc chip ...

4 bananas, peeled, sliced, and frozen  
¼ cup milk your choice (cow, almond, soy, or coconut milk)  
½ cup peanut butter (creamy or crunchy, unsweetened)  
pinch of sea salt  
1 tablespoon maple syrup  
¼ cup mini chocolate chips

Place the frozen banana slices and milk in the bowl of a food processor. Blend and pulse until just smooth, stopping to scrape down the sides occasionally. Don't over-blend. Add the peanut butter, a pinch of salt, and maple syrup to taste and pulse to combine. Stir in chocolate chips.

Enjoy immediately as soft serve or transfer to a freezer container for

later. Once frozen solid, let nice cream sit at room temperature for about 30 minutes to soften before eating.

### ... or fruit & nut

350g bananas, sliced and frozen  
½ cup roasted almonds, chopped  
½ cup raisins  
3 tablespoons almond butter  
1 tablespoon maple syrup  
1 tablespoon coconut milk  
1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
pinch of salt

Place all the ingredients into your food processor, blend until the mixture resembles an ice cream consistency.

Serve immediately or place in an airtight container and freeze until firm (around 6 hours).

## OLD-FASHIONED BAKED CUSTARD THREE WAYS!

### Baked custard

3 large eggs  
2 tablespoons caster sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
2 cups milk (your choice)  
¼ cup sultanas (optional)  
nutmeg

Preheat oven to 180C. Heat milk over a low heat until scalding point. Beat eggs, sugar and vanilla together lightly. Add warmed milk gradually, whisking to combine. Pour into a shallow oven proof dish, sprinkle with nutmeg and sultanas if using.

Stand baking dish in a baking tin, with enough cold water to come halfway up the sides of the dish. Bake in the oven for 40 minutes or until set.

### Baked rice custard

3 large eggs  
2 tablespoons caster sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
2 cups milk (your choice)  
¾ cup cooked white rice  
nutmeg

Preheat oven to 180C. Heat milk over a low heat until scalding point. Beat eggs, sugar and vanilla together lightly. Add warmed milk gradually, whisking to combine. Spread the rice evenly over the base of your baking dish. Pour over the custard mixture, sprinkle with nutmeg.

Stand baking dish in a baking tin, with enough cold water to come halfway up the sides of the dish. Bake in the oven for 40 minutes or until set.

### Bread & butter pudding

3 large eggs  
2 tablespoons caster sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
2 cups milk (your choice)

3-4 slices fruit bread, crusts removed and buttered(optional)  
nutmeg

Preheat oven to 180C. Heat milk over a low heat until scalding point. Beat eggs, sugar and vanilla together lightly. Add warmed milk gradually, whisking to combine. Place bread slices evenly over the base of your baking dish. (The number of slices you need is dependent on your dish size.) Pour over the custard mixture and sprinkle with nutmeg.

Stand baking dish in a baking tin, with enough cold water to come halfway up the sides of the dish. Bake in the oven for 40 minutes or until set.

**Note: any bread can be substituted for the fruit bread.**

### Coconut panna cotta with passionfruit

2 x 270g cans coconut milk  
2 teaspoons gelatine  
¼ cup maple syrup  
1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
3-4 passionfruit

Place the coconut milk in a medium sized pot. Sprinkle the gelatine on top and let it rest for 5 minutes. Place on a low heat and warm for 3 or 4 minutes, stirring continually to dissolve the gelatine. Take care not to overheat it (so you can easily stick your finger in without burning). Once the gelatine is dissolved, stir in the maple syrup and vanilla until combined.

Grease 4-6 small ramekins with oil of your choice and divide the coconut milk mix between them. Place in the fridge for about 4 hours to set.

You can serve the panna cotta in the dish it is set in. Or, to remove your panna cotta from the mould, sit in a bowl of hot water for 3 seconds, run a knife just around the rim of the mould and turn onto a serving plate. Top with passionfruit pulp and perhaps a few mint leaves.



## SMOOTHIES

### Mango

3 cups frozen mango pieces  
2 cups frozen banana chunks  
2 cups milk, nut or coconut milk  
1 fresh mango, diced  
½ cup blueberries  
yoghurt  
crunchy granola

Place frozen mango, banana and milk of choice into a food processor. Blend until smooth and thick.

Divide between small serving bowls, top with fresh diced mango, blueberries, yoghurt (coconut is yum!) and a crunchy granola.

### Choc nut

1 large frozen banana  
250 ml milk, of your choice  
1 tablespoon of nut butter (peanut, almond or cashew)  
½ small avocado  
1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
2 tablespoons cocoa powder  
pinch of sea salt  
½ cup ice  
1 banana, sliced  
½ cup blueberries  
¼ cup coconut flakes

Combine banana, milk, nut butter, avocado, vanilla, cocoa, sea salt and ice in a food processor. Blend until smooth, thick and creamy. Spoon into serving bowls.

Top with fresh banana, blueberries and coconut flakes

## CHIA PUDDING

### Strawberry ...

400 g fresh strawberries, hulled  
400 ml coconut milk  
85 g maple syrup  
1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
100 g chia seeds  
1 lemon, zested



Throw it all in a food processor and blend on a very high speed until well mixed. Divide into 4 glasses and refrigerate overnight. Serve with fresh berries and coconut yoghurt.

### ... or chocolate

½ cup cocoa powder  
4 tablespoons maple syrup  
½ teaspoon vanilla essence  
2 cup coconut milk  
2/3 cup chia seeds

Sift cocoa powder into a medium deep mixing bowl. Add chia seeds, coconut milk, maple syrup, vanilla and pinch of salt. Whisk to combine until smooth.

Divided into four bowls, cover and refrigerate until the mixture thickens, at least 4 hours or preferably overnight. Enjoy with fresh coconut yoghurt and berries, if desired.

### ... or mango

2 large mangos (peeled and cored weight 255g each)  
½ cup chia seeds  
2 cups coconut milk  
4 tablespoons maple syrup

Add the flesh of one of the mangos to a food processor and blend into a purée. Dice the other mango, keeping half for garnish.

Add the chia seeds, coconut milk, maple syrup and puréed mango to a mixing bowl and whisk together. Then add ½ the chopped mango and mix it in.

Place the mixture into the fridge for 15 minutes and then bring it out and give it a stir and then put it back into the fridge for another 15 minutes.

Spoon it out into four serving glasses, top with the remaining chunks of chopped mango.

## Raw raspberry cheesecake

80 g hazelnut meal  
2 tablespoons flaxseed ground  
2 tablespoons cacao  
2 tablespoons desiccated coconut  
30 g coconut oil  
3 tablespoons maple syrup

### Raspberry cream filling:

150 g raw cashew nuts, raw and soaked for 2-3 hours in water and drained  
150 g raspberries  
1 tablespoon white chia seeds  
1 tablespoon maple syrup  
1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
3 tablespoons water or coconut water

### For the base:

In a food processor, combine your hazelnut meal, flaxseed meal, raw cacao and coconut. Add the coconut oil and maple syrup and mix until well combined and the mixture holds together when pressed.

### For the filling:

Process the soaked cashews until smooth and creamy. Add the raspberries (leaving four aside as a garnish) and process again, add the chia, vanilla, and water and process until smooth.

Assemble in 4 glasses by pressing the chocolate base into the glass and top with the raspberry cream.

Chill until set, garnish with raspberries and serve immediately.

## CHOCOLATE MOUSSE



### Indulgent ...

2 ripe avocados, skin and stone removed  
60 g cocoa  
125 ml maple syrup  
125 ml coconut cream  
60 ml coconut oil  
1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
pinch of sea salt

Combine avocado, cocoa, maple syrup, coconut cream, coconut oil, vanilla and sea salt. Blend until smooth and creamy. Divide into serving glasses and refrigerate for 2-3 hours to chill completely. Decorate with coconut yoghurt, whipped cream or mascarpone and raspberries.

### ... or easy

2 large ripe avocados  
125 ml maple syrup  
1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
½ cup cocoa powder  
pinch of sea salt

Place the maple syrup in in a blender, followed by the avocado, vanilla, cocoa and salt. Blend for about 30 seconds until smooth and creamy. Add a splash of water to make a lighter mousse. Spoon into a bowl and allow to cool and set in the fridge. Top with your favourite berries etc.



## A VARIETY OF CREAMS TO ENRICH DESSERTS

### Thickened cream

Thickened Cream with a fat content of around 35% is thicker in texture than pure cream and holds its shape well after beating. It contains additives such as gelatine, vegetable gum or other modifiers which help hold its thickness when whipped. It's the perfect cream to use in desserts such as trifles, as topping on a cake, pavlova or just whipped as an accompaniment for a dessert.



### Pure cream

Pure cream has a fat content of around 40%. This is a great cream to use in sweet sauces or as accompaniment.

### Lite (light) cream

This cream is best used to pour it straight into soups, sauces, pasta and desserts. It's the perfect cooking cream! With 17% milk fat it is not suitable for whipping.

### Double cream

Double cream is a delicious, rich and decadent extra thick cream. It is the perfect accompaniment for any dessert. Double cream has 45% milk fat and is the thickest cream, therefore no whipping is required.

### Sour cream

Sour cream is not just used for savoury dishes, it can be used as a substitute for cream as topping on muffins and scones and is perfect in cheesecakes, puddings or desserts.

### Crème fraîche

Crème fraîche has a rich, velvety texture and mild, tangy taste that is less tart than sour cream. Considered to be the most multipurpose cream available, it is perfect for sweet and savoury dishes. Suitable for heating, dolloping and baking across a range of both sweet and savoury recipes. It cannot be whipped.

### Mascarpone

Mascarpone is a thick, luxurious, creamy cheese that has been made traditionally in Italy. It is not just for tiramisu! It can be used as a substitute for thick or double cream. It is great for topping desserts.

### Cream cheese

Cream cheese although is made with cream and milk and is uniquely tangy, with a smooth and creamy finish. It is the essential ingredient to making any cheesecake, icings and your favourite dips.

### Yoghurts

More and more these days yoghurt is being substituted for cream in dessert recipes and even as an accompaniment. For the dairy intolerant coconut and almond yoghurts are a great alternative.



with tasmania's  
olympic athlete  
tristan thomas

## Getting back on the right track ... IN LONDON

Dear Brighton

As I have mentioned before, I really enjoy writing these articles (and hope you get something out of them too). That being said, as someone who has always done my best work at the last minute, deadlines are not always my best friend. Well this time, I have an extra nine hours of excuses up my sleeve!

When my great editor, John, says he has to have my words by Monday, it's now slightly easier for me and that is due to a recent change I have made. I am writing this article from a bus on my first day to work, at a school in South London, called Langley Park Boys School.

The key word there being London. For this article I won't be discussing exercise, and instead will focus on taking risks.

I have wanted to live overseas for years now. Having had a mum and a dad who both spent time living abroad, I always thought it would be an unbelievable opportunity to add new elements to my life. Whether it be new friends, that I never would have met, or new pastimes that just wouldn't have been available back home in Oz, this experience will hopefully make me grow like no other.

get  
fit

enjoy  
life!

with tasmania's olympic athlete tristan thomas

As I prepare to teach over 150 kids who all view school and growing up differently to back home, I'd be lying if I said it wasn't scary, but it is also fun. When I started thinking seriously about moving, I was a bit bored and stale with large parts of my daily routine, and needed to mix something up.

In the last 12 months, however, I made some great friends at a school I really loved teaching at, have enjoyed training in an athletics squad full of laughs, and had structures in place that made my life in Australia as good as it ever had been.

This led to a moment at the airport where my partner and I looked at each other timidly as she whimpered, 'I don't think I want to do this any more'. At that moment I agreed. Fast forward three weeks though and it has been one of the greatest decisions we have ever made. While our life was great back home, the potential for new opportunities and adventures in this bigger pond has given us a 'try everything' attitude, and already we have had experiences that we never would have had back home.

To relate it back to you, I would equally recommend that you adopt a growth mentality. I get really sad when I see people not believing in themselves, and I can say with 100% confidence that with smart goals, hard work and a 'can do' attitude, anyone can make dreams come true. If you think you are too stodgy to do something, you are certainly not. If you are scared about change, that's totally normal. This doesn't mean everyone should jump off the deep end and flip their lives upside down. It just means you can if you want to. Don't get me wrong, there is nothing wrong with settling when you love what you



**'I have made contact with a training group here, that contains England's best 800m runner, and will start with them when they get going again next month'**

have already. I just recommend that you remain open to new challenges and keep believing in yourself.

To discuss sport, I am probably at one of my lower points of fitness. There are people my age who are still running fast, but for whatever reason it just hasn't happened for me for a while now. My goals have changed and for the first time I've partly been okay with not being fit and strong. But I am proud to write that

despite a couple of months where I have had the flu and haven't done nearly enough running, I have made contact with a training group here, that contains England's best 800m runner, and will start with them when they get going again next month.

I may never run super quick again, but in a way, that makes it an even bigger risk to put myself in this environment. I am now forced to get fit and fast enough to avoid embarrassment, and again I love this challenge. To summarise, I'll offer you the same advice I am continually telling myself (especially on the way to a new school that could tear me to shreds), whether you believe you can achieve something new or you don't, you are right.

Back yourself always and keep moving forward. You CAN do it. Fingers crossed.

Until next time,  
Tristan.





Oregano

# HERBING up your meals

Are you finding your meals a tad boring? Do you crave tasty gourmet dishes but are hampered through lack of culinary skills, or budget? It could be you need to grow some herbs.

Herbs can turn the most mundane dish into something special. Super chefs can't exist without them – and herbs can transform mug cooks into highly admired chefs.

It's as simple as tossing fresh chopped parsley over a meaty pasta. Adding stems of exquisite lemon grass to an Asian-style soup. Or whacking a sprig of rosemary into a roast of lamb.

Herbs are cheap and a lot of fun to grow, and fresh-grown herbs inevitably leave the dried store-bought varieties for dead.

So what are herbs? They're basically herbaceous plants, ones that don't contain woody parts – although today many woody species such as rosemaries and lavenders do get a guernsey in the herb ranks.

## Get growing

Most herbs need minimal care – yet treat them right by planting in good friable soil boosted with plenty of compost and a few handfuls of blood and bone (from the local nursery), and results can be remarkable. Pick a spot that gets maximum sun, drains well after heavy rain and is protected from wind. If drainage is poor, raise the bed 6-10cm so excess water drains away.

The trick with herbs is to remember where you planted them. Because some die down in winter, it's easy to lose them. Also, some only last one or two years, and some need to be sown from seed annually.

## What to grow

For starters, grow the herbs you think you will use most. Once proficient with these, experiment with more exotic ones. The most

popular herbs for adding flavour to basic dishes are basil, bay leaves, coriander, marjoram, lemon grass (a little difficult to grow in Tassie but worth the effort), marjoram, mints, oregano, parsley, rosemary, sage and thyme.

**Basil** It brings tomato dishes alive with tangy freshness and is a winner in pesto sauce. Grow it from seed this spring, or from seedlings spring/summer. It dies down so needs replacing each spring. Grow plenty, water regularly and pick often.

**Bay leaves** These are the leaves of the easy-grow bay tree (*Laurus nobilis*). Grow one plant in a pot and you will have enough leaves for years. Toss just one or two into stews and casseroles for a tantalising taste boost. Clip this good looking tree to keep it manageable.

**Coriander** An annual (it needs to be grown each year) whose spicy leaves – along with its seeds and roots – are sublime in curries and Thai dishes. Grow in a morning-sun spot. It quickly runs to seed so collect seed for new sowings.

**Lemongrass** It's a clump-forming, grassy perennial from the tropics so needs a special spot ... protected from cold and frost. It can be knocked back over winter but generally bounces back come spring. Its fleshy lower shoots work wonders in soups, curries and especially spicy beef dishes.

**Marjoram** Plant in a full-sun, free-draining soil. A perennial often grown as an annual, its small aromatic leaves give a boost to meat dishes. Copes in dry conditions and is not too fussed about soil quality. Cut back in late winter to encourage spring growth.

**Mints** From chocolate flavoured ones to others

reminding of pineapple, spearmint and peppermint, there's a mint for every taste. Growing varies slightly for each, but many are highly promiscuous so must be kept in check. Common mint (think mint sauce with roast lamb) is best grown in a large buried pot or bucket with its bottom cut out. Grow from divisions/runners (beg, borrow or steal a runner from your next door neighbour).

**Oregano** Another winner in tomato dishes, and perfect for meaty pizzas and herb bread. A matting, tough Mediterranean perennial, it's best cut back after flowering to keep it vigorous.

**Parsley** A biennial (lives for two years), it grows best in a slightly moist soil. Grow from seed or seedlings in a part shade/part sun and frost-free position. Runs to seed so allow a couple of plants to do so, to provide new seed. Curly-leaf parsley looks and tastes good as a garnish or sprinkled over meat-sauce, and Italian flat-leaf parsley, for mine, tastes even better.

**Rosemary** Hardy, easy-grow evergreen shrub that does best in a sunny spot in free-draining soil. Ideal for growing in pots, it needs little more than a trim after flowering and an annual feed of fertiliser. Pluck young sprigs for lamb dishes.

**Sage** Common sage, a bushy perennial, likes sun and wind protection. Cut back after flowering and add to meat and poultry dishes. Use fresh or freeze leaves for later use.

**Thyme** Another easy-grower that thrives in a sunny spot. Mulch over summer and pick as needed to inject chicken dishes, stocks, soup and bread with a zap of flavour. Snip back occasionally to stop legginess and to keep it vigorous. For a hit of citrus, grow lemon thyme.

Curly leaf  
parsley