

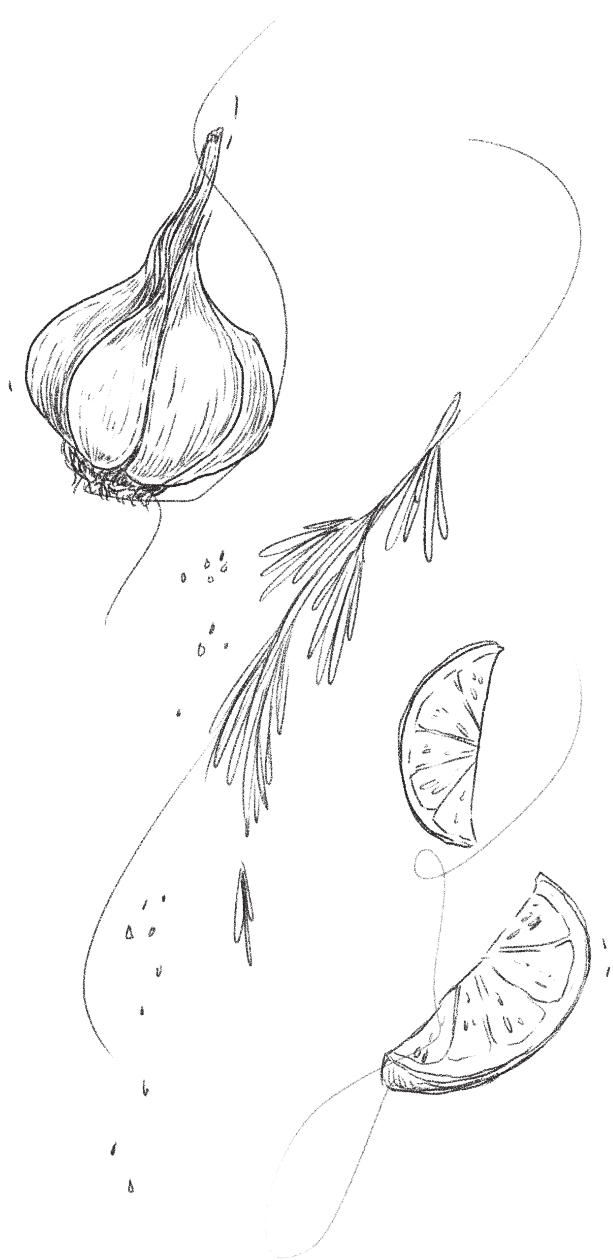
The RNZ Cookbook

A treasury of
180 recipes from
New Zealand's
best-known chefs
and food writers



The RNZ Cookbook

Edited by David Cohen and Kathy Paterson



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Foreword

The guilty secret among RNZ presenters is that some interviews are easier than others. As we scan the three to four hours of airtime ahead of us, any opportunity to take a deep breath and perhaps sip a cup of tea shines out in the schedule. Sometimes all you need for that extra burst of energy when interviewing, say, the Minister of Finance on Budget day is the knowledge that, straight afterwards, you're booked in with some international correspondent who can, as my producer Melita likes to say, 'talk underwater with marbles in her mouth'.

When I joined RNZ National's *Afternoons* show in 2015, I thought food interviews would fit in this 'put-your-feet up' category. I'm a restaurant reviewer who loves food, I reasoned, raised by two ex-hippies, an early tofu adopter, a long-form, slow-burn, project-cooking food nut who, under 'hobbies' on his dating profile, used to list 'eating'. These interviews ought to come ready made. You say hello. You ask what the chef's been

up to. They tell you what they've been cooking lately and then share a recipe. I shouldn't even have to worry too much about the details of the item they share because listeners can always be pointed to the published version on the website if things start to sound too complicated. It ought to be as easy as poaching fish in a barrel.

How quickly I learnt otherwise. Chefs are quirky. Each has their own set of psychological reasons and circumstances for shunning a sensible nine-to-five job in favour of spending their working hours in a hot kitchen cooking for ungrateful strangers. More than any other kind of guest, in my experience, they're likely to surprise you with the way they answer a question, giving you an answer that requires some unpicking. Often they are stressed, having found their 10 minutes for you in between shifts and deliveries, or they haven't had time to prep for the segment. More than once I've seen authors frantically flicking through their own cookbooks when I ask them to share a recipe.

Then there is the audience. If you thought they were going to sit back and enjoy listening to a few minutes of food porn, well, you'd be wrong. As soon as the interview begins, they start texting in questions: What does a cup of peanut butter *weigh*? Where can I buy Aleppo pepper? Is chicken an acceptable substitute for pheasant? And please warn people before they eat Jerusalem artichokes!

If only New Zealanders were as exercised about, say, local body politics as they are about what sort of eggs to use in a pavlova. (Room temperature, seven days out of the hen, for the record.)

So, broadcasting food is no picnic. But it *is* rewarding. In our regular Friday afternoon food slot we showcase dozens of new recipes each year, from chefs who are either already household names or have become so thanks to the irresistibility of their cooking and charm. On our show, and on the brilliant programmes presented at other times of the day and week, we meet chefs at the height of their powers, often sharing a recipe or idea they've only just created — and we are delighted to be their test kitchen: a creative space for them to drop in on between cookbooks.

Though I have an administrative job to do with these visiting chefs, I tend to treat them as a reverent listener would: marvelling at their imaginations, salivating at their latest creations and, occasionally, thinking, *I could do that*. And deciding to give it a go.

I often wonder how many listeners actually try the recipes we share. Although I don't think it matters. The idea that you could

attempt this or that if you want is the appeal. But it's no small thing to enter your kitchen to try something new. As with clothing, most grown-ups have their favourites. Auditioning anything new is a major decision. You wait for the feedback from those around you, and then bump an old regular of perhaps fading fashion to make way for the interloper. If you're lucky, an interviewee might introduce you to an entirely new ingredient along with several different ways to cook it. Though I beg you . . . be cautious with Jerusalem artichokes.

Among the scores of incredible chefs, cooks and pundits featured in this book, it would be unprofessional of me to tell you my favourite.

Okay, it's Julie Biuso. Julie often arrives in studio with a recipe you think you already know how to make and then proceeds to give you the little prep tricks and tips that will mean that your kitchen benchtop does not end up looking like the site of a small tornado. In her recipe for rib-eye roast on page 130, for example, she tells you exactly how to manage the juices from the meat once you lift it from the roasting dish and onto a board for resting and then slicing: by tucking paper towels around the edges of the board to absorb them.

Food culture changes fast: if it tastes good, tradition and politics don't tend to get in the way of progress. When comparatively recently, local chefs learned they could create acidity using not just citrus but also fermented foods, it changed our menus forever. Kimchi, kefir and kombucha are no longer mistaken for lost Kardashian sisters but welcome additions to our New Zealand food culture. More than one chef has attempted a step-by-step guide on the radio to creating these ferments in the home kitchen, and I think Kelly Gibney's sauerkraut (page 205) is as close to a fool-proof guide as you'll find.

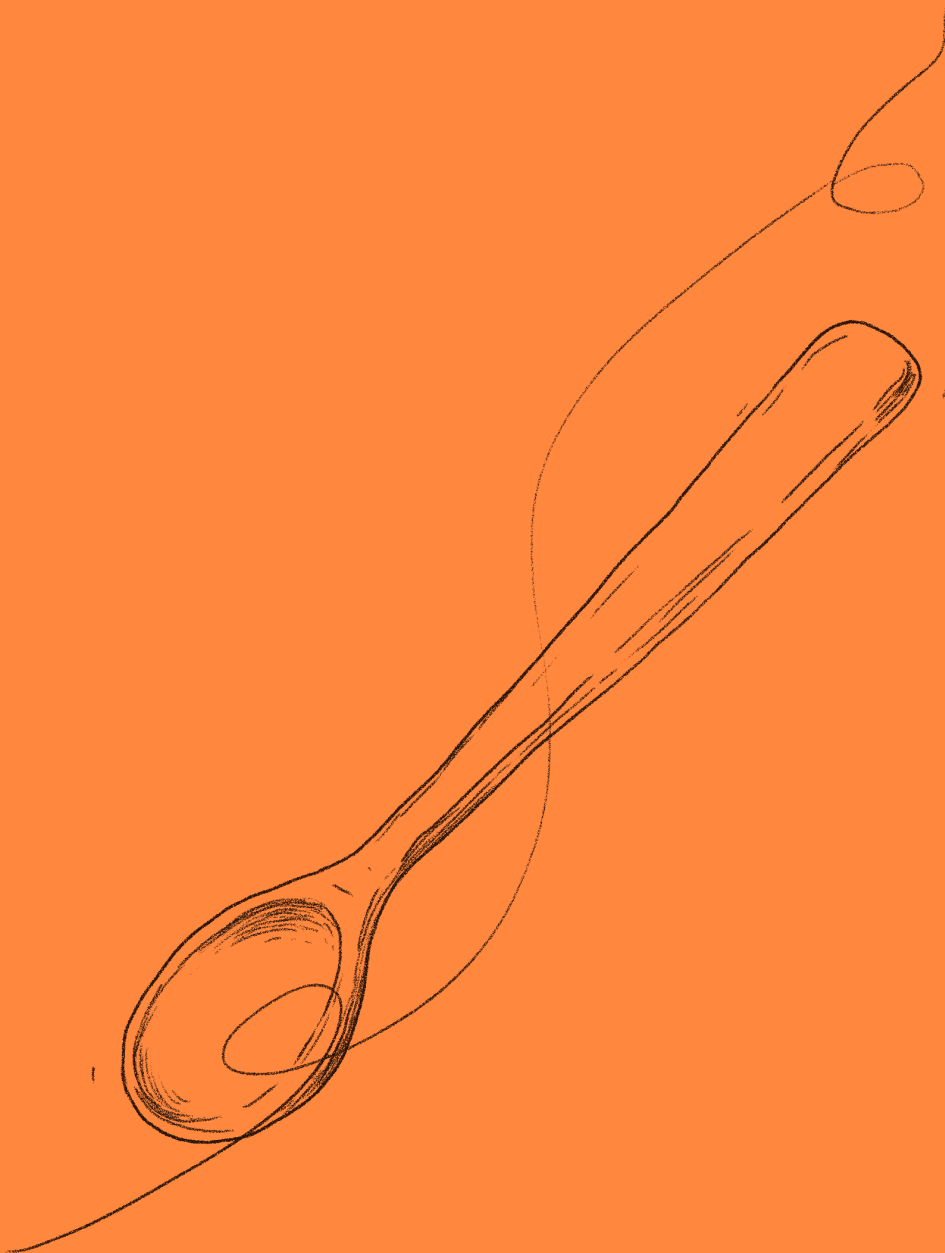
But I will admit it's the classics (and special versions of the classics) that I gravitate to in this collection. Having tried Lauraine Jacob's muffins, made with an entire orange blitzed with dates and brown sugar then folded into some simple dry ingredients, would you ever bake anything else again? Is it possible for a dish to sound more delicious than Nadia Lim's Indian lamb shank curry?

In my experience, the straightforward dishes are the ones that resonate with our listeners too, and although there is certainly a place for fine-dining chefs on the radio, it's hard to adapt what a team of kitchen staff does over 12 hours into something people can try at home ('Before we begin, I'm going to tell you how to dehydrate your feijoa skins then turn them into a powder,' I distinctly remember

one chef telling me as the live country music duo lined up to play next in studio sighed and put down their instruments). Asking a molecular culinary ninja to come up with a simple crowd-pleaser can feel like asking Jackson Pollock to teach you how to draw a cat. Still, some of them manage it, and you'll see some famous names in this book, to whom we're intensely grateful for meeting us at our level.

Thanks to you for picking up this book — and thanks to the contributors who've devoted their time, art and expertise to creating its delicious contents. I hope you'll enjoy reading through and recreating these recipes. And if you have any questions, well, I know from enjoyable experience you won't be shy about asking.

Jesse Mulligan
Host, *Afternoons*



Introduction

It's early in the afternoon and I'm rustling up some tzatziki to go with a lamb recipe for the family to have for dinner while I head out to work. You know the drill. First spoon some creamy yoghurt over a peeled and diced cucumber in a small bowl. Then add olive oil, fresh garlic, lemon juice and kosher salt. Plus herbs. I'm feeling a bit reckless so I go with dill and mint. Finally — and this is important for me at least — the trick is to mix the ingredients oh-so-gently-gently to the sound of RNZ in the kitchen.

Cooking and listening to the radio are two things I do every day of my life. These past few months they have also constituted an enjoyable job brief as I've scoured the RNZ archives for fabulous recipes with everyday appeal for everyday people.

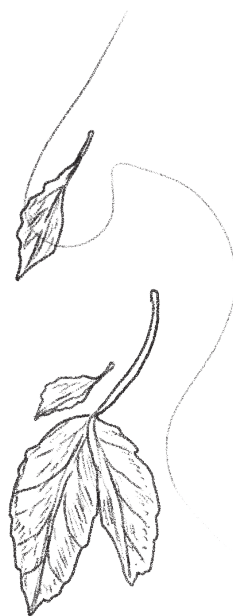
In the following pages you'll find 180 gems garnered from the country's best cooks, chefs, bakers, farmers, environmentalists, kitchen monarchs and local food heroes. They've been grouped into various menu suggestions, along with snacks and other essentials for the pantry. There's a democratic split between meat and poultry dishes and vegetarian (and vegan) ones, and between sweet and savoury, and there's a bit of street food along the way. Wherever possible, the lineup includes dishes by Māori and Pacific Island chefs and food writers.

Without getting all existential or pretentious about it, the selection also keeps an eye out for recipes that capture something of the elusive essence of who we are as New Zealanders, for the tasty, easy, homey food that brings people together in a land where people don't always have a lot of other common symbols or even experiences to draw from. That's a working brief not unlike that of our national broadcaster.

Most of their ingredients are widely available. Even the slightly obscure stuff is reasonably easy to source. That's as it ought to be, really, given the subject. New Zealand is doubly blessed by being a land of immigrants, who invariably bring with them exciting new ideas for meals, as well as being a land that yields so much of what's needed to put those ideas on the table.

As one of our most quintessentially Kiwi chefs, Al Brown — who also happened to be the first to agree with alacrity to his work being featured in this collection — says of the local style: 'Our ace of cards in the culinary deck are our four distinct seasons, fertile soils, and our distance from the source — be it from the sea or the land.' All of these offerings easily work to that observation, which in turn rather suits the country's major public broadcaster's chartered requirement to provide for a broad church.

RNZ shares with its wider audience just such an easygoing love of food. The two fit together like peas in a pod. Or rather, to be a little more precise, peas in a salad: of broad beans, feta cheese, chillies, and a handful of coarsely chopped mint, all of which makes for a scrumptious meal whether served with a rack of lamb or simply as a standalone lunch. (The chef Hester Guy's recipe for this succulent



dish, along with instructions on preparing her own tzatziki dressing, can be found on page 143.)

The chapters here run along similar lines to RNZ's own media menu — breakfast eaten to a radio background of *Morning Report*, lunch with *Midday Report*, snacks with *Afternoons*, dinner with *Checkpoint*, and so on. But if the structure was a no-brainer, making the actual selections proved no piece of cake.

Indeed, the difficulty in whittling down such an exhilarating list is that there are more than 3000 recipes to choose from on the RNZ website alone. That's counting only the appearances chefs and food writers have made on the platform over the past 20 or so years. It's interesting to track their careers against the website: some came on air to share a recipe while talking about a new book, a new restaurant or some new project. Many recipes featured what was then a novel ingredient, and the discussion of it with the radio host was an invaluable aid to home cooks wondering what it was and how they could use it.

Well-established figures — Dame Alison Holst, for example — featured regularly early on, and rising stars — Nadia Lim, Monique Fiso — appeared later. As such, an archive of our food history was created. But *The RNZ Cookbook* is not the work of a food historian. That would have meant pages given over to items such as curried eel, roast black swan and something called braised pukeko pie, the last of which sounds like something you might cook in a gumboot for 10 hours before throwing the pukeko away and eating the gumboot. Decent books already exist along those scholarly lines, a personal favourite being David Burton's illuminating *Two Hundred Years of New Zealand Food & Cookery*. Nope, I'm simply an enthusiast lucky enough to have lived in a country and worked in an industry during a time when the joys of food were also being discovered in a big way.

When I got into journalism in the late 1980s, celebrity chefs were just emerging on to the scene: you saw them featured in publications like *Metro*, and the number of places where you could dine out was rapidly expanding. Back then I quickly staked a small claim to the subject I had already become passionate about. I wrote about dining and travel, did restaurant reviews and profiled chefs, that sort of thing. In the early 1990s, I went to Tel Aviv, learnt how to make shakshuka, and in time became a full-fledged Middle Eastern food nut. Later I put in some more research doing food tours

or attending cooking classes in places like Dubai, Soweto and Cape Town, Buenos Aires, Dublin, Milan and Venice, and Nice. A few years ago I co-authored a cookbook on Levantine cuisine.

RNZ's relationship with the subject goes back much further, and runs deeper. The state-owned corporation's food story opened when it was barely a decade old, really, with Aunt Daisy, or Maud Ruby Basham, who worked happily for the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation in Wellington, where she sometimes cooked meals for herself and colleagues in the dingy basement underneath the old studios on Waring Taylor Street.

In 1929, after her husband lost his job as an engineer, she took a career-swerve into radio, landing a full-time announcer role on the 2YA station, initially to 'fill up' Wednesdays, a day on which the station previously had not broadcast. A couple of years on, they fired her. The station had become nationalised and public service rules decreed that only one female was allowed to be employed at each station. Partly, one supposes, the 'jobs for the boys' edict had to do with the straitened times, but it also reflected a view of women — and of cooking for that matter. But if a woman's place really was 'in the kitchen', Aunt Daisy upended the prejudice by taking it at its word, and taking her own recipes to the then privately owned ZB network.

Thus the mother of the food nation was born, dispensing recipes, cooking advice and handy kitchen hints as she went, all in a rapid-fire voice that quickly won over a huge following.

She offered comfort during the exoruciating Depression years and the war that followed. In 1944, as part of her own war effort, Basham visited Washington on a trip entirely funded by the proceeds of cookbooks, which were already beginning to sell well and would for many decades hence. She famously sipped tea with Eleanor Roosevelt, passing on personal messages to her from some of the American troops stationed back in New Zealand. But her bigger passion remained in sharing an on-air cuppa with the listeners back home. There she worked almost up until the day she died, on 14 July 1963.

Sharon Crosbie, the broadcaster who went on to become a chief executive with the corporation, was one of the first to keep the oven on in her own popular morning show. As did many of her successors, up to and including the current foodie-in-chief, Jesse Mulligan, who presents *Afternoons*. A quarter of a century ago Kim Hill put together a book of recipes called *Sounds Delicious*, the name of the cooking slot on what is now *Nine to Noon*.

These days the operation is more a sound and vision affair. Half a

million of us listen to it live every week, yes, but RNZ is a multimedia platform: on-air, online and on-demand, with plenty of clips and snazzy food photos to show for it. Only somebody who grew up in some far-flung time might sometimes think of it a little more wistfully as simply the wireless.

I grew up in suburban Wellington in a house where the National Radio served as an organising principle around which life and food were planned. Breakfasts were set to the crackly pip-pip-pips of the BBC cable news on what used to be called 2YA. Evening meals appeared to the orchestral sounds of 2YC, or what's now RNZ Concert, to a show called *Dinner Music*, an orchestral version of a classic rock show in which the evergreens were Puccini, Schubert and Bach. In the weekends, brunch-style, there were request shows. (Did people actually post handwritten letters asking to hear such-and-such a David Bowie song, and then wait a week to hear it play over lunch? Oh, yes, they certainly did.)

The music was a blast, but the food — and here I mean no disrespect to my late immigrant Irish mother — wasn't terribly flash. Whose was in those days? The great spices in our pantry, like most Kiwi pantries, were salt and pepper. The quality of most meals would have caused seasoned guests to leap out a window.

Still, progress was happening. In the wider culture, a small revolution was taking place. Tony Simpson writes so well in his marvellous book *A Distant Feast* about living in Europe during the same period and coming back to New Zealand in the 1980s with dread and foreboding to a land that had never been, putting it mildly, a mecca for gourmets. You could have knocked him over with a plastic spoon. In the space of a few short years, the country had 'ceased to be the virtually restaurant-less food wilderness of my recollection and had become instead a nation of diners-out'. Suddenly there were all these restaurants everywhere, not only in Wellington, Auckland and Christchurch but even . . . Clyde. Home cooking was even becoming a bit of a thing.

Partly this had to do with changing demographics — the country was starting to welcome more people than ever before, especially from parts of Asia. And the widespread elimination of most tariffs made it easier for importers to bring in the kind of ingredients that had previously been a huge hassle for local cooks to source — sorry, source.

And guys were getting in on the act, too, far more than even a decade earlier. In 1974, the marvellous Alison Holst (also featured in

this collection) produced her own *New Zealand Radio & Television Cookbook*, a collection of recipes sent in by listeners and viewers. Holst's description of the typical contributor was revealing: 'Farmers' wives and city women; those who cook for one or two, and the mothers of large families . . . women who buy just what they fancy and those who watch their food budget carefully; young cooks and women with years of cooking behind them . . . What they have in common is their interest in food!' Indeed, but you didn't need to be an exasperated feminist to notice a certain glaring omission from the roll.

In my case, I'd like to think there was also a genetic component kicking into my own burgeoning enthusiasm. My paternal great-grandparents were brought together by immigrant food — in their case fish and chips, which many regard as a quintessential British (and later, Kiwi) favourite, but whose origins are in fact continentally Jewish. Rachael Karamelli was a cook in a fish restaurant in the East End of London; Sam Levy worked, in the vernacular of the era, as a 'potato monger'. They made a dishy couple. The eatery where they met was part of a 40-strong empire of fish-and-chip restaurants established by another far-flung relative of mine called John Jacobs.

With all this in mind, I particularly enjoyed working on the section inside this book having to do with the various 'ethnic' dishes other newcomers have brought to this country. It may also explain my ever-so-slight bias in favour of fish recipes.

Which brings us to the spot customarily reserved for editors to go on about how this was really a team effort — the without-whom-none-of-this-would-be-possible bit. Well, this happens to be true. *The RNZ Cookbook* may have been conceived on my lonesome, but, like the best programming, everything else has been a collaborative effort in which I sometimes only played a relatively small part. I feel a bit like a radio presenter, actually, the strength of whose work is totally reliant on a team of set-up producers, executive editors and technical folk in the offing.

Nicola Legat, the publisher at Massey University Press — who in a previous journalistic life was a restaurant judge and wrote many of those early food articles I read in *Metro* and *North & South* and has published many cookbooks — guided the subsequent work, running a cliché detector over the initial drafts. Many times I asked her if something read well, and many times she suggested ways it could read better.

The two of us initially pitched the idea to RNZ's editor-in-chief, Paul Thompson, who reckoned it to be a feast in the making. The subsequent project was superbly managed by Emily Goldthorpe, a former food-truck owner, expertly edited by well-known food writer and caterer Kathy Paterson and illustrated by Pippa Keel. Many of the recipes were road-tested by one or other of them along the way. My wife, Pamela, helped in a number of ways, in particular by lending an American perspective in conversations about what constitutes distinctly local cuisine.

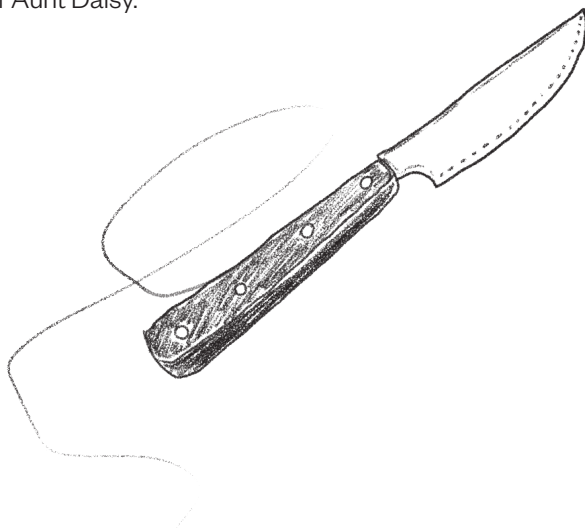
None of this would have been possible without the creators of the recipes giving their permission for their reuse in this book. We are so grateful to them, both for this but also for being this nation's food champions down the years. (There's more about each of them at the back of the book.)

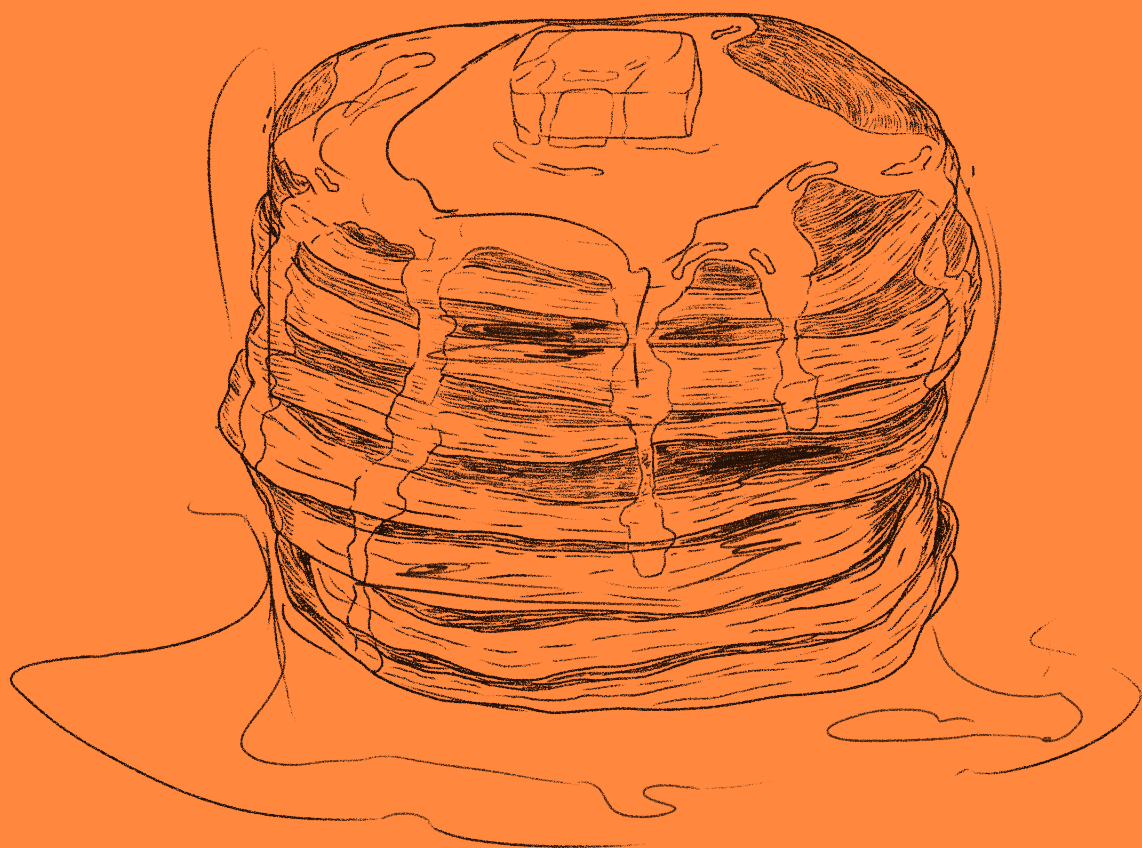
The publisher and RNZ wanted to give something back, and that is why a portion of the royalties from the sales of this book will go to the food charity founded by Nick Loosley in 2017, Everybody Eats.

Most of the selections that made the final cut originally aired on one or other of the RNZ shows (or went straight on to the website) after the year 2000. The self-imposed guideline of sticking with 2003 for the recipes may seem a little arbitrary, but that's the way it is with self-imposed guidelines. On the other hand, the choice of chefs is spread across more than 40 delicious years, and a few have been with us even longer than that.

I need to excuse myself now and tidy up the kitchen before heading out for another evening of it. Among my other media activities, I am a senior producer on *Morning Report*. I work out of the RNZ headquarters in Wellington, alongside Martin Gibson and the crew, a wider editorial and technical complement of more than 300 people, and sometimes — or so it seems late at night, when the place empties out and the studio light is dimmed — the ghost of Aunt Daisy.

David Cohen





Morning Report

Morning Report, RNZ's flagship current-affairs show, routinely enjoys the highest number of listeners of any of the regular programmes. Almost everybody who is anybody in broadcasting seems to have worked for it at one time or another.

If sometimes its early-morning guests sound a little grumpy, it's possibly because they've just rolled out of bed. These breakfast recipes are for them as much as the hundreds of thousands of Kiwis who tune in each morning.

Buttermilk pancakes

Serves 6

Maple cinnamon butter

125g unsalted butter, softened
(but not melted)
1 tablespoon maple syrup
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Pancakes

3 free-range eggs, separated
1½ cups buttermilk
½ teaspoon baking soda
1⅓ cups plain flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon sugar
2 tablespoons melted butter,
plus extra for cooking

Buttermilk kickstarts baking soda into action and helps to break down strands of gluten. This Al Brown recipe from 2012, the year his landmark eatery Depot won *Metro's* Supreme Restaurant of the Year Award, was broadcast on *Summer Report*.

To make the maple cinnamon butter, mix all the ingredients together. Dollop the flavoured butter down the centre of a piece of baking paper. Fold the paper over and roll into a sausage shape, then twist the ends of the paper in opposite directions to further shape the butter. Put in the fridge to firm up, then slice as needed.

To make the pancakes, place the egg yolks in a large bowl with the buttermilk and baking soda. Sift in the flour, baking powder and salt, then add the sugar. Whisk until you have a smooth batter. Stir in the melted butter.

In a clean bowl, whisk the egg whites to medium peaks (the peaks should have a curl). In batches, fold the whites into the pancake batter.

Heat a large frying pan over medium-low heat. Grease the pan with a little butter. Ladle about ¼ cup of the batter into the pan for each pancake, leaving space between pancakes. Cook until bubbles appear on the surface and the batter is no longer glossy, then flip to cook the other side for 1 minute. Remove and keep warm while you cook the remaining pancakes.

Serving idea — layer pancakes with grilled bacon and maple cinnamon butter, and top with maple syrup and fresh cherries. Serve pancakes hot so the butter melts lusciously between them.

Raisin bread with ricotta, honey and barbecued peaches

Serves 6

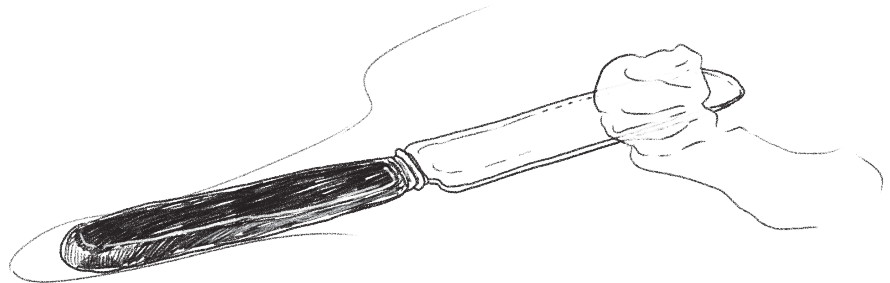
3 ripe freestone peaches
70g thinly sliced prosciutto
good knob of butter
small raisin or fruit loaf, sliced,
or sliced fruit bread
100g ricotta
maple syrup or runny honey
for drizzling
fresh thyme sprigs for
garnishing

Julie Biuso explained how to make these sweet toasts in 2009, the year she published her barbecue cookbook *Never-ending Summer*. They can also be made with croissants or sliced brioche.

To prepare the peaches, halve, remove stones and slice into quarters. Wrap each peach quarter in a little prosciutto.

Heat a barbecue hotplate or a large frying pan over medium heat. Add the butter, and when sizzling add the prosciutto-wrapped peaches and cook until they take on some colour.

As the peaches are cooking, toast the bread then arrange on plates and top with teaspoonfuls of ricotta. Remove the peaches and serve on top of the ricotta, drizzled with a little maple syrup or honey. Garnish with fresh thyme sprigs.



Vine-ripened tomatoes with fresh ricotta

Serves 4

8 large and 12 small tomatoes,
use a variety of colours and
shapes
2 tablespoons extra virgin
olive oil
1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
flaky sea salt and freshly
ground pepper
1 sourdough baguette
300g fresh firm ricotta
a few basil leaves, to garnish

This recipe by Catherine Bell, founder of The Epicurean Workshop, co-founder of *Dish* magazine and chair of the Garden to Table Trust, which works in schools to teach children to grow and then cook their own fresh produce, was shared with *Nine to Noon* listeners in 2012.

Slice the large tomatoes thickly and cut the smaller ones in half.

Combine the olive oil and balsamic vinegar and season with salt and pepper. Pour over the tomatoes, toss gently to coat and leave for 15 minutes to half an hour.

Cut 4 elongated diagonal slices from the baguette and toast or grill them. Generously spread with ricotta, season with salt and pepper and place each one on a plate.

Spoon the tomatoes over the ricotta and drizzle with a little of the dressing. Garnish with basil and serve immediately.

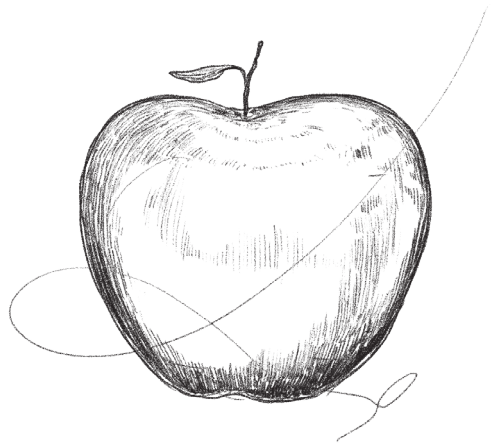
Breakfast apple crumble

Serves 1

3 tablespoons butter
2 apples, finely diced
2 tablespoons brown sugar
2 tablespoons rolled oats
2 tablespoons wholegrain
oats
2 tablespoons sunflower
seeds
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

In January 2014 Laura Vincent appeared on *Summer Nights* to talk about comfort food and share this recipe. She had come to fame as the author of the food blog *Hungry & Frozen* — she was one of New Zealand's earliest food bloggers, starting in 2007 — and the cookbook of the same name had been published a few months prior. These days she's vegan and would make this recipe with coconut oil.

Heat 1 tablespoon butter in a frying pan and add the diced apples. Cook gently, stirring, for 5 minutes or until the apples have softened slightly but not collapsed into mush. Place in a serving bowl, then melt the remaining butter and the brown sugar together in the same frying pan. Once sizzling, add the remaining ingredients and stir to toast everything slightly and coat in syrup. Once the mixture is looking browned and crisp, spoon it over the apples.



Raw chia

Bircher muesli

Serves 1

1 tablespoon coconut chips
1 tablespoon dried goji berries
1 tablespoon sultanas
1 tablespoon Brazil nuts,
chopped (or use almonds,
walnuts, hazelnuts or
cashew nuts)
1 teaspoon chia seeds
1 teaspoon pumpkin seeds
1 teaspoon sunflower seeds
½ cup almond milk (or other
plant-based milk, or freshly
squeezed apple juice, or
coconut water)
¼–⅓ cup coarsely grated
fresh pear

To serve

fresh or dried fruit
coconut chips
bee pollen
mix of chopped nuts

This super-healthy muesli mix by naturopath, nutritionist, medical herbalist and plant-based food blogger Buffy Ellen was shared on *Nine to Noon* in 2019.

Combine the coconut chips, goji berries, sultanas, nuts and seeds in a bowl. Pour over the almond milk, then cover and leave to soak overnight in the fridge.

In the morning, add freshly grated pear and extra almond milk or water if you want a thinner consistency.

To serve, top with your favourite combo of fresh or dried fruit, coconut chips, bee pollen and chopped nuts.



Hot-smoked salmon with sorrel, poached eggs and crispy pancetta

Serves 4

4 rashers pancetta (or free-range streaky bacon)
olive oil
4 very fresh medium-sized free-range eggs, at room temperature
splash of white vinegar
8 slices toasted bread or sliced baguette
butter, softened for spreading, plus extra for cooking
4 small handfuls of baby sorrel leaves, washed, dried and trimmed
100g hot-smoked salmon, skinned and flaked
black pepper

Sorrel has a fresh, clean, lemony bite which cuts through the richness in this dish. This Julie Biuso recipe from 2015, the year she published her cookbook *Julie Biuso at Home*, was discussed on *Afternoons*. It would also work just fine without the pancetta.

Sizzle the pancetta or bacon in a small frying pan in a little hot oil. Drain the rashers on paper towels and set aside.

Have ready a wide, but not deep, saucepan of simmering water with a good splash of white vinegar (*not* white wine). Make a little swirl in the water with the end of a wooden spoon (the movement of the water will help the egg white wash over the egg yolk as it spins around, forming a neat little shroud), and lower in the eggs, encouraging the egg white to fold over the yolks. Lower the heat immediately and poach until the whites are firm but still feel soft and spongy. Lift the eggs out of the water with a large slotted spatula or spoon and mop the underside with paper towels or a folded cloth.

While the eggs are poaching, butter the toast and put it on 4 warmed plates. Heat 1 large tablespoon of butter in a frying pan and add the sorrel leaves. Toss the sorrel in the butter for 10–15 seconds until slightly wilted. Spoon on to the toast.

Divide the salmon between the plates. Trim the eggs if necessary and place 1 egg on each toast stack, grind over black pepper, then top with crispy pancetta or bacon. Serve immediately.