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Season's eating

*Give the traditional Christmas feast a distinctive Kiwi flavour -
without spending the whole day in the kitchen*

RECIPES JULIE LE CLERC PHOTOGRAPHS MELANIE JENKINS



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Entertaining



Lime and chilli-glazed
 celebration ham p194

***Chef's trick:** A large ham is a wonderful Christmas centrepiece and leftovers can provide easy meals into the new year. Don't store leftover ham in plastic wrap as it will sweat and deteriorate quickly. Wrap small amounts in greaseproof paper and large amounts in muslin cloth dampened with water mixed with a little vinegar.*



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Lime and chilli-glazed celebration ham

Ham is an obvious choice when catering for a crowd. A whole glazed ham is a beautiful sight, its carving grabs the attention of guests, and that's all before they even taste its wealth of flavour. This lime and chilli glaze is easy and super-delicious.

Serves up to 24

7kg ham, cooked on the bone
2 cups apple juice
½ cup lime marmalade
¼ cup sweet chilli sauce
½ cup soft brown sugar
Juice of 1 lime

1 Preheat oven to 180°C. Remove skin from ham and discard. With the tip of a sharp knife, score the ham

fat in a diamond pattern.

2 Place ham in a large roasting pan. Pour apple juice into the pan. To make glaze, combine marmalade, chilli sauce, brown sugar and lime juice. Spread glaze over scored fat.

3 Bake ham for 1 hour, basting at regular intervals until glaze has caramelised to a deep golden brown. Serve hot or cold.

Welcome to my kitchen...

Well, I can hardly believe it's that time of year again. Just when we all feel like winding down, we have to take one last breath and make it across the Yuletide finishing line. For those of you who have taken on the responsibility of festive head chef, we have some easy and wonderfully delicious ideas to provide you with inspiration and help you rise to the challenge.

While Christmas foods and traditions are often passed on from generation to generation, there's always

room to add some variety to your celebrations or to give them a Kiwi twist. I've tried to capture the essence of the season in these recipes that produce memorable results without being too tricky to prepare. Whatever you decide to cook on the day, enjoy preparing and sharing food with the ones you love this Christmas.

Julie



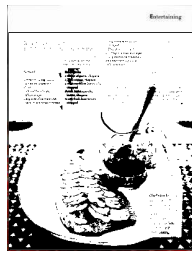
TRY IT WITH...

Waipara Hills Marlborough Cuvée

Grassy, tropical and zesty on the nose. Fresh and lively with bright tropical and gooseberry flavours combined with a slight sweetness and effervescence. **\$22**

Best BUY





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Roast salmon with potato crisps and salsa verde

Salmon is a superb festive dish, as it is silky textured, fleshy and flavoursome. The potato crisp 'scales' add something special, and refreshing salsa verde complements the fish.

Serves 6

3 medium (400g) waxy potatoes, unpeeled
 Olive oil
 Salt and freshly ground black pepper
 1.2kg side of salmon with skin on, pin bones removed

Salsa verde:

2 cloves of garlic, chopped
 2 Tbsp capers, chopped
 4 anchovy fillets (optional), chopped
 Bunch Italian parsley leaves, chopped
 ¼ cup fresh basil leaves, chopped

¼ cup fresh mint leaves, chopped
 1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
 2-3 Tbsp white wine vinegar
 ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
 Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 Preheat oven to 220°C. Very finely slice potatoes. Toss potato slices with 2 Tbsp olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Spread slices in a single layer over two oven trays lined with baking paper. Roast for 20-25 minutes or until crisp and golden.

2 Place salmon, skin side down, in a large flat oven pan lined with non-stick baking paper. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Bake for 10 minutes for medium or longer if preferred.
 3 Make the salsa verde by combining all ingredients in a jug. Season with salt and pepper and if necessary a little more vinegar to taste.
 4 Serve salmon on a platter topped with potato crisps. Serve salsa verde on the side, to spoon over.



Chef's trick: Cook salmon with the skin on; the skin acts as a protective layer, holding in succulence and flavour. You can remove it after cooking.



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Spiced coconut prawns

King prawns are a real treat and perfect to serve for Kiwi summer-time Christmas celebrations. This spicy toasted-coconut coating turns prawns into a celebratory starter.

Serves 6

18 (600g) king prawns,
 peeled with tails intact
 2 Tbsp peanut oil
 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger
 2 cloves garlic, crushed

1 small red chilli, finely
 chopped, seeds removed
 ½ cup thread coconut
 Salt and freshly ground
 black pepper
 ¼ cup fresh coriander leaves
 Lemon wedges, to serve

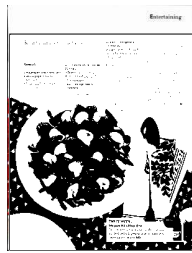
1 Remove and discard
 veins from prawns. Thread
 prawns onto skewers
 lengthways and season with
 salt and pepper.

2 Add a little oil to a large
 frying pan and cook prawns
 for 30-60 seconds on each
 side or until they turn
 bright pink. Remove to
 one side.

3 Add a little more oil to

the pan. Add ginger,
 garlic, chilli and coconut.
 Cook over medium
 heat for 1 minute,
 stirring continuously
 until toasted.

4 Return prawns to the
 pan and toss to coat
 with coconut mixture.
 Scatter coriander leaves
 on top and serve with
 lemon wedges on the side,
 to squeeze over.



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Roast summer vegetable salad

All-in-one salads like this one, filled with lots of special ingredients, are excellent summer Christmas fare.

Serves 6

1 red pepper, seeds removed
1 yellow pepper, seeds removed
1 large eggplant, cut into 3cm cubes

4 courgettes, thickly sliced
Olive oil
3 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 bunches asparagus, trimmed

12 small vine ripened tomatoes
200g bocconcini, halved
¼ cup fresh basil leaves, to garnish

1 Heat oven to 220°C. Cut peppers in coarse chunks. Place pepper, courgettes and eggplant in a large roasting pan. Drizzle with olive oil and balsamic, season with salt and pepper

and toss well. Roast for 20-30 minutes, tossing once during cooking until vegetables are tender and golden brown.

2 Place asparagus and tomatoes in a separate roasting pan. Drizzle with oil and season with salt and pepper. Roast for 10-15 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove all vegetables to cool.

3 Transfer vegetables to a large serving platter. Scatter with bocconcini and basil leaves to serve.



TRY IT WITH...

Waipara Hills Pinot Gris

Delicate with rich and lingering flavours. Dry and textured with pear and melon characters. Serve lightly chilled. \$22

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Glazed berry tarts

It seems to be a Kiwi Christmas tradition in many families to offer two types of dessert. I know this is definitely the case with my family! So, here's the first option: gorgeous individual tarts filled with creamy yoghurt piled with berries.

Serves 6

300g sweet shortcrust pastry
1½ cups thick Greek-style yoghurt
1 punnet each strawberries, raspberries, blueberries
½ cup apricot jam
Juice of 1 lemon

1 Roll out pastry to 5mm thick and use to line 6 x 10cm tart tins. Prick bases with a fork. Chill for 15 minutes. Preheat oven to 190°C.
2 Place tart tins on a baking tray. Line pastry shells with

squares of foil and fill with baking beans or rice. Bake for 15 minutes. Remove foil and beans. Return pastry shells to the oven for a further 5-10 minutes, or until pastry is dry and golden.
3 Remove to cool completely. To serve, half fill pastry cases with yoghurt, smoothing the surface with the back of a spoon. Top with berries.
4 Heat jam and lemon juice in a saucepan until runny, adding a little water if necessary. Strain to give a smooth glaze then brush over fruit while still hot.

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Vanilla nectarine and white chocolate trifles

While trifles are a traditional northern hemisphere pudding, these ones definitely have a summertime twist to suit Christmas Down Under. Layered with nectarines cooked with vanilla and a light mascarpone custard, they're sure to delight the whole family.

Serves 6

4 nectarines or peaches
Juice of 1 lemon
1 tsp vanilla extract
½ cup demerara sugar
100g packet sponge fingers
½ cup brandy (optional)
2 cups prepared vanilla custard
400g mascarpone
1 vanilla bean, split in half
100g white chocolate, shaved or grated

1 Halve nectarines and remove stones. Cut flesh into wedges and place in a saucepan with lemon juice, vanilla extract and sugar. Cook over a medium heat until tender and liquid is

syrupe. Remove to cool. Reserve 6 slices for decoration.
2 Break up sponge fingers and distribute half the pieces among 6 serving glasses. Drizzle with brandy and top with some of the nectarines and juice.
3 Place custard and mascarpone in a bowl and whisk until smooth. Remove seeds from vanilla bean and add.
4 Spoon half the mixture into glasses to cover nectarines. Scatter with half the white chocolate. Repeat layers, ending with custard mixture. Chill. Decorate with a slice of nectarine and a scattering of white chocolate. **[N]**



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