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Feature
Gift Guide

09

Home & Garden
Eyrewell Homestead

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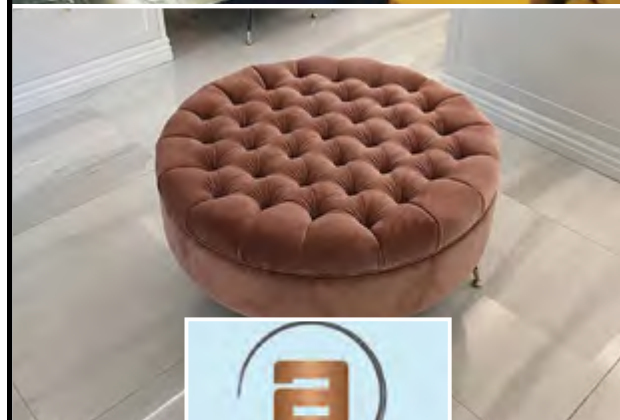
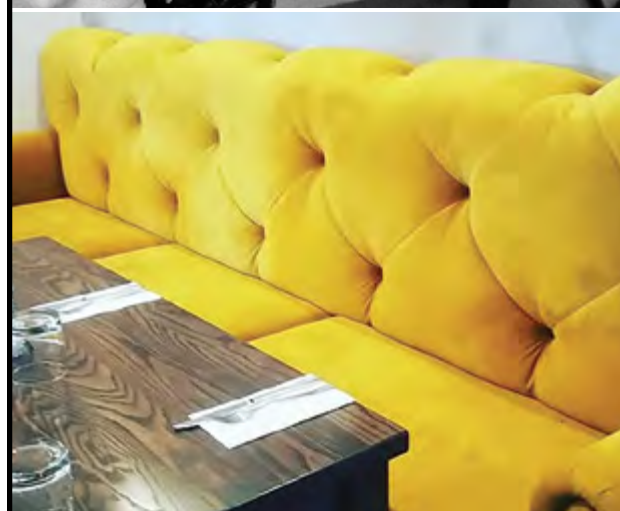
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contents

These final months of the year are always fun as the weather improves and the region gets busy with events and holiday plans. It's a great time of year to get out and about at markets, festivals and fetes and we're looking forward to those traditional summer events like the Fernside Garden Tour later this month and the Kaiapoi Christmas Carnival early December.

If you're already thinking of Christmas gifts then read on for a little inspiration with this month's gift guide - packed full of great ideas from our wonderful North Canterbury retailers. We are long-time fans of shopping locally and putting together the gift guide really brought home to us what a fantastic range of fashion, homewares and more can be found in our local stores.

For those of you that love to entertain at Christmas and are looking for some sure-fire recipes - check out pages 11 and 13. You'll find a couple of truly delicious Christmas day recipes from one of my favourite cook book writers Julie Biuso and you will enjoy Barbara's New World recipe - Summer Roast Vegetable Tart. We got to taste test this and can honestly say it was fabulous.

This month we also got to check out one of our region's gorgeous historical homes - Eyrewell Homestead. Dating back to 1900 it's now home to a young family who are combining modern family life with preserving this little slice of North Canterbury history. Check out the full story on page 9.

That's all from me this month - make sure you get out and about and enjoy our wonderful region in the coming weeks.

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Distributed monthly since 2003 to rural and urban letterboxes throughout North Canterbury. Essence Magazine is dedicated to promoting the personality, places and businesses in our unique community.
Printed copies - 21,500. For further information or our print dates please get in touch.



09 Home and Garden



Cover Image: Check out the fabulous range of Stellar Haus Christmas trees and stars at Blackwells Department Store, Kaiapoi. These functional and beautiful decorative Christmas accessories add a touch of sparkle, warmth and theatre to your home.
Image supplied; Blackwells Department Store.

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To be in the draw to WIN a \$50 food/beverage voucher, jump on our Facebook page to our competition, tag who you would bring with you and ensure you are both following our page. You can also enter via email info@essencemagazine.co.nz. Competition ends Wednesday 2 December 2020.



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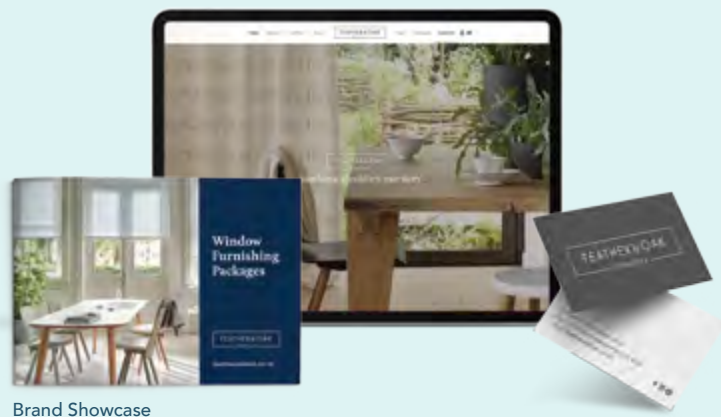
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Wai Arts

The Waikuku Artists Incorporated held its opening night on Friday 30th October. The annual event which continued through weekend was held at the Brick Mill.

The guest artist was Elisha Clarke-Jordon.



Chase Timothy and Chelsea Sanderson



Annette and Ron Van Oosten, Nicki Carter and Peter Giles



Shaun McCoubrey and Anthony Light



Fiona Kilty and Garry Quayle



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Martin Pinkham, Debs Taylor-Hayhurst and Geoff Barclay



Karen Bailey, Tracey Inwood, Martyn Cook, Geoff and Bridget Barclay, Andrew Jackson and Grant Hartley-Brown



Bridget and Geoff Barclay



Book Worms

There was a pleasant crowd gathered at the Hurunui Library on Sunday to hear readings from Cantabrian authors, Laura Borrowdale, Philip Norman and Doc Drumheller. This was the 13th year of The Writers Tea Party, an annual event put on by The Friends of the Hurunui District Library with support from the Hurunui Arts council. An enjoyable time was had by all.



Hurunui Mayor, Marie Black, with Aleisha Black and Corrine Christian



Lisa Heatley, Corrine Christian and Aleisha Black of Miscarriage Matters with their care package display



Aleisha Black, Barbara Frazer, Rose Christian and Corrine Christian



6km Butterfly Fun Run



Daelyn Pitman won the best dressed award



Miscarriage Matters NZ held their inaugural Butterfly Fun Run for Baby Loss Awareness week in October at the Groynes Reserve.

Miscarriage Matters NZ has a beautiful website packed full of practical miscarriage information: miscarriagematters.org.nz.

Photography by Camila Jordão

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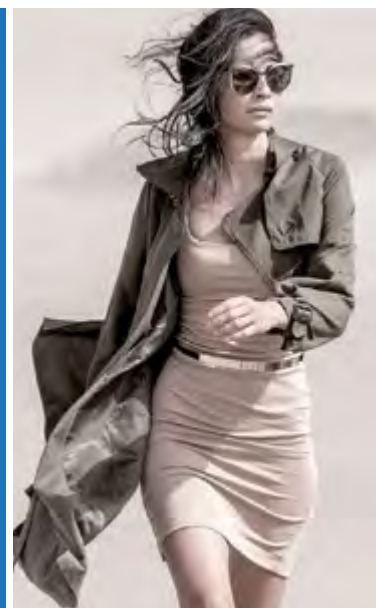
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Authorised by Matt Doocey, Parliament Buildings, Wellington.

Defining Style

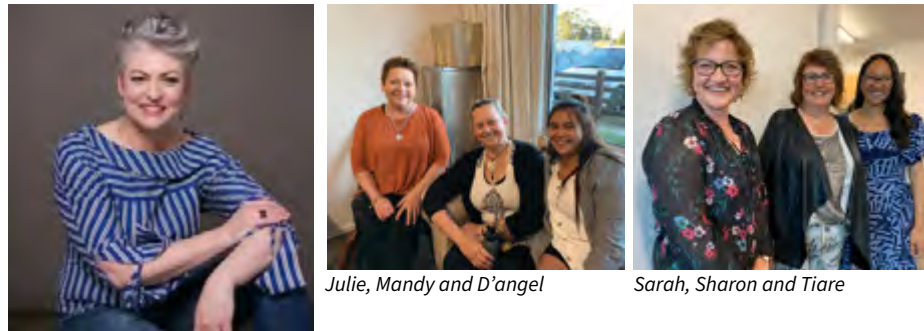
Thea's New and Preloved Boutique in Oxford invited guests to an evening with personal stylist, Hayley Horrell. Over drinks and nibbles, guests learnt about latest trends, personal styling and fashion tips.



Beck, Rebecca and Beth Fernanda, Janine and Katherine Liz, Jacqui and Leanne



Pretty, Robyn, Bella and Jacqui Merlyn, Kay, Jenny, Jenny and Kathy



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Claire and Stuart Morris

It's not too late!

So by now everyone's well aware that the market is pretty strong and it's a good time to consider selling but with Christmas now looming, when is a good time to get on the market?

If you are hoping to get a result (Sold) before Christmas then you really need to be getting the process underway pretty soon. We like to run our campaigns for 3 - 4 weeks, culminating in calling for offers (for priced or deadline sale methods, or for auctions).

In the last few years the market has run all the way up to Christmas, and we expect this year to be no different, perhaps it will be even more intense. So we'll have no issue in getting your properties sold in the week of Christmas if need be!

You still have time! The buyers are still there and there are some very good reasons for that:

- Interest rates continue to underpin purchasers buying power and of course, interest rates are at record low levels.

- Importantly, the general consensus among economists is that they will remain at these low levels for the foreseeable future. These rates are a driver of home affordability and in many areas, while prices have risen in the last 12 months, corresponding interest rates have reduced.

- Banks and lenders remain very supportive of lending for residential property. Buyers having the maximum financial capacity to purchase a property is one of the key leading indicators when it comes to buyer confidence. Loan Market, our loan brokerage partner, has reported over \$1.2 billion in pre-approved loans across New Zealand. These are buyers that are ready to proceed with offers where no finance clause is required.

So, if you want to sell soon, our advice is simple, get the jump on everyone else who is waiting to come back from holidays before making decisions. Get your preferred real estate salesperson in as soon as possible and get your plan sorted. Hit the market hard and early!

Give us a call to chat this through and get your plan in place.



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Time to Plan for Christmas!

If you own a rental property then now is the time to set a plan in place to ensure you can have a peaceful uninterrupted break. But there are a couple of extra things to put on your "get ready list" this year.

The first is the fast approaching deadline for all new tenancy agreements having to have a Healthy Homes Statement from 1st December 2020. If you have a tenant moving in after this - you need to be getting this sorted right now!

The second thing to consider is rent payments - contact your tenants in writing to advise them of their rent payment dates over the holiday period. Ask them to ensure they have sufficient funds in the bank so that their automatic payment will still process on the next banking day. Also, remember to check the payments are in your bank - don't wait until after Christmas when arrears could be piling up!

And thirdly, maintenance - are you available and easy to get hold of if something needs urgent attention over the holidays? Will you have good cell phone coverage where you are staying? Do you know which plumbers and electricians are working through and are available on public holidays?

You can almost guarantee that things will go wrong at the most inopportune times, so be prepared and know what tradespeople are on call over the holiday period.

Finally, don't forget the upcoming legislation due to take effect on 11th February 2021. Are you ready? There are some components to the new legislation that you should be aware of because as I always say, knowledge and education is the key to owning a successful investment property.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding any of the above, please don't hesitate to give me a call.



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Teaching Young Dancers With Dance Socks



When Rangiora dance teacher Jenna McKenzie was holding a teacher training session last year the conversation turned to how to help young students learn key dance techniques.

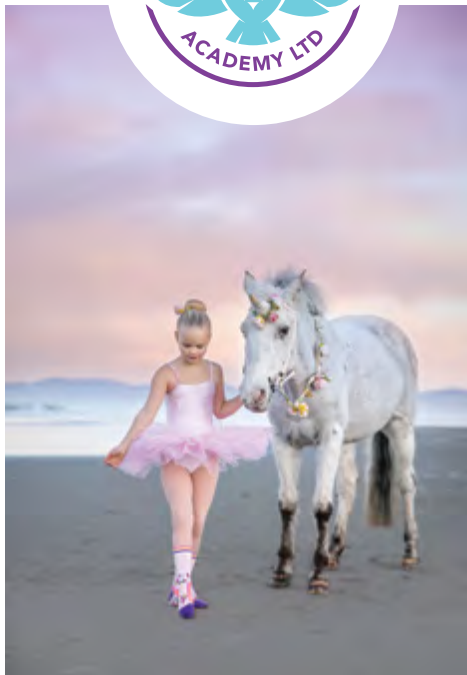
Perhaps if students imagined a family of mice living under the arch of their foot that they didn't want to squish? Imagining that would help them lift their arches and avoid rolling ankles.

Inspired Jenna decided to go away and mock up a helpful sock that incorporated some of those ideas. There were no mice on that first sock – but there were colourful laces and shapes and felt-tip lines. It might have looked homemade but when Jenna whipped it out in a first-grade ballet class it was clear that it worked.

Fast forward a year and Jenna's Dance Socks are now professionally manufactured with arch supports and padded heels and toes. And they look beautiful with colorful illustrations, patterns and laces. All these features are designed to help with developing dance techniques and correct placement. They help banish flat feet and scrunched up toes as well as ensure correct placement for knee in plié. These innovative Dance Socks incorporate years of dance teaching expertise to help young dancers – they're fun and funky and they really work.

It's no wonder that Jenna is now seeing dance schools all over the world, from Canada to Chile, ordering her Dance Socks. And for every order Jenna and her Dance Sock team also donate to a New Zealand Child in need of school or sports socks.

You can buy Dance Socks online at www.dancesock.co.nz



WHEN THE WORLD Stayed Home

North Canterbury artist Corina Hazlett recently launched a unique children's book inspired by the events of this year. "When The World Stayed Home" is a record of lockdown illustrated by children. It has been such a success it has sold copies overseas and is already into its second print run.

When the lockdown took place in New Zealand earlier this year it got Hazlett thinking about different ways to be creative. Her classes had closed due to the restrictions and so she set about writing a book that would capture events as they unfolded – with illustrations by children. She put a call out on her social media to children in New Zealand to send her photographs of their artworks which she has woven into a story with chapters covering Anzac Day, Easter, Mothers' Day and even birthdays in our "bubble worlds."

A donation of \$5 from each book sale is going towards children's mental health charity The Key to Life Charitable Trust. A spokesperson from the trust said, "Giving our kids the permission to publicly express their thoughts, even their fears, is paramount in creating confident young people. A young person's interpretation of the world also gives us as adults, a rare perspective within the minds of our young people."

"When The World Stayed Home" (RRP \$30) is available from The Colombo Bookstore, Shopology, Riverside Markets, Gather & You in Rangiora. Or copies can be purchased by emailing Corina Hazlett jandchazlett@gmail.com.



Front cover - artwork by Lucy Edwards, 10 years old, Ashburton

Several libraries, including Selwyn and Hurunui District Libraries, have purchased copies to be included in perpetuity for their local history reference collections. And Allenton School Library purchased a copy to honour the work of 10-year old Lucy Edwards who won a contest to design the front cover.



Tyle Hira with his original artwork that is included in the book "We Will Fly Again"

Corina at Riverside Market "Shopology" - one of the stockists

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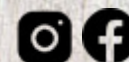
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A HISTORICAL Homestead

Words; Pattie Pegler Images; Essence Magazine



Heading down the long driveway to Eyrewell Homestead is at first unremarkable, past dairy paddocks and alongside a water race. But then the space opens out. The grey and white, two-storey homestead sits at the end of a winding driveway bordered by agapanthus and colourful tulips all bathed in dappled sunlight from mature trees. It's a charming scene.

Today the property is home to Amy and Arjen Schouten who juggle the long working days of dairy farming with two young children and the pressures of modern life. The house looms large in their lives and their own history. It was owned by Arjen's parents and he grew up here. Amy, originally from Cust, came to work on the farm helping with calf-rearing when Arjen's parents were still running it. She met Arjen and

the rest is history. They married in 2010 in the gardens and moved into the house early in the following year.

The homestead, built around 1900, is actually the third residence to be built on the site. The land was originally developed by settler Marmaduke Dixon, who came from England in the mid-1800s. The discovery of groundwater on the site and the digging of a well, gave the area its name – Eyrewell. So Amy and Arjen are custodians of this little slice of North Canterbury history and it's a responsibility.

"It's classified as a heritage house in the district so any work has to be done in keeping with the house," explains Amy. "And I'm OK with that. Actually, I really like that."



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The couple are slowly working their way around the 7-bedroom house updating and improving rooms but always keeping the history in mind.

"Inside an open kitchen, dining and lounge area is kept warm in the winter months with a huge logburner and it's the heart of the home" says Amy. It's here that she cooks dinner, the kids do their homework, Arjen pops in from the farm for lunch.

But at the far end of this open area a door leads into the quieter, formal lounge. Here there are original wood panelled walls and a majestic fireplace bordered by a pair of Chesterfield style leather couches. French doors give a view over the garden and paddocks beyond. It's easy to imagine old style gentlemen retiring here after dinner for a brandy overlooked by stags' heads on walls.

At the far end of the room a small, sunny nook has been revamped with floral wallpapers and a bottle green leather suite. It's a spot where Amy likes to grab a moment of peace and relaxation enjoying the morning sun and the gardens beyond.

There are period features everywhere from the intricate wooden cornices to the ceiling roses and stained glass window panes. And Amy always keeps an eye out for furniture and pieces that will fit with the house.

Upstairs the family bedrooms have also been revamped. Stella's room in a glorious, girly pink; Jacob's utterly boyish with blues and whites and geometric patterns and the master bedroom with a sumptuous wallpaper rich with golden tones.

"I do enjoy it but I don't have the eye for it I need advice," says Amy. "It can be hard because you want to do

something but you're just not sure about it". To ensure she gets it right she has been calling on a local interior designer for guidance.

And there are plenty of plans. There are rooms that are closed off or used for storage that Amy would like to bring back into play. Behind the kitchen a second staircase and corridor and a small room with a serving hatch would have been used by servants in the early days of the house. Now Amy would like to think about bringing those areas into use possibly by expanding the family kitchen.

Sometimes modern living in a heritage home requires a certain balance, like in the family bathroom where a modern shower and built in bath are offset by painted wood panelling. "The priority was practicality," says Amy. "The bathroom is something we use a lot and freestanding baths look amazing, but they're not that practical and water splashes under them."

And sometimes money and time has to be spent on the less exciting stuff that makes the home more comfortable - like insulation. "The house was freezing before," says Arjen. They've also retrofitted double glazing to some of the sash windows and they've had to replace the roof and carry out a full exterior paint job. Maintenance is an important part of looking after this historical home for the next generation.

"It's a big job cleaning, tidying, keeping on top of it all as you go along," says Amy. "But we do love it."



Summer Roast Vegetable Tart

Summer is certainly on its way and that means the entertaining season is beginning. Whether you're planning a picnic or a Sunday lunch Alfresco, this month's recipe is a tasty Summer Roast Vegetable Tart.

This is one of our many New World recipes that has been released for the summer, light and packed with roast veggies, pesto and lemon. The good thing it's quick and easy to make as well. A couple of pointers, keep an eye on the pastry as it is easy to overcook it, especially after you remove the baking beans. You can use any veggies from the garden, just don't cut the chunks too small as they shrink a little when cooking. Serve with crusty bread and a glass of your favourite summer Rose.



If you are looking for a sharp knife we have our Smeg Promotion running till January 24th (while stocks last), check out the fantastic range of knives available by The Love Food Stand.

Ingredients (Serves 6-8)

- 1-2 sheets shortcrust pastry, defrosted
- 2 x 1/4 cups freshly grated parmesan
- 1/2 large Kumara
- 1/2 eggplant
- 1 courgette
- 1 capsicum
- Olive Oil
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 cup (230g) crème fraiche
- 1/4 cup pesto, plus extra for garnish
- Juice of half a lemon
- Handful of fresh rocket
- 1 T toasted Almonds or pinenuts, to garnish

Method

- Preheat oven to 200oc. Grease a round tart tin and line the tin with pastry. Trim the edges, then prick the base with a fork and place in the freezer to chill for 15 minutes.
- Once chilled, lay a piece of baking paper into the shell and fill with baking beans or rice. Blind bake for 15 minutes, then remove the beans and paper. Sprinkle 1/4 c grated parmesan evenly across the base, then return to the oven for a final 15 minutes until golden. Set aside.
- To prepare the vegetables, cut the kumara into 2-3cm chunks. Cut the remaining vegetables into slightly larger chunks (as the kumara will need to cook longer) and scatter over baking tray.
- Drizzle with olive oil, then sprinkle over the dried oregano and season with salt and pepper. Toss to coat, then roast for 20-30 minutes or until tender. Leave to cool until just warm.
- To make the filling whisk together the crème fraiche, pesto, remaining parmesan and seasoning to taste. Spread into the base of the cooled tart shell, then top with warm roasted vegetables.
- Squeeze the fresh lemon juice over the tart and garnish with fresh rocket and toasted nuts. Serve warm at room temperature and enjoy.



Barbara Palmer has worked at New World Rangiora for 17 years, the last six as their New World Brand Ambassador during which time she has created many striking recipes.



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WEDDING & PORTRAIT
PHOTOGRAPHY

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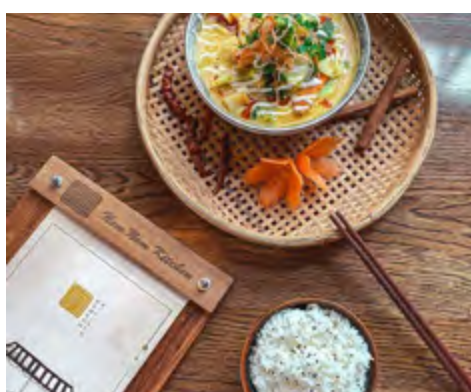
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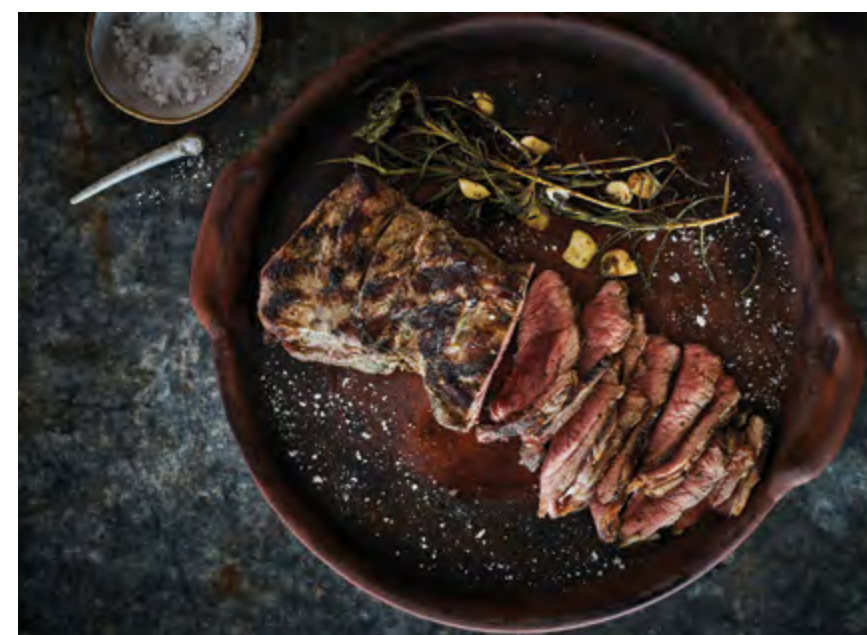
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Shared Kitchen

I'm a big fan of Julie Biuso's and at this time of year, my favourite summer recipes from her cook book *Never-ending Summer*, get a thrashing. I've lost count of how many *Essence* end-of-year parties have had food inspired by Julie. So I'm pretty excited about her latest book - *Shared Kitchen*, in which she teams up with daughter Ilaria to create "real food from scratch".

Enjoy these recipes and tips on how to share the cooking load on Christmas day.



Barbecued Lamb with Aromatics

Serves 4 or more

This prime lamb dish is quick to cook and even more quickly gobbled up. Serve with salad, in buns or sliders, or with vegetables such as eggplant (aubergine) and peppers (bell peppers / capsicums). I like it on grilled sourdough spread with a cannellini bean dip and salad leaves and topped with fried or barbecued eggplant slices and grilled or slow-roasted tomatoes. Scrumptious.

- 600 g (1 lb, 3 oz) thinnish piece boneless leg of lamb
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp creamy Dijonnaise mustard
- 3 cloves garlic, peeled and thickly sliced
- Few sprigs rosemary and oregano
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 tsp flaky sea salt, plus extra for sprinkling over cooked lamb

Pat meat with paper towels to absorb moisture. Trim if necessary. Put oil, mustard, garlic, herbs and seasonings in a dish and stir together. Add lamb and coat it all over with the marinade. Cover lamb with a food umbrella or similar and leave at room temperature for about 40 minutes.

Preheat a covered barbecue or, if your barbecue doesn't have a hood, improvise using an upturned heavy-duty roasting tin. Toss lamb one more time in marinade, picking off and reserving garlic and herbs. Place lamb fat side down on

barbecue and strew the top with the garlic and herbs. Lower barbecue hood and turn gas to low. Cook for 7 minutes.

Turn lamb over and cook for a further 5 minutes. If the lamb weighs more than 600 g (1 lb, 3 oz) you may not necessarily have to cook it any longer – it is the thickness of the meat, not the length of it, that affects the cooking time (see Recipe Notes).

Remove lamb to a board and sprinkle all over with salt. Rest lamb for 5–7 minutes, then slice thinly with a carving knife.

Recipe Notes

When the lamb feels flabby to the touch, it is rare. When it feels springy it is medium-rare. If it feels firm, it is medium and if it feels hard it is well done.

I like this lamb cooked to medium-rare. It will continue to cook a little more as it rests and will remain juicy. If the piece of lamb you have is an uneven thickness, with a thicker chumpy bit, cut the chumpy thicker bit off and cook it a little longer than the rest of the meat. In my book the worst thing you can do to a beautiful piece of meat like this is to overcook it. Keep it pink and juicy. Maximum 12 minutes (six minutes each side)! Be brave! Yes, lots of exclamation marks, but I need your full attention. And I'm not sure chumpy is a word, but I reckon you can work out what I mean.



SHARED KITCHEN
Real Food From Scratch

Julie Biuso & Ilaria Biuso

Photography by Manja Wachsmuth
RRP: \$39.99, Publisher: Bateman Books



Julie Biuso & Ilaria Biuso

Meringue Raspberry Cream Bombe

Serves 8

A great idea for using up leftover pavlova or meringues, although it is so delicious that it is definitely worth making from scratch.

- 3 punnets (375 g / about 14 oz) fresh or frozen raspberries
- 1 Tbsp icing (confectioner's) sugar
- 750 ml (3 cups) cream
- 8 mini pavlovas (or use 12 homemade meringues)
- ½ cup limoncello
- Fresh berries for serving

Lightly crush two-thirds of the raspberries on a board with a fork. Set aside. Push the remainder through a sieve into a separate bowl to produce juice. Blend in icing sugar.

Whip cream in a large bowl until thick and slightly stiff – don't overbeat it or it will turn buttery.

Add pavlovas or meringues, gently breaking each into 2–3 pieces. Fold through with a large spoon. Mix in crushed raspberries, leaving them streaky, then pour in limoncello and lightly fold everything together.

Spoon one-third of the mixture into an ice cream container and drizzle with one-third of the raspberry syrup. Pile in another third of the cream and meringue, smooth the top lightly and drizzle with the second third of the syrup. Pile on remaining cream and meringue. Drizzle over remaining raspberry syrup, put lid on container and freeze. Remove bombe from freezer and transfer to fridge 30 minutes before serving to allow it to soften just a tad.

Serve with fresh berries.

Recipe Notes

Raspberries can be fresh or frozen. Frozen raspberries will need about 30 minutes at room temperature before they can be crushed.

Limoncello, sometimes spelled lemoncello, is a lemon liqueur of Italian origin, which must be served icy-cold to mute its sweetness. It's not the sort of drink to linger over, but best 'down the hatch' in one chilly hit. It's a treat poured over perfectly ripe sliced strawberries, making the berries taste sweeter, and good with lightly whipped cream or crème fraîche sandwiched with a sponge cake. Either splash the cut sponge with limoncello or sandwich it with the sozzled strawberries and cream, or have it on the sponge, in the cream and with the strawberries! Keep it in the fridge and pop it in the freezer 30 minutes before serving.



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The Central Otago influence of cedar and schist allows this magnificent 4ha property to blend an easy grandeur with warmth, function and infinite possibility.

Just under 10 minutes north of Rangiora this wonderful property offers uninterrupted views of Mt Grey, and the surrounding hills. The main home was built to the highest standard for the owners who intended to live there. However, extensive travel and changing priorities, means this 479sqm main residence remains brand new, un-lived in, and searching for its new owner. Everything behind the automatic gates has been finished to the highest specifications. From the German plumbing to the sound-proof rooms, and the three-phase power, the results in their entirety are...breathtaking. The home, which is encased in cedar with copper corners and rose-head copper nails, includes four expansive bedrooms and four bathrooms. Two generous living areas – both with schist-surrounded fireplaces – and soaring angled ceilings frame the beautifully-crafted open-plan kitchen (by Finesse), which includes a Butler's pantry, and a wine fridge. The extensive hardwood outdoor deck, includes an outdoor Jetmaster fireplace as well as a state-of-the-art outdoor sound system.

There is also a self-contained one-bedroom unit finished to the same standards as the residence, with a living area, bedroom, and a gorgeous fully tiled bathroom, which would be perfect for family/B&B/friends. There is a second semi self-contained unit at the end of one of the two voluminous garages. Both garages are fully lined, carpeted, immaculate, and able to accommodate five and six cars respectively.

But, wait...there is more. There is a beautifully crafted two-bay shed, a loading ramp and a set of yards (with some cover), a final detached sleep out, and a cleverly built container storage shed, with power. There is also a fancy chicken coop, and a raised vegetable garden.

Native easy-care plantings frame, surround, and compliment the home with the property including some stone fruit trees, raspberries, gooseberries, Feijoa, and lemon trees.

This is a rare and established offering in a beautiful and private part of the world for the truly discerning buyer.



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HOE HOE HOE!

Well I know it should be Ho Ho Ho, but I could not resist.

Rachel Vogan, The Happy Gardener has a few ideas on surviving the silly season up the garden path.

With the silly season well and truly upon us, finding time to catch up on things up the garden path can be a challenge. However this is not a bad thing, rather than getting busy doing stuff and charging around like a chook with a missing head, take time to reflect on all the good things about your garden, take time to be in your garden as a place and a space of solace, acknowledge the year has been crazy, and through it, both you and your garden have survived.

Presents with purpose, when a gift card does not quite cut it, think outside the box.

- Salvia Bonfire makes a superb gift, for a couple of dollars, one plant, wrapped in Christmas wrapping makes a wonderful gift for a fellow green fingered loved one.
- Christmas Lilies and Pine trees are the aromas (smells of Christmas). Consider using a real living tree this year, rather than a fake or plastic one. I have a 'Pine Nut' in a large pot that I bring inside each year, granted there are probably enough nuts in my house already, but one more does not hurt. Potted plants and Christmas lilies make tree-mendous gifts.
- Offer to Garden sit. The ultimate gift for a fellow garden lover is offering to look after their prize plants while they are away. Both indoors and out. Chances are they will return the favour.
- Make a wreath. Such a fun and fabulous thing to do, I made my first ever one last year, in the shape of a horse, Pops (the horse's name) looked amazing. Angela Wilkens, a floral artist from Canterbury, was running wreath making classes, it was such fun

and a great thing to do with friends.

5. A floral face mask, now you may mock, and think I have been delving into too much festive spirit, but it could be a handy gift for any good gardeners handbag or tool shed (everyone wants to be protected from nasty airborne diseases)

Enjoy the garden over the silly season, if your own one is not looking that great, hang out in someone else's.

Happy Gardening people



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The Leithfield Boy Making Music

Teenager James Constable writes his own lyrics, releases music online and performs live. We caught up with him to find out what inspires this young musician.

As a toddler with parents who met in the Air Force Band, James was surrounded by music and liked playing around with music software on the computer. Even at a young age he says he became quite competent at writing "little ditties" on the computer but it was about five years ago that he really embraced music. A classmate asked him to write a song for a teacher that was leaving. He did. And he couldn't stop.

"I got the song writing bug," explains James. "And I recorded a few songs on my mum's iPad, burned them to CD and sold about 20 of them. Everything I have done since has been built off that."

He describes his music as a cross between 60's pop and 80's and 90's alt-rock and says influences include bands like the Smiths, R.E.M. and The Sundays along with kiwi bands like the Mutton Birds. And, of course, The Beatles figure "they're my musical DNA," says James. "And they were definitely a big factor in me beginning to write songs as well."

And James is a good songwriter. Good enough to scoop some prizes including in 2018 the Hookline and Singalong competition. Part of his prize was to go and record his winning song, The Smell of Sunscreen, at Roundhead Studios in Auckland with "all the bells and whistles"

of a professional recording studio it was an amazing experience he says. There was also a performance at the New Zealand Ukulele Festival where he performed in front of 2000 – the largest audience he has ever played for. Not bad for a self-confessed "introvert".

James has spoken on social media about living with Aspergers and it has some plus sides for creativity he believes. "It has been beneficial to my musicianship in a number of ways. The two main ones are drive and learning new skills. For me - it's different for everyone - my Aspergers means that I only really am majorly interested in one thing at a time... and I only focus on that one thing until I've found all the information I can about it. Therefore, I am able to push really hard to make my interest a career if I want to."

But, as for many striving to make a career in creative arts, one of the biggest challenges is getting his material out there James says. He appears on Spotify, Facebook and YouTube under James Constable Music but playing live also helps him promote his work and he's hoping to start doing a few more gigs around the South Island. "I've always viewed myself as a recording artist that does live gigs as promotion, rather than the other way around" he says.



Matt Doocey

MP for Waimakariri

Thank you, Waimakariri, for your continued support in re-electing me as your local Member of Parliament.

Our regions need strong representation to ensure we have access to the resources we need, including healthcare, reliable internet connectivity and good roading and transport solutions. As a newly-elected MP in 2014, I set myself a number of goals. I was determined to be a voice for Canterbury and have strived to be accessible through my offices, community constituent clinics, night meetings and seniors' coffee mornings. I've always believed it's only through being aware of the issues on the ground that MPs can be effective voices for their communities.

Working together, we've locked in some significant gains for our community over the past term. These include securing after-hours health care; saving our Waikuku bus service; bringing forward the third-laning over the Waimakariri Bridge to make

morning commutes easier; fighting for a signalised crossing for Woodend; and standing up for Belfast residents against a proposal to store 40,000 bales of waste near homes.

I will continue working hard to build on these gains. Like others, I'm concerned about the loss of leadership within the Canterbury District Health Board and I want to ensure this doesn't impact on timeframes for our after-hours healthcare facility. I'm meeting with the interim CEO to ensure building of our new facility is prioritised. I'm also meeting with Waka Kotahi NZTA over a range of transport concerns, including the continuation of our fight for a Woodend Bypass and to hold NZTA to its commitment to provide Woodend families with a signalised crossing before the new school year and meet timeframes in delivering solutions to the problem of poor visibility at the Tram Road off-ramp.

In Parliament, after campaigning for a cross-party approach to mental health as National's Mental Health Spokesperson, I'm looking forward to launching the Zero Suicide Aotearoa cross-party report and debating it in Parliament. It's seldom a report is debated in Parliament and this signifies how strongly I believe that a cross-party approach is the only way to break down the barriers to progress in responding to the growing demand for mental-health services.



Funded by the Parliamentary Service. Authorised by Matt Doocey, Parliament Buildings, Wellington.

Spring is in the Air Update from Hank

Spring is very definitely in the air! Back again are the long drawn out evenings, changeable weather, 27 degrees one day and then 12 degrees the next... welcome to Canterbury! But the other thing of course, is the countdown to Christmas. With Show Week upon us it's a clear sign to us Cantabrians that Christmas isn't far way. With that comes the inevitable "I need to do this by Christmas", as if the world stops at Christmas Day.

As it draws nearer pressures mount, tensions run high and tempers flare. We here at PPNZL have noticed that many of our clients are terribly busy. That's a good thing given where we were in March with so much doubt and uncertainty. But that means there'll be lots of pressure from clients to get jobs done by Christmas. As well as the things we want done ourselves, Christmas shopping, Christmas events, getting our house in order for Christmas day... and so the list goes on.

"Just take a moment to reflect here. Christmas isn't supposed to be a deadline. The sun will still come up on Boxing Day. There are still 31 days in January."

Does it really matter that not everything gets done by the 25th of December? Christmas Day is just another day, albeit an incredibly special day, one where we enjoy our

family and close friends. We enjoy good food, champagne, and the joy of giving. The delight of seeing our children, grandchildren opening their presents with such glee.

Over the next few weeks as we close on Christmas day, I urge you all show some tolerance and understanding for those around us and recognise those that are under pressure. Learn to "no, I can't do that by Christmas" rather than putting yourselves under too much strain and then in the end not being able to deliver anyway. Take a little time to smell the roses on the way.

However, give some thought that while life becomes very frantic and the pace quickens up, distractions occur, and things inevitably can go very wrong. Our attention to detail is just not there and we make mistakes. Sometimes those mistakes can be significant. And have some serious consequences. Driving with distractions, ignoring workplace safety by taking shortcuts, high blood pressure because of stress, emotional outbursts due to frustration, all are not good. None of us need a tragedy this time of year.

Probably the furthest from your mind right now and over the next few weeks will be your insurances. I certainly get that, it's just not a priority. That is until something goes wrong. Remember Murphy's law, it'll go wrong when you least expect it and at the worst time.



However remember that's why you have insurances in place. To help when things go wrong.

We're here to help if you need some assurance that your insurances are up to date and give you the cover you need. We'll be here right up to and through Christmas and available to help wherever we can.

Remember, and I've said it many times, hope for the best but plan for the worst. If you need a hand with that planning then give us a call, after all it's what we do.



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