

## Spicy Perthshire Vegetable Hotpot



There is truly nothing tastier than Scottish vegetables in season. Full of flavour and packed with goodness most are versatile enough to be boiled, steamed, stir fried or roasted. Scotland's seasonality makes for a varied array of vegetables, bringing a different taste to the table almost monthly. We have become so conditioned to expecting vegetables all year round and the truth is, we have an abundance of wonderful varieties right here on our doorstep. Don't be afraid to try new ideas and different ways of cooking old favourites. You'll be surprised at the number of glorious dishes and garnishes you can create with a little imagination.

The experts say that the best way to get your five a day is to use a variety of different coloured fruit and veg. Scotland in October can certainly offer that. Try dark green leafy Broccoli heads packed full of vitamin C, orange carrots with beta-carotene essential for good eyesight, golden butternut squash roasted with mixed seeds, pale green brussels sprouts and red, white or Savoy cabbage, delicious dark green watercress, white cauliflower in soup, runner and French beans to add vitamins A and C to meat and fish dishes and the eternal favourites white onions and mushrooms – great with everything!

Cooked well, vegetables should be al dente, this ensures the vitamins and minerals remain sealed in. Roasting is a wonderful way to enjoy veg and a light drizzle of oil and some mixed herbs and seeds gives a delicious accompaniment to meat and fish, or, makes an entire meal when stirred into pasta, rice or risotto.

Honey is delicious with many different vegetables but is particularly good with carrots and parsnips as it brings out the sweetness of the veg. Local honey eaten all year round can help combat summer hay fever – take a spoonful each day either over your veggies, spread on toast or stirred into hot drinks. Of course, its medicinal uses go further with that old Scottish cold remedy, the hot toddy. Add local honey to hot water and whiskey - if it doesn't cure you it'll certainly cheer you up! Perthshire's local honey comes in two varieties – blossom and heather. The blossom is runny to begin with but will set with time. This is made from the spring and summer pollen and in this area, the fruit farms are a particularly good source of pollen for the bees. In July, the hives are moved to the hills and the bees collect the heather pollen which gives us the rich, strong tasting heather honey.

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## Ingredients:

### ***For the Base:***

2 local onions  
3 Scottish Garlic cloves  
100mls lemon juice  
100mls rapeseed oil  
1 dessert spoon honey  
1 teaspoon each of cumin, paprika, turmeric and chilli powder  
Handful of fresh coriander, chopped roughly

### ***For the Hotpot:***

1 tablespoon rapeseed oil  
3 carrots cut into chunks  
3 large parsnips cut into chunks  
3 onions cut into chunks  
4 duke of York potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks  
Half a cauliflower, cut into chunks  
400mls water

### ***To Garnish:***

2 mint leaves, finely chopped  
Spoonful of natural yoghurt

## Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 220C / gas 7.
2. Whizz all of the ingredients for the base into a blender.
3. Tip the vegetables and the oil into a casserole dish and cook on the hob until beginning to brown.
4. Add the base and the water, cover and roast for 45mins. Reduce heat to 180C / Gas 4 and cook for a further 45 mins. .
5. Stir the chopped mint into the yoghurt.
6. Spoon into bowls and serve with the minty yoghurt.