

Easy-to-prepare meals and accompanying drinks

Spicy Butterbean & Butternut Squash Stew

BY RACHEL WALKER



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IT'S THE SEASON of potatoes and parsnips, carrots and celeriac. But even those who love a hearty British dinner can become disheartened at the thought of root-vegetable soups and stews for months ahead.

Whether it's pairing coriander with carrot, cumin with parsnip or chilli with sweet potato, a dash of spice can go a long way to livening up a dish. This stew recipe goes a step further, by using coconut milk instead of traditional stock. The result is a light and aromatic dish, which is best cooked on a dreich day when the flavours will transport diners to warmer climes.

Serves 4

- 2tbsps oil (preferably groundnut or coconut)
- 1 small butternut squash, peeled and cut into bite-sized chunks
- 1 red onion, finely diced
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 bird's eye chilli, finely sliced
- 1tsp garam masala (optional)
- 2tsps turmeric powder
- 1 knob of ginger, peeled and grated
- 2 tomatoes, rough dice
- 400ml coconut milk
- 400ml vegetable stock
- 400g tin of butterbeans
- 350g brown rice
- 1 bunch of fresh coriander, picked
- 1 lime, quartered
- 1 chilli, cut into slivers (optional)



1. Put a slug of oil into a casserole dish and heat on a medium-high hob setting. Add the butternut squash and then the onion. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes, until the onion is turning translucent and the chunks of butternut squash start to take on some colour.
2. Add the garlic and chilli to the pan, and cook for one more minute. Then add the garam masala, turmeric, chilli, ginger and tomatoes. Pour the coconut milk over everything and then measure out 400ml of vegetable stock in the empty can. Tip it into the pan and

3. Put on the lid and leave the stew to cook at a gentle simmer for 15 minutes. Meanwhile, cook the rice according to pack instructions.
4. Divide the rice between four bowls. Use a ladle to spoon the stew on top. Garnish with a few fresh coriander leaves and serve with a wedge of lime and optional chilli for those who love spice.

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Hop To It!

Indian Pale Ale (or IPA) is known for its big, hoppy notes—a flavour borne out of necessity rather than taste. In the mid-19th century, British brewers began adding extra hops to the ales that were being shipped to the sub-continent via the Cape of Good Hope, as a preservation method.

The brassy flavour stuck, and IPAs are now seeing a resurgence. It's an ale that showcases the taste of hops, making it the antithesis to bland and bloating mass-produced pints. What's more, IPA pairs well with food. The dry, hoppy notes sit happily alongside spicy food, and the bitter twang has a cooling effect, making it the perfect tittle for Thai or Indian dishes.

IPAs are the darling of the craft-beer movement—responsible for the explosion of small, independent breweries cropping up round Britain (200 opening in the UK each year). It's



created a competitive marketplace, with small-scale brewers pushing up each other's standards.

British IPAs are more subtle than their US counterparts. But those with a robust palette (think black coffee or big red wines) may enjoy IPAs from the west coast of America, where the hops have bold, citric notes.

Beware of the high alcohol levels of hoppy ales. While a "session ale" should fall under the 5% mark, recent trends have seen some creep up to 8%. Fortunately, this is countered by another trend of sharing-size bottles, which are perfect for the dinner table. So buy big—and sip slowly!

TOPS FOR HOPS

- **Meantime IPA (7.4%),** £5.35/750ml, Waitrose
- **Brew Dog Punk Indian Pale Ale (5.6%),** £2.59/660ml, Tesco
- **Thornbridge Jaipur Indian Pale Ale (5.9%),** £2.55/500ml, Ocado
- **Sierra Nevada Torped (7.2%),** £28/12 x 350ml, shop.fullers.co.uk



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pudding
of the
Month



Shortbread

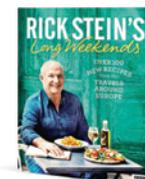
Simple yet delicious, this is best served plain with a cup of herbal tea or coffee at the end of a meal.

Serves 4

- 250g unsalted butter (room temperature)
- 100g caster sugar
- 350g plain flour

1. Preheat the oven to 170C and line two trays with baking parchment.
2. Cream the butter and sugar until it's starting to turn pale and fluffy.
3. Sift the flour into the mixture and use a spatula to incorporate it roughly.
4. Tip out the mixture onto a floured surface and gently knead it into a dough.
5. Roll out the dough and then cut into shapes.
6. Move the shapes onto a baking parchment, prick with a fork and chill in the fridge for 20 minutes.
7. Bake for 25 minutes, until they are just starting to turn golden at the edges.
8. Gently lift the biscuits to a cooling rack and dust with sugar. ■

BOOK



Rick Stein's Long Weekends, BBC Books, £12.50. Excellent recipes inspired by gourmet breaks around Europe.

BARGAIN



Stove kettle, Aldi, £17.99. A new item from Aldi's premium kitchen range—at an absolute snip.

BLOW OUT



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