

Microwave Greens

As a child – like most children – I hated green vegetables in any shape, size and form. Especially if they were overcooked. And yet, isn't it funny how leafy greens have now suddenly become so trendy, even among children if they are taught to appreciate the crunch!

Serves 4–6

280 g tender-stem broccoli
100 g mini-asparagus
150 g fine green beans, tops
trimmed
6 baby marrows, halved
lengthways
micro-greens or herbs,
to garnish
melted butter, to drizzle over
freshly squeezed lemon juice

- 1 Place all the vegetables into a shallow microwavable dish.
- 2 Add only a little bit of water to cover the vegetables.
- 3 Cover the dish with cling film. Use a sharp knife to pierce four small holes in the cling film.
- 4 Microwave on high for 3 to 4 minutes. The vegetables should still be bright green and slightly crunchy.
- 5 Garnish with fresh micro-greens or herbs, drizzle with the melted butter and add a dash of lemon juice as the final touch.





Chicken

When I was younger, I loathed Zulu chicken, or hard-body chicken, as it is fondly called by most folks. The Xhosa people call it umleqwa.

I hated the smell of it. So once again my sister-in-law Thandeka introduced me to a recipe that has irrevocably changed my mind. Not only does it taste delicious, but the flavour also intensifies and the next day the leftover chicken is even tastier served cold.

It is a very simple recipe with only a few easy steps to follow, and with very few ingredients.

Zulu Chicken

Umleqwa or hand-raised Zulu chicken is sold at most supermarkets or local meat markets. Replace it with an ordinary whole chicken if you have difficulty sourcing a hard body.

Serves 6

1 large whole chicken
500 ml cold water
10 ml sea salt
2 cubes of store-bought
chicken stock
1 medium onion, roughly
chopped
4 medium spring onions,
finely chopped

- 1 If using proper hard-body chicken, clean the bird carefully and properly before cooking.
- 2 Pour the cold water into a large pot, add the salt and stock, and stir until dissolved.
- 3 Put the whole chicken in the seasoned water while it is still heating up, put the lid on the pot, and cook over low heat for $\pm 1\frac{1}{2}$ hours or until tender.
- 4 Add all of the onions during the last 5 minutes of the cooking time so that the onion flavour is not overpowering.
- 5 Serve with *pap* or Steamed Spinach Bread (*ujeqe*) (see page 44).





Prawns

To be honest, I never thought that I could and would eat prawns. The first time I ever laid my eyes on these crustaceans, I only saw creepy crawlies that looked scary and inedible. But when I was served my first prawn cocktail, I changed my mind – it looked so elegant in the tall glass. It was garnished with thin slices of mango, which made it difficult for me to resist. And that is how I started liking and enjoying prawns. I went on to experiment with preparing them in all kinds of ways: grilled in garlic, prawn curry in yoghurt and cream, or prawn and chicken curry ... Here is my own take on a prawn cocktail, and even if I say so myself, this is a truly delectable dish.

Prawn Cocktail

Serves 4

15 g (15 ml) butter
400 g prawns, peeled and
pre-cooked
10 ml chilli flakes
salt and pepper, to taste
1 whole mango, peeled and
cubed (if it is not in season,
replace with melon or
papaya)
150 ml mayonnaise
10 ml Masala Mix, wet or dry
(see page 36)
2.5 ml turmeric
80 g chopped rocket,
chopped Italian parsley and
edible flowers, to garnish

- 1 Heat the butter in a skillet over moderate to high heat.
- 2 Dust the prawns with chilli flakes, salt and pepper.
- 3 Sauté the prawns on each side for about 2 minutes.
- 4 Transfer the cooked prawns into a bowl lined with paper towel.
- 5 Set aside to cool.
- 6 Mix the mayo and masala to make a currynaise sauce.
- 7 First put some mango cubes in the bottom of 4 clear, tall wine glasses.
- 8 Add a bit of currynaise on top of the mango.
- 9 Place the prawns on top of the sauce and garnish with rocket, Italian parsley and edible flowers.



Rainbow Trifle

Trifle is the epitome of Seven Colours, because of the vibrancy of the layers. There's no wrong or right way when it comes to trifle. Most people prefer to use a large glass bowl so that the layers are clearly visible. I like making individual trifles in glasses and adding fresh fruit instead of stewed or canned fruit.

Serves 6

80 g red jelly powder
80 g green jelly powder
480 ml hot water
480 ml cold water
1 quantity Home-Made
Custard (see page 160)
250 g strawberries, sliced if
necessary (reserve some for
garnishing)
100 g blackberries
100 g raspberries
250 ml fresh cream
10 ml castor sugar
a sprig of mint

- 1 Place the red jelly powder in a large clear bowl, and place the green jelly powder in another large bowl.
- 2 Add 240 ml hot water to each bowl, and stir through.
- 3 Add 240 ml cold water to each bowl, and stir through.
- 4 Refrigerate until the jelly is set.
- 5 Make the custard and leave it to cool.
- 6 Use 6 separate glasses, and start layering the trifle with spoonfuls of jelly as the bottom layer. Alternatively, take the bowl of red jelly as your trifle bowl, and spoon the green jelly into a layer on top of the red jelly.
- 7 Then add a layer of strawberries, followed by a layer of custard.
- 8 Then add a layer of blackberries, followed by a layer of custard.
- 9 Then add a layer of raspberries, followed by a layer of custard.
- 10 If there are jelly, berries and custard left, continue layering. Remember to reserve some of the strawberries for garnishing.
- 11 Whip the fresh cream while adding the castor sugar to it. Keep on whisking until it forms stiff peaks.
- 12 Finish the trifle with a top layer of whipped cream.
- 13 Garnish with mint leaves and the remaining strawberries.