

### The benefits of Kefir

Members get  
10% off in  
January

After the excesses of Christmas, you may be thinking it's time to give your body a reset. Kefir has been consumed for thousands of years for its beneficial properties.

Kefir is a cultured, fermented milk drink, similar to yogurt but thinner in consistency and has a tart, sour, slightly fizzy taste.



Traditional milk kefir uses kefir grains (small gelatinous beads that look like grains and contain a variety of bacteria and yeasts) and whole cow's milk. The grains are placed in a glass jar or bowl, soaked in milk, covered and left at room temperature. This enables the bacteria and yeast to ferment the lactose into lactic acid, activating the bacteria to proliferate and grow. After around 24 hours at room temperature, the grains are strained from the kefir, which is now ready to drink.

Kefir, is a good source of bioavailable protein, fat and carbohydrate. It also contains valuable vitamins A, D and K; B vitamins; and minerals including calcium.

Kefir contains millions of probiotics, which are bacteria with potential health benefits. Eating fermented foods like kefir can help increase the diversity of the beneficial bacteria in your gut microbiome.

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There is some evidence that kefir is beneficial for improving cholesterol, blood sugar control and reducing inflammation although more research is needed.

Kefir can be drunk as a daily shot or you can try mixing it with fruit, yogurt or in a smoothie. It can also be added to porridge or made into a salad dressing.

### True Food Event: Fire Cider

Join us on 20th January between 11 and 1pm, when budding herbalist and member Elisa will be on hand to show us how we can use everyday ingredients available in the shop to make a wonderfully powerful immune system booster, Fire Cider! Fire cider is a traditional folk elixir that has been lovingly brewed and used by generations of people across the world as a preventative medicine.

### This year make one small change

Often people start the New Year with good intentions to make big changes and resolutions, however, making one small change can be beneficial and has the potential to be more sustainable throughout the year. So this January we are encouraging our community to change 'one small thing' to make a difference to their health and our environment.

That small change could be:

- Swapping from free range eggs to organic
- Making one meal a week completely organic
- Cutting out ultra-processed bread
- Choosing to refill a household cleaning product
- Opting for loose fruit and vegetables that aren't wrapped in plastic
- Drinking organic wine.

True Food will also be looking to make small changes in 2024; as our suppliers expand their ranges and increase the number of organic options available, we will be looking to discontinue some of the few non-organic products we stock, replacing with organic where possible.

# Recipe: Chilli con chocolate

## Ingredients

This is a very popular dish, among vegetarians, vegans and meat-eaters, alike. Many non-vegetarians do not even notice the absence of meat because the dish is so tasty. The presence of chocolate adds a warm depth to the spices and flavours, and is reminiscent of the chocolate mole dishes of Mexico.

- 40 ml olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 small red pepper, chopped
- 2 carrots, sliced
- 2 celery sticks, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 1 tbs paprika
- 425 g tin chopped tomatoes
- 500g cooked red kidney beans (or two tins)
- salt and black pepper
- 50 ml of chilli and chocolate paste

(Serves four)

## Chilli and chocolate paste

- 2 tbs olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, peeled and chopped
- 1 medium onion chopped
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp chopped chillies
- ½ tsp ground star anise
- ¼ tsp Allspice
- 100 g currants
- 100 g sultanas
- 1 tsp sugar
- 3 tbs tomato Puree
- 100 g plain chocolate
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ tsp chopped thyme or oregano (dried is fine)
- -3 drops vanilla essence
- 1 cup of cold water

This month's recipe celebrates the use of chocolate in savoury cooking. After all the chocolate you may have consumed over Christmas and New Year... why stop now? Chocolate is so versatile. If you have never included chocolate in a savoury dish, this will be a great new experience! It does not make savoury dishes taste like desserts. Rather, it adds a warm depth of flavour like nothing else. This seasonal recipe includes celery and carrots. It incorporates a recipe for a chilli and chocolate paste that you can use for other dishes.

## Method

- Heat the oil then gently fry the onion, pepper, carrots and celery for five minutes. Add the garlic, paprika, tomatoes and spice paste, then turn the heat down. If you are using tinned kidney beans, add them at this stage with the water from the tins.
- Simmer for at least twenty minutes, but make sure it does not stick (add water if necessary). If you are using freshly cooked kidney beans, add them now.
- Add seasoning and heat through.
- Serve with long grain white rice.

## Method

1. Gently fry the onion and garlic until soft.
2. Add the spices and cook for two minutes.
3. Add everything else, with water to cover. Simmer for 20 minutes, adding water as necessary to prevent it from sticking or drying out, but don't add too much. It is going to be a paste, rather than a sauce.
4. When the time is up, let it cool for 20 minutes, then blend it in a liquidiser.
5. This recipe makes approximately 250 ml, enough for five meals, so split into small plastic containers and freeze four of them.



## Opening Times

Tuesday to Saturday  
9 am to 6 pm

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