

Spring has well and truly sprung! One of the earliest signs is the prolific growth of three-cornered leek- or as you probably know it, onion weed! While regarded as an annoyance by many gardeners, this humble little herald of spring is edible from flower to bulb. Use in the place of spring onion or be a bit more adventurous and try the recipe below!



Wild onion weed bhajis' with date, soy and tamarind chutney

Alby Hailes

Perfect for a forager's feast, these bhajis are crispy, crunchy, garlicky and all things delicious. Paired with a punchy tamarind sauce that's boosted with date sweetness and umami soy, this is snacking food at its finest.

hands-on time 35 minutes

total time 35 minutes

makes 16 -20 bhajis

Ingredients

Wild onion weed bhajis

2 tbsp canola oil, plus extra for deep-frying
1 tbsp cumin seeds
1 tsp fennel seeds
1 tsp black mustard seeds
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 tbsp finely grated fresh ginger
220g chickpea (besan) flour
1 green chilli, finely chopped
1 tsp ground turmeric
1 tsp ground coriander
1 tsp cracked black pepper
¼ tsp sea salt
freshly squeezed juice of ½ lemon
200g wild onion weed (about 8), ends trimmed, chopped into 4cm pieces (including bulbs, stems + flowers)

Date, soy + tamarind chutney

125g dried pitted dates, chopped
2 tbsp tamarind paste
1 tbsp dark soy sauce
¼ tsp ground chilli
freshly squeezed juice of ½ lemon
1 tbsp tahini

Method

First make the chutney. Place the chopped dates, tamarind paste, soy sauce, ground chilli, lemon juice and 250ml water in a small saucepan over medium heat. Bring to the boil and simmer for 5 minutes, at which point the dates will be nicely softened. Remove from the heat, add the tahini, and blitz with a stick blender until smooth. Loosen with a little extra water if desired, to reach your preferred dipping consistency; set aside.

For the bhajis, place 2 tbsp canola oil in a small frying pan over medium heat. Once hot, add the cumin seeds, black mustard seeds, fennel seeds, garlic and ginger. Cook for a couple of minutes until golden and fragrant, then transfer to a large bowl. To the bowl, add the chickpea flour, chilli, turmeric, coriander, black pepper and salt, and whisk to combine. Add the lemon juice and 250ml cold water, and mix together to form a smooth, relatively thick batter. Add the chopped onion weed and stir through the batter to coat.

To cook the bhajis, heat 2-3cm of canola oil in a medium high-sided frying pan or Dutch oven (24 or 26cm) over medium heat. You want the oil to reach about 175°C – you can measure this with a thermometer or by dropping a blob of batter into the oil: if it sizzles, floats, and starts to brown, the oil is ready. Line a large plate with a paper towel and place beside your frying station. Once the oil is at temperature, place large tablespoons of the batter in the hot oil. Fry in batches of 4-5 at a time, for about 2 minutes on each side until golden. Remove the bhajis from the oil with a slotted spoon and place in a single layer on the paper towel-lined plate to allow any excess oil to drain. Repeat until all the batter has been cooked, adjusting the heat as needed to maintain the oil temperature.

Serve the bhajis warm, with the chutney for dipping.

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Alby's culinary journey started in the kitchen of his flat while pre-med at Otago University.

These financially limited food adventures became a blog, **Scarfie Kitchen**, as well as a self-published cook book. As he began his medical career this evolved into 'trEAT right', where food and flavour were part of a holistic approach to wellbeing.

A successful stint on **The Great Kiwi Bake Off** gave him the boost needed to create his debut cookbook **Good Vibes**, published in 2023.

You can follow Alby at [@albyhailes](https://www.instagram.com/albyhailes) and [albyhailes.com](https://www.albyhailes.com)



Dunedin City Property Newsletter

Jane Booth



Market Update

Dunedin City property statistics are showing every sign that the volatility of the past 3 years is calming and we are returning to a more predictable and stable market. The August REINZ report shows the median house price holding steady in the high \$500K bracket, where it has been sitting for the last 6 months with little variability. Days on Market is up slightly to 50, but with fewer cash buyers this is expected. Sentiment remains mixed, with both buyers and sellers feeling positive about recent interest rate drops, however the pandemic property bubble has had a profound distortion effect on what is now considered a 'normal' market, which affects perception.

While days to sold is now slightly more than 7 weeks, total number of property sales shows a very healthy winter property market. Sitting at 498 for the 2024 winter quarter, this demonstrates that despite doom and gloom reporting, property continues to transact at typical levels. What may surprise most people is that there is very little difference between total seasonal quarterly sales- so the perception that spring and early summer are the best time to sell is not supported by transaction numbers!

If you enjoy market commentary that cuts through the noise, is based on quality data, and is by a local for locals, you can sign up for my newsletter at www.janebooth.pb.co.nz

Spruce up for Spring

As skips pop up on suburban streets like enormous mushrooms, it's clear that spring cleaning is well underway! If you are thinking of selling, or even just getting some good home maintenance done ahead of patio season, here are three free or nearly free things you can do to give your home a lift.

Declutter declutter declutter! Too many belongings can make a space seem much smaller than it is. There are many options for recycling and rehoming surplus possessions. Clubs and schools often run scrap metal collections, there are a number of community groups that will gratefully accept clean, good quality bedding and clothing, many op shops now offer a pick-up service for bulkier goods.

Kerb appeal is an important component of sale prep- first impression count! This can be a simple as making sure that your frontage is well swept and free of weeds. For the more adventurous, pressure washers are fairly cheap to hire and make a huge difference to the appearance of paths and patios.

The unseen factor now is the time to deep clean all of your bedding and soft furnishings. Fabrics are prone to absorbing odours, so over the winter months in a closed up house they lose their freshness. Scent has a huge unconscious impact, and a home smelling crisp and clean is immensely appealing.

What's Happening



Hoiho crowned Bird of the Year



St Clair pool opens for summer 1st Oct



Chinese Moon Festival from 22nd Sept

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