



eat. drink. live.



It's hard to imagine a life without rich, creamy, flavourful butter. Many of our all-time culinary favourites simply taste better with a generous dollop of butter; mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs, hot cross buns, freshly baked scones, blanched asparagus with Hollandaise, steak and chips with Sauce Bearnaise or freshly grilled fish with lemon beurre blanc, to name but a few.

Even though olive oil is admittedly slightly healthier than butter, I far prefer to go with the 'everything in moderation' mantra and have decided to dedicate a whole mailer in its honour! And for those of you who think butter is all bad, you'll hopefully change your mind after reading the flavour files below so that the next time you spread good, wholesome farm butter onto hot toast, you'll do so with relish and a clear conscience!

Tracy

flavour files



butter

Butter has been part of the human diet for thousands of years. Not only is it deliciously flavourful, but it is made using 100% natural ingredients, unlike margarine! In fact, you'll need about 10 litres of cow's milk to make just one pound or 454g of butter. We're so used to simply buying a block in the supermarket that we forget its organic origins where cream, separated from milk, is churned till it turns into smooth and creamy butter.

Over the years, butter has often received a bad rap, however contrary to popular belief, butter is not all saturated fat. 30% of butter's fat is actually monounsaturated – the kind that gives olive oil its good name, and on top of that, butter's saturated fats also have the ability to raise your HDL's (the good cholesterol!). In addition, it has no more calories and fat than olive oil.

Butter gets its beautiful colour from its natural pigment, carotene, which is converted by our bodies into Vitamin A, good for healthy skin and eyes as well as for strong bones and teeth.

Unsalted butter is commonly used for baking instead of salted butter, which contains 1.7% salt. Interestingly the salt increases its refrigerated shelf-life from 2 weeks to 2 months!

Clarified butter is often used for frying or sautéing as it has a higher burning point than un-clarified butter. To make your own, simply melt unsalted butter in a small saucepan until the milk solids separate by sinking to the bottom and by forming a foam on top. Remove from the heat and skim off the foam then carefully pour off the clarified butter into another container leaving behind the remaining milk solids. As all the milk solids have been removed, clarified butter has a much longer shelf life than fresh butter.

creamy fudge

1kg sugar
3 tins condensed milk
5 tbsp golden syrup
180g butter
125ml water
2 tsp **NoMuU Vanilla Extract**
pinch of salt

Dissolve the sugar in the water over a gentle heat. Add the remaining ingredients and bring to the boil, stirring from time to time until a firm ball forms when dropped into chilled water.

Beat with an electric beater until firm and almost set. Pour into a greased baking tray and score while still soft.

Makes: 35 (depending on the size).



1-2-3 butter biscuits

For the biscuits:

125g (1 cup) caster sugar
250g (2 cups) butter
375g (3 cups) cake flour
1 tsp **NoMU Vanilla Extract**
a pinch of salt

For the 3 flavours:

2 tbsp unsalted pistachio nuts, finely chopped
2 tbsp **NoMU Hot Chocolate Chunks**
2 tbsp **NoMU Sweet Rub**

Preheat the oven to 150°C.

Using an electric mixer, cream the butter and caster sugar. Sift the cake flour and salt into the butter mixture and work into a soft dough. Divide the dough into four portions. Mix each of three portions with one of 3 different a flavour ingredients, leaving the last portion plain.

Roll the dough onto a floured surface and using a cookie cutter, cut into desired shape. Top the biscuits with an extra sprinkling of the relevant flavour.

Place the biscuits on a greased baking tray and bake until they are firm to the touch, about 10 minutes. Cool on a cooling rack.

Makes: 16- 25 (depending on the size).





plum tart

- 12 plums
- 1 portion puff pastry – see recipe below
- 4 tbsp apricot jam
- 2 tsp melted butter for the tin

Hazelnut & Almond Frangipane

- 200g unsalted butter, softened
- 50g NoMU sweet rub
- 100g caster sugar
- 125g ground almonds
- 125g ground hazelnuts
- 100g plain flour
- 3 eggs

Frangipane is a delicious nut paste used as a filling for cakes, tarts and pastries. Although it is traditionally made with almonds, experiment with different flavours using hazelnuts, pistachios or even pine nuts.

Preheat the oven to 190°C.

To make the frangipane beat the butter and sugar together at high speed until light and fluffy. Add the ground nuts and flour and beat thoroughly. Add the eggs one at a time, whisking them through each time. Put aside.

Quarter the plums, discarding the stones, and set aside. Prepare a 25cm detachable based round tart tin by brushing it with melted butter. Roll out the pastry into a 5mm thick circle. Transfer the pastry into the tin using the rolling pin and gently press down into the sides and corners. Using a sharp knife, trim the edge to neaten.

Spread the frangipane over the base. Place the plum quarters in the frangipane in a circular pattern, standing slightly upright. Bake for 15 minutes and then reduce the oven temperature to 150°C and bake for a further 40 minutes. During this time the frangipane will rise up around the plums and set. Remove from the oven and place on a cooling rack for a little while before removing the tart from its tin. Warm the jam until melted and brush over the tart to glaze.

Makes: A 25cm tart.

Tip: Make this tart using apricots, nectarines or peaches for scrumptious alternatives.

WINE PAIRING: Obvious choice is a sticky and SA has many well-priced and excellent examples. Too much sweetness would cloy the perfume of the frangipane and the fruitiness of the plums – so something like the fabulously complex and nuanced Tulbagh Mountain Vineyards Vin Pi Two – high sugar levels cut by bracing acidity. Or be bolder and pair with a Meerlust Pinot Noir 2004 – wonderful perfume and red fruit notes and silky tannins that moisten the pastry in the mouth.

pan-fried mahimahi with lemon & herb butter

- 6 x 200g fresh mahimahi (dorado)
- 2 tbsp clarified butter (or olive oil)
- 1 tsp **NoMU One For All Rub**
- Or **NoMU Seafood Rub**
- Or **NoMU Hooked Grinder NoMU Just salt**

Lemon & herb butter:

- 6 tbsp butter, softened
- 1 garlic clove, crushed (optional)
- 3 tsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp freshly chopped herbs (parsley, dill, tarragon or basil)

To make the lemon & herb butter, place the butter, lemon & garlic in a small saucepan and gently melt all the ingredients together. Just before serving, stir in the freshly chopped herbs.

Rub the butter or olive oil all over each fillet. Season with NoMU One For All and Just Salt. Sear in a hot pan for 2-3 minutes on each side until golden brown and just cooked inside. Serve on warmed plates with a generous drizzle of lemony garlicky herb butter.

Makes: Serves 6

Tips:

1. Alternatively beat all the ingredients together and roll up in greaseproof paper or clingfilm in a cylinder shape and refrigerate for at least one hour to firm or freeze for 10 minutes.
2. For a bit of bite, add a few grindings of NoMU African Heat Grinder or 1 tsp NoMU Spanish Rub.
3. For a deliciously buttery sun-dried tomato pesto, rehydrate 2 tbsp NoMU STIR Tomato & Herb Pesto with 5 tbsp warm water and stir into the finished lemon garlic butter.

WINE PAIRING: Tailor made for a chardonnay of the steely, minerally kind rather than a fat buttery, heavily wooded style that would swamp the food. If the budget can accommodate it, a Marquis de Laguiche Chassagne-Montrachet (available from www.winecellar.co.za); and if funds are tight, the Brampton Unoaked Chardonnay – less than R50



butterscotch sauce

- ¾ cup light brown sugar
- ½ cup golden syrup
- 2 tbsp butter
- ½ cup cream
- 5 pumps **NoMU Vanilla Paste**

Combine the brown sugar, golden syrup and butter in a small saucepan. Bring to the boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Boil for 1 minute and then remove from heat. Stir in cream and vanilla immediately.

Cool and store in the refrigerator. Stir before serving over ice cream, puddings, or desserts.

Makes: 1 ½ cups of butterscotch sauce.

Tip: While hot, pour into sterilized jars and keep for 3 months. This also makes a scrumptious gift!



lemon beurre blanc

- ¼ cup white wine vinegar
- ¼ cup white wine
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 large very finely diced shallot
- 1 cup butter, cubed and chilled

NoMU Just Salt
NoMU Just Pepper

Tips:

1. By whisking the butter in vigorously you'll incorporate lots of air into the sauce making it lighter and thicker.
2. To change the flavour try adding different herbs such as dill, tarragon or lemon grass.

In a heavy saucepan, boil the first 4 ingredients until your mixture is reduced to 2-3 tablespoons. Allow the mixture to cool slightly before placing it over low heat and quickly whisking in the butter, a few blocks at a time, only adding more once the previous piece has been fully incorporated. The sauce should have the consistency of a light hollandaise.

Remove from the heat, strain if desired and season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve with seafood or succulent roast chicken (see recipe below).

Makes: Approx. 1¼ cups.

Note: Please try the Soy Beurre Blanc from Recipe Mailer # 16 as it is one of my all time favourites! Although not a traditional beurre blanc, it never fails to impress!



beurre manié

30g butter
30g flour

Beurre manié (pronounced "man-yay"), or "kneaded butter" in French, is an uncooked "dough" consisting of equal parts of soft butter and flour used to thicken sauces, stews, soups and gravies. As the flour particles are coated with butter, the flour does not create lumps when added to a warm or hot liquid giving you an effortless and silky smooth finish. Beurre manié should not be confused with a "roux" which is also a thickener made of equal parts of butter and flour, but which is cooked before use and usually forms the base of a sauce rather than a later addition. Be sure to cook your sauce, stew, soup or gravy for a while after adding the Beurre Manié so that you do not pick up a taste of uncooked flour.

In a bowl, using a wooden spoon, simply work the flour into the softened butter until extremely well incorporated. Cover with cling film and refrigerate until needed.

Tip: I usually make larger quantities and freeze them in small ice trays ready to use when required.

confit of baby gem lettuce

- 4 baby gem lettuces
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 75g butter, in cubes
- 200ml chicken stock
- 2 thyme sprigs, de-stalked
- 1 tsp NoMU Veggie Rub
- or NoMU One-for-All Rub
- NoMU Just Salt
- NoMU Just Pepper

Cut the lettuces in half lengthways, without cutting off the stalks. Wash and pat dry with paper towel. Heat the oil in a large pan. When very hot, add the halved lettuces, cut side down and sauté for 2 minutes. Gradually add the butter in pieces, allowing it to melt before adding more. Add the stock, the thyme, the salt and pepper and the NoMU Veggie Rub.

Cover the lettuce with greaseproof paper and simmer on a low heat for about 8-10 minutes or until tender.

Serves: 4 as an accompaniment.

Tip: Allow to stand for 5 minutes before serving.



butter basted roast chicken

- 1 large free range chicken
- 2 tbsp NoMU Roast Rub
- 2 lemons, thickly sliced
- 6 pickling onions, halved
- 6 garlic cloves
- 2 tbsp olive oil

Herb Butter

- 250g butter
- 1 small lemon, zest and juice
- 4 tbsp finely chopped herbs (tarragon, sage, thyme, parsley or oregano)
- 1 tsp NoMU One for All Rub

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Prepare the herb butter by creaming the butter with the lemon, herbs and One For All Rub. Using your fingers or an up-side down wooden spoon, carefully lift the skin of the chicken, separating it from the breasts and the legs, taking care not to break the skin. Next, massage the herb butter all over the breasts and legs under the skin as well as over the skin of the whole bird. Rub the chicken with 1 tablespoon NoMU Roast Rub. Place the other tablespoon of Roast Rub into the cavity, along with 2 halved pickling onions, 2 gloves of garlic and 1 sliced lemon. Pour the olive oil into a casserole dish and place the chicken inside. Scatter the lemon slices, halved pickling onions and whole garlic cloves around and place in the oven. Allow to roast for 60 minutes, until cooked through and golden. To find out whether cooked through, pierce the thickest part of the leg with a skewer and see if the juices run clear. If the juices are still pink, cook for a further 10 minutes.

Serves: 4

WINE PAIRING: Tricky – the lemon can kill delicate wines. A well-made Spanish Albarino like the La Fontana from Pazo Baion, with its tartness and citric complexity would be perfect. Locally a bold lemony chenin like De Morgenzon would hit the right notes.



butter icing

250g butter, cubed, at room temperature
pinch of salt
450g pure icing sugar, sifted
½ tsp **NoMU Vanilla Extract**
60ml boiling milk

Place the butter in a large mixing bowl. Gradually add the icing sugar, alternating with the hot milk and beat with an electric mixer until the mixture is very pale and fluffy. Add the salt and vanilla and mix.

Variations:

Orange butter icing: Add 1 tbsp finely grated orange rind with the butter.

Coffee butter icing: Dissolve 2 tbsp instant coffee granules in the milk.

Chocolate butter icing: Reduce the icing sugar to 230g (1 1/2 cups). Omit the milk. Stir in 250g melted, cooled, NoMU Hot Chocolate Chunks.

Dark chocolate butter icing: Reduce the icing sugar to 300g (2 cups). Omit the milk. Sift in 2 tbsps NoMU Cocoa Powder and then stir in 600g melted, cooled, NoMU Hot Chocolate Chunks.

bread and butter pudding

10 slices white bread (or any left over bread)
60g softened butter
50g raisins or sultanas (optional)
3 eggs
500ml milk
30g brown sugar
60g **NoMU Sweet Rub**
4 pumps **NoMU Vanilla Paste**
zest of one orange
50g flaked almonds
NoMU Sweet Rub, for sprinkling

Comfort food at its best! It is also the perfect way to use up stale bread, croissants, pandora, pannetone or brioche.

Remove the crusts from the bread and butter generously. Halve the slices diagonally to create triangles. Butter an ovenproof baking dish and layer the bread, buttered sides up. Sprinkle with the raisins if using.

Beat the eggs, milk, sugar, NoMU Sweet Rub, NoMU Vanilla Paste and orange zest together.

Pour evenly over the bread. Sprinkle the almonds and some more NoMU Sweet Rub over the top. Leave for half an hour for the custard to properly soak into the bread. In the interim, preheat your oven to 180°C.

Bake for approximately 1 hour until golden brown and just set in the middle.

Note: Do not overcook it as it will carry on cooking and set further after you remove it from the oven.

Tip: If you have time, gently boil the raisins and/or sultanas in a little orange juice or brandy before sprinkling over the bread.



back to basics



butter puff pastry

250g cake flour
5ml fine sea salt
150ml iced-cold water
60g unsalted butter, cubed
190g unsalted butter

Sift the flour and salt into a large chilled mixing bowl. Cut or rub 60g chilled cubed butter in until it resembles coarse breadcrumbs. Make a well in the centre and add the water. Gradually combine the flour mixture with the water until combined. (Note: I cheat and do this whole step in a food processor!). Turn the dough onto a floured surface and knead lightly, forming it into a ball. Wrap in clingfilm and refrigerate for 2 hours or overnight.

Place the remaining 190g block of butter between two sheets of clingfilm and roll into a 10x15cm rectangle. (Note: Your dough and butter must be of similar temperature and consistency for the next step).

On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough into a rectangle approximately 25x30cm, ensuring that it does not stick at the bottom. (Note: using a pastry brush, gently remove any excess flour from the dough's surface.) Remove the clingfilm and place the butter in the centre of the dough. Fold the four edges of the dough over the butter enclosing it completely, stretching the dough if necessary ensuring that none of the butter is exposed. With the folded side facing up, roll the dough out into a smooth, even neat rectangle again. Starting at the bottom, fold the dough in thirds, like a business letter. Rotate the block of dough 90 degrees so that the folded edge is on your left and the dough faces you like a book. Roll out the dough into yet another rectangle, repeating the folding. Cover with clingfilm and chill for 30 minutes. Repeat the rolling, folding and rotating process 4 more times, chilling the dough for 30 minutes after every 2nd folding. Finally, cover and chill for 2-3 hours or overnight before using.

Butter conversions

1 stick (US)	=	113g
1 cup	=	227g
1 ounce	=	28.35g
1 pound	=	454g
1 tsp (UK)	=	4.43g
1 tsp (US)	=	4.73g
1 tbsp (UK)	=	17.72g
1 tbsp (US)	=	14.17g

Note: This puff pastry can be frozen for up to 3 months.



CONTRIBUTOR OF THE MONTH

John Maytham knows what he's talking about. This is why he is one of the leading talk radio personalities of Cape Town's top talk-radio station, 567CapeTalk. Invariably entertaining and informed by a frankly almost infallible general knowledge for most things trivial or serious, John is consistently witty, funny and often appropriately acerbic which makes his shows an absolute must for his growing audience of regular listeners. John's shows are hugely popular and widely discussed, so we are thrilled that he could find the time to offer NoMU his opinions on two of his other favourite topics, wine and food, to be our contributor for the month of May. John's show can be heard on 567CapeTalk, weekdays from 15:00 till 18:00. For more information visit www.capetalk.co.za.