

# The Entertainer's Pantry

With a cupboard well stocked with all the essential ingredients, you will never find yourself having to offer anyone toast.

**Crackers** – Always have on hand good quality crackers, lavosh or Joe's favourite, grissini sticks.

**Pickled vegetables** – Giardiniera is the name of Italian mixed pickled vegetables. Traditionally cauliflower, celery, carrot and cocktail onions, they add fantastic colour to an antipasto plate and have a long shelf life.

**Olives** – Quality olives never go astray. Purchase a few different varieties in jars and keep them in the cupboard for when friends pop around. If you have the time whip them out and marinate them with your own extra virgin olive oil and herbs.

**Bread** – You can't go wrong with fresh crusty bread. Serve it with an antipasto plate or with extra virgin olive oil. Remember bread can be kept in the freezer, simply defrost it a tad and pop it in the oven when guests arrive.

**Balsamic vinegar & extra virgin olive oil** – These condiments work so well together. Slosh them together in a dipping bowl and serve with good bread.

**Marinated vegetables in oil** – Vegetables such as artichoke hearts and sun-dried tomatoes add great colour to an antipasto plate and can be stored in the fridge or pantry for a long period of time.

**Nuts** – Cashews, peanuts, almonds and pistachios are sure crowd pleasers so have them readily available to serve. Nuts come dry-roasted, salted or spiced. If you're feeling adventurous you can always create your own mix.

**Canned goods** – To make a delicious dip all you need is a can of chickpeas, cannellini beans or butter beans. Simply mix together with lemon juice, tahini paste, garlic and olive oil, along with salt and pepper to create a mouth-watering hummus or bean dip.

**Salumi** – Cured meats like prosciutto and salami are ideal for an antipasto plate. They can be purchased pre-sliced and vacuum sealed so you can keep them in the fridge for an impromptu party.

**Cheeses** – Marinated cheeses such as Persian fetta and labneh packaged in oil or brine have a long shelf life in the fridge. Vacuum-sealed hard cheeses will also stay good for a lengthy period of time.

**Anchovy fillets** – Best served on toasted bread drizzled with extra virgin olive oil and a squeeze of lemon juice. Purchase them in oil or buy marinated white anchovies, simply delicious.

**Chocolate** – Impress your guests by whipping up a chocolate fondue in minutes. Simply mix ½ cup (125g/4oz) of thickened cream with 150g (5oz) of quality dark chocolate in a saucepan over low heat. Add ½ teaspoon of vanilla extract and a splash of good liquor and transfer to a fondue pot.

**Prosecco/Champagne** – Many concur that champagne is the only alcoholic beverage that can be served at any time of day. Mix with fruit juice or peach puree, garnish with a strawberry, or serve alone.







## Mini Cheese Scones *with Smoked Salmon*

*1 1/3 cups (200g/ 7oz)  
self-raising flour  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon paprika  
50g (1 3/4oz) cold unsalted butter  
1/2 cup (50g) (1 1/4 oz) cheddar  
cheese, grated  
1/2 cup (120ml) (4fl oz) milk, plus  
extra for brushing  
100g (3 1/2oz) smoked salmon slices  
cut into 12 pieces  
50g (1 3/4oz) butter at room  
temperature  
1/2 bunch fresh chives, chopped  
salt and pepper to taste  
parmesan cheese, grated for garnish*

Preheat oven to 180°C (350° F).

In a food processor combine flour, 1 teaspoon salt, paprika and unsalted butter. Blitz until it resembles breadcrumbs.

Mix in the cheddar cheese and milk to make a soft dough. Remove from food processor and place on a lightly floured surface and gently knead.

Using a rolling pin, roll dough out to 2.5cm (1in) thick.

Using a small 4cm (1 1/2in) scone cutter cut 14–15 mini scones and place on a greased and lined baking tray approximately 1 inch apart.

Brush scones with extra milk, sprinkle with parmesan cheese and bake in oven for 12–15 minutes, rotating tray after 6 minutes.

When cooked remove scones and allow to cool.

Meanwhile, mix together butter and chives. Season to taste.

Cut scones in half, spread butter mix on both sides. Place salmon piece on bottom half and close with top half.

*Preparation time 15 minutes    Cooking time 12 minutes  
Makes 15*



# Caramelised Balsamic and Red Onion Tarts *with Goat's Cheese*

*Onion Jam (see recipe on  
page 137, halved)*

*2 eggs  
2/3 cup (170ml/5fl oz) cream  
30 x 6cm (2 1/2in) shortcrust  
tart cases  
120g (4oz) goat's cheese  
1/2 bunch fresh thyme, chopped  
cracked black pepper to garnish*

Prepare half of Onion Jam recipe and set aside to cool.

Preheat oven to 160°C (320°F).

In a medium bowl combine eggs and cream until ready to use.

Lay tart cases on a baking tray lined with baking paper. Place one teaspoon of onion jam into each tart case, followed by a dollop of goat's cheese.

Fill each tart case with the egg mixture and garnish with fresh thyme.

Bake for 10–15 minutes, rotating tray after 7 minutes.

Arrange on a serving platter and season with cracked black pepper.

*TIP: Onion Jam can be prepared 1–2 days prior to making tarts.*

*Preparation time 15 minutes    Cooking time 15 minutes*

*Makes 30*





## Goat's Cheese Balls *with Onion Jam*

400g (14 oz) soft goat's cheese  
100g (3oz) cream cheese, softened  
1 bunch chives, finely chopped  
( $\frac{1}{3}$  cup) zest of 1 lemon  
1 teaspoon white pepper  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon ground nutmeg  
3 cups (750ml/ 24fl oz)  
rice bran oil  
 $\frac{1}{3}$  cup (50g/ 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz) plain flour  
2 eggs, lightly beaten  
truffle honey, to serve

In a medium bowl combine goat's cheese, cream cheese, chives, lemon zest, white pepper and nutmeg. Mix well to ensure the spices are combined evenly.

Roll 2 level tablespoons of mixture into balls (golf ball size) and refrigerate for 30 minutes or until firm.

Meanwhile heat the oil in a medium saucepan until a piece of bread dropped into it turns golden brown within 5 seconds.

Roll balls in flour and then coat lightly with beaten egg. Deep-fry balls in batches for 40–60 seconds, until golden. Drain on kitchen paper.

Serve on top of Onion Jam (see recipe on page 137) and drizzle balls with truffle honey.

*TIPS: If you can't get your hands on truffle honey (try good delis) you can use any good quality honey.*

*For deep-frying, use an oil such as rice bran oil which has a high smoking point. To save the oil for another use, cool the oil to room temperature, strain through a fine sieve and store in an airtight container.*

Preparation time 30 minutes + refrigeration    Cooking time 10 minutes

Makes 12







## Sicilian Lemon *Granita*

*4 cups (1L/ 35fl oz) water  
2 cups (440g/ 15 1/2oz) caster sugar  
1 1/2 cups lemon juice  
(juice of 8 lemons)  
fresh mint, to garnish*

Combine water and sugar in a large saucepan. Stir over low heat until sugar dissolves. Bring to boil over high heat. Boil for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and cool. Stir in the lemon juice and pour into 4 ice-cube trays. Freeze. Just before serving, using a food processor, puree the ice cubes until smooth in consistency. Divide mixture evenly into martini glasses (or other fancy glasses) and garnish with fresh mint leaves. Serve immediately.

*Tip: Freeze ice cubes overnight for the best result.*

*If you're afraid the motor of your processor isn't up to crushing ice, you can freeze the lemon mixture in a large roasting dish. Once it starts to freeze, scrape the icy mixture with a fork every 20 minutes until you have a crushed ice texture.*

*This granita is also delicious with a dash of vodka or rum added just before serving.*

*Preparation time 15 minutes    Cooking time 5 minutes  
Freezing time overnight    Serves 6*