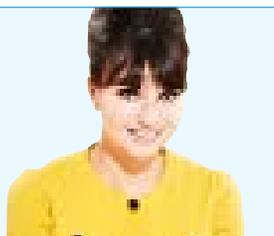




## Surprisingly skinny recipes for fasting days

**GIZZI ERSKINE**



Last year was the year of health and fitness. Green juices, clean eating and the 5:2 diet all trended on Twitter: we're more concerned than ever before about what goes into our food and the effect it has on our body.

I've always supported dieting for six days, then giving yourself a day off, living by the 80:20 rule, where, if you're good 80% of the time, you can eat what you like for the remaining 20%. It teaches you the rule of "everything in moderation". The 5:2 diet that I watched so many people follow and shrink by (slightly wrecked with my logic but I'm a convert) is based on the same principle as the 80:20, but is a bit more stringent.

Some people do this diet in a basic way, piling their plates with blanched or raw vegetables, then squeezing over a little lemon juice. This isn't that much fun. My friend Elly Curshen, who runs the Pear Cafe in Bristol, has a much better approach to it. She's a clever cook and her fasting-day food is vibrant and delicious, but somehow always comes in below 200 calories.

With Elly's help I've come up with three fasting-day recipes that don't compromise flavour in the slightest. They're packed full of goodness, will fill you up, make you feel and look fantastic. Even I'm tempted to give the 5:2 a go this year ■

### Gizzi's masterclasses

Gizzi Erskine shares her kitchen secrets in a series of one-minute videos, at [thesundaytimes.co.uk/foodseason](http://thesundaytimes.co.uk/foodseason)



### Purple-sprouting broccoli with egg, caper berries and chickpeas

#### TOP TIP

Reserve some of the  
CXXXXXXXXX  
XXXXXXXXXX

I'm pretty much happy with anything that features an egg. This is a brilliant, fast and filling vegetarian salad that really does keep you full up.

**SERVES: 1**  
**PREPARATION: 10 MINS**

**COOKING: 10 MINS**

2 free-range eggs,  
160g purple-sprouting broccoli  
1 tsp olive oil  
1 tbsp sherry vinegar  
50g caperberries  
70g chickpeas

1. Boil the eggs for 6 minutes, then cool in ice water before peeling.
2. Fill a small pan with water, bring to the boil and blanch the broccoli for few minutes until just tender but with a bite. Drain and leave on the side.
3. Mix together the sherry vinegar and olive oil and season with salt and pepper.
4. Peel the egg and cut in half. Throw together the broccoli, caperberries and chickpeas. Add the dressing and mix well. Serve on a plate with the eggs on top.

## Lemon sole with celeriac and kale colcannon

Celeriac is low in carbohydrates, so has few calories. When puréed it becomes so creamy it almost turns into a sauce.

**SERVES: 2**

**PREPARATION: 10 MINS**

**COOKING: 35 MINS**

1 small celeriac

1 clove of garlic

60ml milk

35g kale

2 spring onions, thinly sliced

2 x 100g lemon sole fillets, trimmed

1 tsp plain flour

1 tsp butter

**1.** Put the celeriac and garlic in a pan with the milk and top with water until just covered. Bring to the boil, then reduce to a low simmer and cook for 30 minutes or until tender.

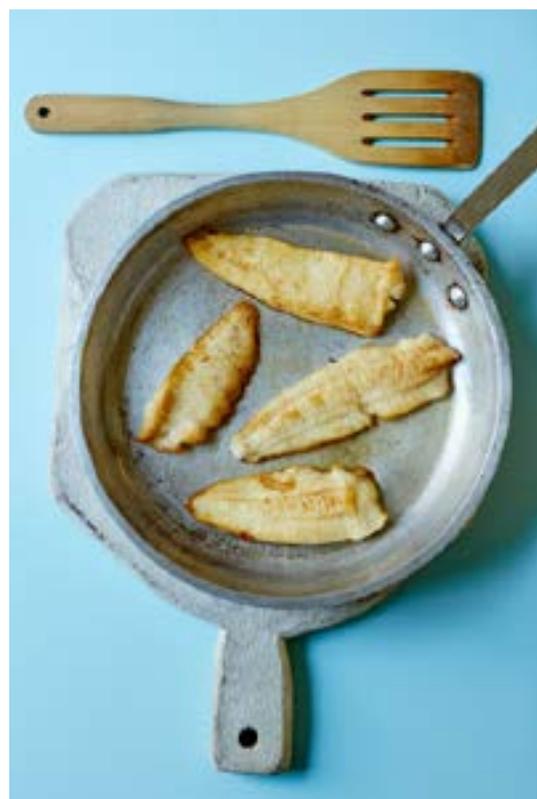
**2.** Meanwhile, bring a small pan of salted water to the boil and blanch the kale for 1-2 minutes. Then drain, squeezing out the excess water. Leave to one side.

**3.** Once the celeriac is cooked, drain then blend until you have a smooth purée. Chop up the kale and spring onions and add to the purée. Season with plenty of salt and black pepper.

**4.** Season the fillets, then dust in the flour. Heat a pan with the butter and fry for 2 minutes on each side until crisp and golden. Serve the colcannon with the fillets.

**TOP TIP**

Reserve some of the celeriac liquid in case you need to loosen it when blending to a purée.



## On the Bottle

### Ring in the new with the best low-calorie wines

DAMIAN BARR



**Y**ou're probably feeling fat. I certainly am. I'm not into body-shaming and I don't think anyone should feel bad about the natural consequences of Christmas indulgence (or indulgence at any time). But as we pinch our real and imaginary inches, gyms are being swamped with sweating newbies and punishing diets of obscure paleo grains are being undertaken. Hair shirts do horribly well in the January sales.

At this time of year, *les vins de virtue* appear in the shops. Low-alcohol, low-calorie wine surely rank alongside sugar-free chocolate and joyless sex as the least appealing of prospects, but this is a potentially desperate month. So, bravely, I tried some.

First, the science bit. Alcohol is not a sugar and your liver does not metabolise it into sugar. But wine is full of calories. One gram of carbohydrate contains four calories and one gram of alcohol has seven. The alcohol percentage of what you're drinking is more significant than the amount you pour (within reason).

Here's how to work out the calories per glass: multiply the alcohol percentage by ounces poured, then multiply the resulting number by 1.6. So, a 5oz glass of something 8% would contain 64 calories, and a 15% glass would contain 120 calories. Be warned: performing this calculation will lead to mild stress, which in turn will result in increased consumption.

So, lower alcohol means lower calorie, provided it's not packed with sugar to make up for lost flavour (which much of it is). Almost all of it is vile. The two worst offenders are Torres Natureo Dealcoholised Muscat (£4.79, Waitrose) and Miranda Summer Light Shiraz (£4.99, Tesco). The Torres, just 0.5% alcohol, is gum-splittingly sweet. The Miranda smelt like a new roll of bin bags and tasted of a Sangria hangover.

Wines made from grapes which aren't left lingering on the vine — vinho verde and the drier rieslings — are naturally lower alcohol and so lower calorie. These are your January friends ■

THREE  
OF THE  
BEST

**MOSEL RIESLING KABINETT, SELBACH-OSTER**  
Exhilaratingly light, bright lemon balm aroma, genuinely thirst quenching. £10.25, Berry Bros

**WIRRA WIRRA MRS WIGLEY MOSCATO**  
Lightly fizzy, this peach-blush treat bursts with strawberries in balsamic vinegar. Sweet, not cloying. £7.99, Ocado

**MIRANDA SUMMER LIGHT, MADE WITH SAUVIGNON BLANC**  
Sharp green apples and pleasantly like the watered-down wine you were allowed as a child. As palatable as their red is revolting. £4.99, Tesco



## Cauliflower and Monkfish three ways

Cauliflower is brilliant roasted or puréed. Served here with curry spices, it makes a hearty dish.

**SERVES: 2**  
**PREPARATION: 10 MINS**  
**COOKING: 30 MINS**

1 x 400g head of cauliflower
50ml white wine vinegar
2 tsp sugar
1 small dried chilli
1½ tbsp olive oil
A splash of fresh vegetable or chicken stock
1 tsp curry powder
1 tsp curry leaves
250g monkfish
2 tsp lemon juice
¼ red chilli, finely chopped
1 tsp fresh coriander, finely chopped

**1.** Cut the cauliflower into three through the stalk: one-third will be for the pickle, one roasted, the other puréed.

**2.** To make the pickle, thinly slice one-third of the cauliflower. Melt together the vinegar, 50ml water, sugar, 1 tsp salt and the dried chilli,

then soak the cauliflower in the pickle for a minimum of 30 minutes or up to 4 hours.

**3.** To make the roasted cauliflower, cut into florets, rub with 1 tsp of the oil and roast at 200C for 25 minutes until cooked through.

**4.** To make the purée, cut the remaining third into florets. Add to a small pan, pour in splash of stock and heat gently. When soft, blitz until smooth adding a splash more stock if needed. Season with plenty of salt and white pepper.

**5.** Mix the curry powder and leaves with the remaining oil and cook for 30 seconds or until the curry leaves have popped. Strain the powder from the oil, reserving the oil. Rub the powder and curry leaves over the monkfish.

**6.** To make the dressing, mix 2tsp of the curry oil with the lemon juice, red chilli and coriander.

**7.** Heat the oven to 220C. Heat 1 tsp of the curry oil in a medium-hot pan and add the monkfish, browning it all over, then finish cooking in the oven for 5 minutes. Leave to rest for 5 minutes, then cut into 4 slices.

**8.** Spread the purée around the base of each plate, top with two of the slices of monkfish and surround with the roasted and pickled cauliflower. Drizzle over the dressing.