

“What's Happening”

DIEP RIVER



“Don’t waste a minute not being happy. If one window closes, run to the next window - or break down a door.”

~ Brooke Shields ~

Dear Residents,

I hope you’re all well.

This week's newsletter has an added winter flavour to match the colder weather we experienced this past week.

Starting with the Dinner menu for the 23rd, you can look forward to some hearty oxtail followed by a decadent sticky toffee pudding.

Then, in anticipation of our second Fine Spirits Club tasting, we are sharing a little preview into the differences between Cognac and Brandy. Dates for the next tasting will be confirmed in coming weeks.

For all those amazing winter dishes we can start looking forward to, see our article on drying and storing fresh

herbs. If you are like me you never end up using the whole container of store bought herbs, so why not dry them, reduce your food waste and save a couple of bucks at the same time.

Then the not so fun part of Winter - the dreaded sniffles and Flu. Read all about how you can boost your immune system to improve your chances of avoiding flu this winter.

Wishing you all a peaceful weekend.

Regards,
Riaan and the Evergreen Team

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WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

MON 15 APR	09h30 SKY LOUNGE MOVEMENT CLASS			
TUE 16 APR			14h00 SKY LOUNGE KINITTING GROUP	
WED 17 APR		10h15 POOL AQUA AEROBICS		18h00 RECREATION LOUNGE BINGO
THUR 18 APR	10h30 RECREATION LOUNGE FELLOWSHIP	14h00 BISTRO RUMMIKUB	15h00 BISTRO TEA & CAKE	
FRI 19 APR	11h45 SKY LOUNGE WOL AAN DIE ROL			
SAT 20 APR				18h00 BISTRO RESIDENT BRAAI
SUN 21 APR				



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

19th Jeanne Daniels - A314
19th Sophia Mentor - A214
22nd Clive Whitson - A110
25th Brenda Nieuwstad - A306
26th John Richards - A305
27th Mona Randall - A209
27th Sue Butcher - A301



Bistro

LUNCH MENU

15-21 APRIL

MONDAY - R45

Option 1- Mild butter chicken curry with savoury rice and sambals

Option (V, GF) - Mild potato & chickpea curry with savoury rice and sambals

TUESDAY - R45

Option 1- Beef burger with chips and onion rings

Option (V) - Plant-based "beef" burger with chips and onion rings

WEDNESDAY - R45

Option 1- Honey and mustard pork chop with potato wedges and side salad

Option (V) - Plant-based cornish pie (homemade) with potato wedges and side salad

THURSDAY - R45

Option 1 - Italian chicken puttanesca on savoury rice, with a side salad

Option (V) - Plant-based "meatball" puttanesca on savoury rice, with a side salad

FRIDAY - R45

Option 1 - Fish and chips with a side salad and tartar sauce

Option (V) - Toasted pita bread with falafel and tzatziki, potato wedges and side salad

SATURDAY - R60

Take-away only - Beef lasagna with a garlic roll and green salad

SUNDAY - R60

Take-away only - Roast gammon with garlic baby potatoes, savoury rice, creamed spinach and roasted pumpkin

Meal orders close on the day prior to when the meal is ordered for, at 14h00 | Weekend take-aways and Monday orders close on a Friday at 14h00

Music Evening

25 APRIL | 19H00

PROGRAMME

VIVALDI: LUTE CONCERTO IN D

SYMPHONY SEVILLE ROYAL ALCALZAR PALACE SEVILLA,
CONDUCTOR JOSE BUENAGU, CLASSICAL GUITAR JOHN
WILLIAMS

~

CHOPIN: PIANO CONCERTO NR 1

POLISH RADIO CHAMBER ORCHESTRA,
CONDUCTOR AGNIESZKA DUCSMAL, PIANIST OLGA SHEPS

~

BRUCH: KOL NIDREI

FRANKFURT RADIO SYMPHONY
CONDUCTOR PAAVO JAEVI , CELLIST MISCHA MAISKY

~

ROBERET SCHUMANN ARABESQUE IN C MAJOR

PIANIST EMIL GILELS

~

CLARA SCHUMANN BALLADE OP 6 NO 4

KUMHO ART HALL YONSEI, PIANIST HYE-SEON LIM

RSVP AT RECEPTION

HOW TO DRY AND STORE FRESH GARDEN HERBS

USE YOUR GARDEN HERBS WELL INTO WINTER

The herbs from your garden are best when used fresh, but there are always more than you can use in one season. That's where learning how to dry herbs comes in. Air drying is not only the easiest and least expensive way to dry fresh herbs, but this slow drying process can also help retain the essential oils of the herbs, which helps to maintain their flavour.

BEFORE GETTING STARTED

Air drying works best with herbs that do not have a high moisture content, like bay, dill, angelica, marjoram, oregano, rosemary, summer savoury, and thyme.¹ To retain the best flavour of these herbs, you'll either need to allow them to dry naturally or use a food dehydrator. A microwave or an oven set on low may seem like a convenient shortcut, but they actually cook the herbs to a degree, diminishing the oil content and flavour. Use these appliances only as a last resort.

If you want to preserve herbs with succulent leaves or a high moisture content, such as basil, chives, mint, and tarragon, you can try drying them with a dehydrator, but for the best flavour retention, consider freezing them. It's easy to do and even quicker than drying.

ARTICLE BY:
THEspruce.COM



WHEN TO HARVEST YOUR HERBS FOR DRYING

When you're ready to make a final trimming of your herbs for the season:

Harvest herbs before they flower for the fullest flavor. If you've been harvesting branches all season, your plants probably never get a chance to flower. However, by late summer, even the herbs that have not yet flowered will start to decline as the weather cools. This is a good time to begin harvesting and drying your herbs.

Cut branches in midmorning. Let the morning dew dry from the leaves but pick before the plants are wilting in the afternoon sun.

Do not cut the entire plant, unless you plan on replacing it. You should never cut back by more than 2/3 or remove more than about 1/3 of a plant's branches at one time.

Once dried and stored in airtight containers, herbs will retain good flavour for up to one year.



HOW TO STORE HERBS

Once you've completed the drying process:

Discard Any Mouldy Herbs

Discard any dried herbs that show the slightest sign of mould. It will only spread.

Store Herbs in Airtight Containers

Store your dried herbs in airtight containers. Small canning jars work nicely. Zippered plastic bags will work, as well. Your herbs will retain more flavour if you store the leaves whole and crush them when you are ready to use them.

Label and Date the Containers

Label and date your containers.

Place Containers in a Cool, Dry Spot

Place containers in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight. You can choose amber-colored canning jars that are designed to block sunlight.

TIPS FOR USING DRIED HERBS

You can begin using your herbs once the drying and storage process is complete:

When you want to use your herbs in cooking, simply pull out a stem and crumble the leaves into the pot. You should be able to loosen the leaves by running your hand down the stem.

Use about 1 teaspoon of crumbled dried leaves in place of 1 tablespoon of fresh herbs.

Dried herbs are best used within a year. As your herbs lose their colour, they are also losing their flavour.



HOW TO DRY FRESH HERBS

Gather Clippings

Gather the clippings you wish to dry.

Shake the Branches

Shake the branches gently to remove any insects. There are always hitchhikers, and since you won't be thoroughly washing the stems, get rid of as many as you can right now.

Make Sure the Herbs Are Dry

If you've picked your herbs while the plants are dry, you should be able to simply shake off any excess soil. Rinse with cool water only if necessary and pat dry with paper towels. Hang or lay the herb branches out where they will get plenty of air circulation so they can dry out quickly. Wet herbs will mold and rot.

Remove the Lower Leaves

Remove the lower leaves along the bottom inch or so of the stem. You can use these leaves fresh or dry them separately. Remove any dry or diseased leaves from the cut herbs during this time. Yellowed leaves and leaves spotted by disease are not worth drying. Their flavor has already been diminished by the stress of the season.

Bundle the Stems Together

Bundle four to six stems together and tie them as a bunch. You can either use a string or a rubber band. The bundles will shrink as they dry and the string will loosen, so check periodically to make sure that the bundle is not slipping. If you are trying to dry herbs that have high water content, make small bundles so they get air flowing between the branches and do not rot.

Add the Herbs to Paper Bags (Optional)

Though this step isn't completely necessary, some find that paper bags aid in drying out the herbs more quickly and thoroughly. Punch or cut holes in a paper bag, and place the bundled herbs inside, upside down. Secure the bag by gathering the end around the bundle and tying it closed. Make sure the herbs are not crowded inside the bag. Label the bag with the name of the herb you are drying.

Hang the Herbs Upside Down

The oldest way to dry herbs is to take a bunch, hang it upside down in a warm, airy room and let nature do the work.

COGNAC VS BRANDY

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

All Cognacs are brandy, but not all brandy is a Cognac.



Maybe you already appreciate Cognac and brandy as sipping spirits and have the sniffers to match, or maybe you've noticed them listed as ingredients on craft cocktail menus. But what exactly is the difference?

WHAT IS COGNAC?

Cognac is a type of brandy distilled from wine made in France's Cognac region. Cognac is twice distilled from the blends of various wines and then aged in oak casks. It can be enjoyed as an aperitif, digestif or in cocktails.

"Cognac is a highly regulated grape wine, where the Appellation D'origine Controlée (AOC) dictates the quality based on four grape varietals, fermentation, distillation, maturation, blending and eventual bottling," Oakes explains.

Cognac is often sipped neat, in a snifter or mixed into classic cocktails such as a Sidecar, Sazerac and Vieux Carré.

WHAT IS BRANDY?

Brandy is a category of spirits made from distilled fruits. Grape brandy is distilled from white wine and aged in wooden casks (typically oak). Fruit brandy is made from fermenting fruits other than grapes, such as apple, pear, cherry, raspberry, peach or plum brandy.

"Brandy comes from the Dutch term Brandewijn, which means 'burnt wine,'" Oakes explains. "It is a term for a grape distillate, unless another fruit is used to make the wine, such as apple brandy."

Examples of well-known fruit brandies include Calvados, an apple brandy made in Normandy, France; Framboise, a raspberry brandy from Alsace, France; and Slivovitz, a plum brandy from the Balkans and eastern Europe.

Brandy can be sipped neat (ideally in a snifter), on the rocks (ideally with a large ice cube) or mixed into drinks, like this Red Sangria or these Pear-Brandy Cocktails. For more info and brandy recipes, check out our What is Brandy guide.



ARTICLE BY:
FOOD NETWORK



COGNAC VS BRANDY: KEY DIFFERENCES

In a nutshell, all Cognacs are brandy, but not all brandy is a Cognac. Brandy is a general term for a grape-based distillate that has no restrictions of grape varieties, region of production, size of capacity, aging requirements or production constraint. Cognac is a specific type of brandy and denotes a process of making it that is regulated the AOC in France.

Here, Oakes breaks down the key differences between Cognac and brandy, including ingredients, region of production, fermentation, distillation, aging and appearance.

INGREDIENTS

Cognac must be made with specific grape varieties including Ugni Blanc, Folle Blanche, Colombard and perhaps Muscat, harvested early enough to maintain acidity (but lower sugar/alcohol potential). One distinct tradition some Cognac houses praise is the adding of clean rainwater captured to proof down or reduce the highly alcoholic spirit to something closer to bottle strength, often 80 proof.

Brandy can be made with any type of grape variety; fruit brandies are made by fermenting fruits other than grapes and must be labelled as such, i.e. apple brandy, peach brandy or pear brandy.

REGION OF PRODUCTION

Cognac must be produced in Cognac region of France, which includes six distinct areas: Grande Champagne (considered the epicenter), Petite Champagne, Borderies, Fins Bois, Bons Bois and Bois Ordinaires. Brandy does not have any restrictions on where it can be produced and is made all over the world.

FERMENTATION

Cognac must be fermented in a certain way and completed in a certain seasonal window (March 31). Brandy does not have any regulations surrounding fermentation.

DISTILLATION

Cognac is distilled slow and low, most often over an open fire in a specific copper still called a

Charentais, which is a specific size, proportion and material to ensure proper quality. Cognac must be twice-distilled per regulations.

AGING

Apple and grape brandies are often aged in wood (typically oak), which imparts an amber hue. Cognac is aged in French oak, most often from a specific forest in France (Limousin). The procurement and processing of this specific oak is in and of itself a special art, science and craft. Barrels of Eau de vie are aged in particularly designed barrel cellars called Chai. The French term the process elevage or 'barrel rearing,' to express the upbringing of spirit, like rearing children. This includes blending and slow reduction with waters that have also aged.

APPEARANCE

Cognac is aged in French oak and gives it a rich amber color. Apple and grape-distilled brandies are often aged in wood, including oak, which imparts an amber hue. Other varieties of brandy that aren't aged in wood, such as eau de vie, are clear.

5 Ways To Boost Your Immune Response Ahead of The Flu Season

“Strike before the sniffles do!”



It has been four years since the Covid-19 pandemic turned the world upside down, but we have also witnessed its beneficial impact on how we approach immunity, particularly during the cold and flu season.

With around a billion cases of seasonal influenza annually, according to WHO data, including 3–5 million cases of severe illness, it pays to take proactive measures to boost your immunity ahead of the coming cold and flu season with these tips.

1. Get the seasonal flu vaccine

The success of Covid-19 vaccines boosted public confidence in vaccination as a preventive strategy, which translated into increased willingness to get vaccinated against seasonal flu.

The flu vaccine specifically targets and builds immunity against the most prevalent influenza virus strains for the upcoming flu season based on national health authority predictions for their region.

Following a vaccination, when exposed to these strains, your immune system recognises and fights them off, preventing illness or reducing its severity.

The flu vaccine's effectiveness varies each year depending on how well the predicted strains match the circulating ones, but studies confirm that vaccines reduce symptoms.

Data from the Centres of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the US, during seasons when flu vaccine viruses are similar to circulating flu viruses, the vaccine reduces the risk of having to go to the doctor with flu by 40% to 60%.

And the vaccine offers even better protection against severe illness and hospitalisation from flu, with a 2018 study showed that among adults hospitalised with flu, vaccinated patients were 59% less likely to be admitted to the ICU than unvaccinated patients. Among adults in the ICU with flu, vaccinated patients spent four fewer days on average in the hospital than those who were not vaccinated.

One study shows that getting the seasonal flu vaccine from your local Dis-Chem can also reduce infection rates from circulating Covid strains.

2. Take preventative measures

The non-pharmaceutical measures introduced during the pandemic still apply to any cold and flu season as they help to prevent viruses from spreading.

These measures include frequent hand-washing, avoiding close contact with sick individuals, and maintaining good hygiene. Avoiding hand-to-hand or close contact is also recommended during cold and flu season to reduce the risk of contact transmission.

Wash your hands thoroughly after any person-to-person contact or after coming into contact with potentially contaminated surfaces. While this is a less common cause of infection compared to transmission via respiratory droplets in the air, viruses can survive on surfaces for some time, depending on specific virus and environmental factors like temperature and humidity. However, proper hand hygiene significantly reduces the risk of transmission through this route.



3. Eat your way to greater resilience

Eat a diet that consists predominantly of whole natural foods, with a variety of colours from fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

These foods are nutritious, providing a rich source of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that support your immune defences by providing the nutrients your body needs to produce and repair immune cells.

Ideal foods include berries, citrus, leafy greens, sweet potatoes, quinoa, brown rice, and lean protein sources like fresh fish, poultry, beans, and lentils. Healthy fats like olive oil, nuts, and seeds offer anti-inflammatory benefits and support vitamin absorption.

It is also advisable to limit or avoid processed foods, which generally lack essential nutrients and typically contain added sugar and manufactured fats, which can hinder your immune response due to their roles in inflammation and dysregulation of the gut microbiome.

4. Create a healthy lifestyle

Creating and following a healthy lifestyle that includes regular exercise and sufficient sleep will support your immune defences.

Engaging in moderate-intensity exercise for at least 150 minutes per week helps to stimulate immune cell production and circulation. These activities can include simple tasks like brisk walking, swimming, biking, or dancing.

The more of these activities you do outside, the better, as getting out into nature can reduce stress and promote immune function.

The other key element in your lifestyle is sufficient restorative sleep – between 7-9 hours a night – can help improve your resilience to infections.

Studies consistently demonstrate that sleep enhances the adaptive immune response against the invading viruses.

5. Supplement strategically

Research links a vitamin D deficiency with the increased susceptibility to infections. As sunlight exposure typically decreases in winter, a vitamin D supplement can help to boost levels and improve your immune response.

Vitamin D sublingual sprays offer a convenient option with potential benefits over orally administered supplements due to faster absorption rates and improved bioavailability. Additional options include tablets and effervescent tablets.

A zinc deficiency can also negatively impact immune function and increases your susceptibility to infections. This important mineral supports proper immune cell development and function, making it vital to an optimally-functioning immune response.

Zinc also acts as an antioxidant, protecting cells from damage caused by free radicals, and possesses anti-inflammatory properties. In addition, sufficient zinc is essential to maintain skin and mucous membrane integrity, which act as first-line barriers against viruses and bacteria. As such, a supplement can help to meet any shortfall in your diet.

Adding probiotic-rich foods and supplements to your immune-boosting plan is another way to support optimal immune health and function.

A healthy gut microbiome that hosts a diverse range of beneficial bacteria strains supports immunity by providing barrier protection against potentially harmful pathogens entering your bloodstream. Gut bacteria also communicate with the immune system through various signalling molecules, influencing immune cell production.

ARTICLE BY:
DISCHEM MAGAZINE