



MEDIA RELEASE

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Inspiring winter meals - made better with dairy

Have you hit that mid-winter slump where you find yourself repeating the same familiar meals? We ask a lot from our winter food. It needs to support our immunity and wellness while also giving us the nourishment and comfort we need through the coldest months.

But cooking doesn't have to become part of winter's drag. It can lift the season and be an important source of cheer through the senses as our kitchens fill with warmth and rich aromas. At a time when we naturally feel like retreating, winter cooking can be an avenue for adventures of the culinary kind, and the best reason to still gather around a generous table with friends and family.

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Dairy is an important part of bringing many of our favourite winter meals together. Whether it's milk in a silky sauce, yoghurt added to stews, amasi in meat marinades and bright, creamy dressings or mouth-watering baked puddings with custard, dairy has an exceptional ability to transform everyday ingredients into dishes that are full of flavour, texture and nourishment.

Why dairy has the advantage

According to Maretha Vermaak, Registered Dietitian at Rediscover Dairy, milk, amasi, yoghurt and cheese also make a unique nutritional contribution to our wellness as we navigate the peak of winter's cold temperatures.

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She says, “While focusing on more hearty meals to help maintain body temperature is instinctive, we also want to ensure the nutritional balance needed to protect our health. Dairy foods offer a unique nutritional profile from high-quality protein to bone-building calcium and immune-supporting vitamins and minerals. What we have to remember is that every time we include milk or other dairy products in our winter meals, we are improving our nutritional intake for that day.

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From a bowl of warm, milk-soaked breakfast oats to a yoghurt drizzle brightening a vegetable salad or a cheesy-topped casserole, there are so many ways to find comfort while ensuring that every family member gets two to three dairy servings every day.”

As Maretha points out, one of dairy's greatest strengths is its versatility. It doesn't belong to just one type of cuisine or one style of cooking. It enriches pasta bakes, balances bold spices, complements roasted vegetables and soups, adds freshness to salads and creates nourishing sauces without overwhelming other ingredients.



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Maretha adds, “Dairy is so varied that you can easily replace cream with milk, yoghurt or amasi to limit the kilojoule content of a winter dish, but still retain the flavour and texture of dairy.”

Whether you're preparing a quick midweek supper or a leisurely weekend meal, dairy helps turn simple ingredients into memorable winter favourites.

Winter cooking with dairy

This season, Rediscover Dairy has selected six delicious recipes that illustrate just how adaptable dairy can be in winter cooking. It's a recipe collection with global flair where familiar dairy ingredients like yoghurt, cheese, milk and amasi adapt beautifully to different herbs, spices and flavour profiles.

Mexican bowl with amasi & herb dressing – A colourful, high-protein one-bowl meal combining Portuguese-spiced chicken, rice or bulgar wheat for a high fibre option, smashed avocado, kidney beans, sweetcorn, cottage cheese and a fresh tomato, mango and red onion salsa. A creamy amasi dressing blended with parsley, coriander, chives, honey and wholegrain mustard ties all the vibrant flavours together.



Winter fisherman's pie -

Chunks of white fish, smoked fish and prawns are folded into a rich, milk-based sauce with leeks, spinach, peas, dill and chives. Topped with crisp, golden puff pastry, this comforting seafood pie is packed with flavour and perfect for sharing on a chilly evening.



Cheesy lasagne – There's nothing quite like a homemade lasagne in the middle of winter. This veg-forward take on the Italian classic layers a rich beef mince sauce made with carrot, thyme, tomatoes and garlic with tender lasagne sheets and a creamy cheddar cheese sauce. Finished with extra cheddar, basil pesto, paprika and roasted tomatoes, this is the ultimate winter comfort food.



Roast beetroot salad with herbed amasi dressing –

Amasi is such a quintessential South African ingredient, and it's fun to find new ways to use this versatile ingredient. Here, sweet roasted beetroot is paired with peppery wild rocket and crunchy toasted almonds for a hearty winter salad. A smooth dressing of amasi, fresh herbs, lime, ginger, garlic and warm spices adds a creamy, zesty finish that complements the earthy beetroot beautifully.





Spicy roasted winter vegetables with za'atar yoghurt - A colourful medley of roasted butternut, sweet potato, carrots, baby marrow, peppers, cauliflower and red onion is seasoned with smoked paprika, cumin, coriander and a hint of chilli. Served with a creamy za'atar yoghurt dressing brightened with lemon, fresh herbs and garlic, it's a warming dish that balances bold spices with cool, tangy dairy.

Baked camembert with honey and herbs -

Creamy camembert cheese is topped with honey and fragrant herbs and then baked until irresistibly soft and gooey. Served with toasted French bread or ciabatta for dipping, it's a simple yet indulgent dish that's perfect for cosy winter entertaining, especially in front of the fireplace!



These winter recipes highlight that it's worth looking beyond the obvious ways of enjoying dairy. A splash of milk, a spoonful of yoghurt, a drizzle of amasi or a handful of grated cheese can completely change the character of a meal, adding richness, balance and valuable nutrients at the same time. However you choose to cook this season, dairy is an easy way to make winter meals more delicious and more nourishing.



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