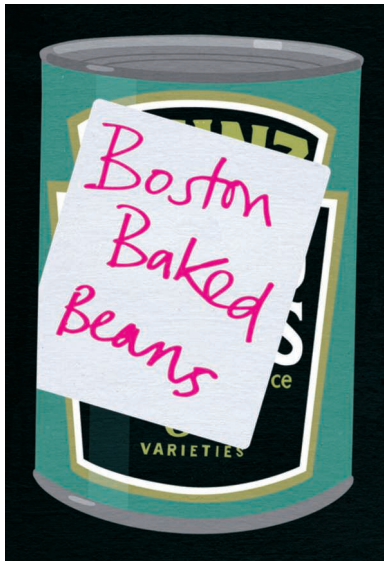


THE REAL...



BAKED BEANS by Rose Prince

If they can't see you open the can, they probably won't eat the beans. A child's unworldly palate has remarkable powers of recognition, yet an equal lack of basic good taste. Offer them real, authentic Boston baked beans, lovingly made in your own kitchen and they will ask instead for Heinz. If, however, you can be the one to initiate baked bean addiction without resorting to canned, prepare for a pleasant surprise. Authentic baked beans, served with sausages and buttered toast, are nicer. The dish is derived from a pottage, adapted by the Pilgrim Fathers on their arrival in Plymouth. Sweetened with molasses and apple, the flavour is then levelled with onion, mustard and a rib of smoked pork belly. Keep the vegetables grated and fine – onion pieces will be rejected out of hand...

For four to six servings, soak 175g of dry white haricot beans in water overnight. Preheat the oven to 150C/gas mark 2, heat four tablespoons of dripping in a large cast-iron casserole or earthenware dish, and add one grated white onion and one garlic clove, also grated. Cook until soft but not coloured, then add the drained beans, 200ml of passata, the grated flesh of a Bramley apple, a 150g hunk of bacon (previously soaked in water to remove the salt) and a tablespoon of molasses. Cover the contents with water – to a depth of 4cm above the beans. Put on the lid and bake in the oven for two to three hours until the beans are tender. You may need to add more water. Before serving, add one teaspoon of English mustard and one tablespoon of Worcestershire sauce; season to taste. Serve on hot buttered brown toast or muffins, with a fried egg.

Buying the goods Haricot beans

Dried haricots, £1.22 for 500g, or Suma canned haricots, 77p, both from Goodness Direct (0871-871 6611; goodnessdirect.co.uk).

Molasses Blackstrap molasses, 89p for 350g, from Goodness Direct, as above.

Cooking pot Le Creuset casserole, 20cm wide, £78, from johnlewis.com.

See **Weekend for Rose Prince's The Real English Cook**

Food news by Carolyn Hart



WHAT A BOAR Hunted out of Britain in the 18th century, wild boar have been reintroduced to the South West by Simon Gaskell, who farms them naturally on his 20-acre holding in the Cotswolds, where he lives with his wife, Louisa, and small son, William. Cuts available by mail order include wild boar salami with red wine and wild boar chorizo. The Gaskells also farm pigs, and offer hams cured to an Italian recipe using thyme, coriander, rosemary, pepper, allspice, cloves and garlic, dry-smoked for four days and then left to dry. The Real Boar Company also supplies 12 Michelin-starred restaurants, including Le Cinq at the George V hotel in Paris. From £7.50 for 200g of salami (01249-782861; therealboar.co.uk). **Photograph by Brijesh Patel**



BOX OF DELIGHTS

Why has no one set up shop as a larder editor – filleting out the superfluous packets and cans, identifying the gems and presenting his client with a list of gourmet decisions made? In fact, the restaurateur Mark Hix has done just that with his edited-down aspects of the culinary world; 'my choice of the best of the best', as he puts it. Contents include Little Wallop cheese, Loch Fyne smoked salmon, manchego cheese, smoked anchovies and stuffed peppers. Tio Pepe Gourmet Grazing Box, £45 (tiopepe.co.uk).

GLASS ART The gorgeous octagonal glass packaging is destined to become one of those keepsake bottles that gathers dust for the next 20 years. But who cares when the contents are so delicious; elderflower liqueur made from flower buds macerated in eau-de-vie and distilled grape spirit. Have it on the rocks or mixed with fruit juice, but don't hang about – only 10,000 bottles are made each year. St Germain elderflower liqueur, £20 for 70cl, from Harvey Nichols and Sainsbury's.



SUNDAE BEST

Irresistibly pretty 'fin de siècle' sundae glasses made in Portugal are now available here in four colours: clear glass, pink, red and blue. ICTC sundae glasses, £9.25 each (01603-488019; ictc.co.uk).



ILLUSTRATION BY LUCY VIGRASS