



LYDIA SLATER
TRULY SCRUMPTIOUS



TIME FOR TEA

There is something about the change of seasons that can make one far too twitchy to sleep. If you have problems nodding off, give up on the leaping sheep and try a tub of Sleepy Tea from Today Was Fun – it deservedly won Best New Food Product at this year’s Organic Industry Awards. Containing lemon balm, lime flowers and lavender, Sleepy Tea is so soporific that I rarely get to the end of the mug. The rainbow-coloured Teastack (£15; 0870 240 0092, www.todaywasfun.com) contains 20g of Sleepy Tea, along with three other organic tisanes, Happiness, Inspiration and Friendship.

TAKE 3 INGREDIENTS

Jerome Tavron, head chef at L’Etranger, suggests this tender confit of lamb shoulder

- 1 head of garlic
- 1 generous pinch of sea salt
- 1 lamb shoulder (not too fatty)

Crush the garlic with skin on, then rub it and the salt over the lamb. Cook in a preheated oven at 120C/250F/Gas Mark ½ for 10 hours. It is delicious served with baked aubergines.

L’Etranger, 36 Gloucester Road, SW7; 020 7584 1118

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PATIENCE, PLEASE

Anyone who hasn’t discovered Patience Gray has a treat in store. Like Elizabeth David’s, Gray’s cookery books are just as good a read in bed as they are in the kitchen. The Centaur’s Kitchen (Prospect £20), a manual she wrote in the 1960s for the education of cooks who worked on passenger liners, has just been published posthumously. The agreeably user-friendly recipes are accompanied by lovely illustrations, left, by her daughter Miranda.

TIP FROM THE TOP

“Coffee with a piece of chocolate is a traditional favourite, but neither can be fully appreciated when mixed. The chocolate aromas are drowned by the coffee, and the flavour of the coffee is hidden by the sugar in the chocolate. Try eating chocolate with a cup of tea instead”

Chloé Doutre-Roussel, chocolate buyer at Fortnum & Mason and author of *The Chocolate Connoisseur* (Piatkus £10)



SPOTTED

Natalie Portman is not as fragile as she looks. The barman at the Lonsdale in Notting Hill pulls no punches when mixing his cocktails, but the elfin Star Wars heroine downed a couple of Grey Goose vodka martinis with no obvious ill effects while discussing business with some serious film types. The force must be with her.