

## Young Co-operative Press Team



Tommy Hodgkins Year 10

### Keeping It Simple . . . the Zen of Cooking

'Keep it simple,' says Grandpa, 'No messing around'.

I am standing in my Grandparents' kitchen. Fragrant smells of spices caress the air. The songs of Jagjit and Chitra Singh play softly in the background. I am twelve years old. I am smiling. I am hungry.

Saag Aloo is possibly the first Punjabi dish I learnt to make. And it remains one of my favourites. Some of you reading may have heard of Saag Aloo – which translates simply as 'Spinach and Potato'.

You have no idea how many times people say to me 'I love a good curry'. I smile normally, and reply with sweet nothings, but underneath I am wondering, 'Have you had a good curry?' Most Indian takeaways serve mass-produced dishes, where the original ingredients have been smothered by too much flavour. What happened to keeping it simple? I often say that you can judge an Indian takeaway on its Saag Aloo.

If one cannot create a simple dish, taking advantage of the simple flavours of spinach and potato, then how can one expect to create a complex dish? It is like the clichéd term running before you can walk.

Cooking has followed me through my life like a noble and silent friend. I am still smiling. I am still hungry.

#### Sag Aloo (Serves four)

1 kilo potatoes, peeled and chopped into rough cubes of 1-2 cm (you can use any type you like, just preferably not salad or new potatoes)

250 gm frozen (preferably thawed) or fresh spinach  
 1/2 tsp. turmeric                      A couple of cups of water  
 1/4 tsp. chilli                              1 heaped tsp sea salt  
 1/2 tsp. ground coriander              Pilau or plain rice to serve  
 1/2 tsp. garam masala  
 1/2 tsp. ground cumin  
 2 tsp. whole cumin  
 1 tbsp. ghee, butter and oil mix, coconut oil, or any other oil of your choice,  
 (My favourites are coconut oil, or ghee)



1. Heat all the oil/ghee in a saucepan on a medium-high heat. Whilst it's heating, mix all of the ground spices together with a tablespoon or so of water to make your 'masala'.

2. First put the whole cumin in the pan – they should sizzle. Using a wooden spoon/spatula, mix the seeds for about five seconds. Then pour in the masala – it should bubble a little in the oil. Stir constantly for about ten seconds – until the spices smell fragrant and cooked.

3. Pour in all the potatoes, and a splash of water. Fold the potatoes into the spices. When they are all covered in the masala, add a couple of cups of water – so it half covers the potatoes.

4. Cover the pan. Bring to a boil. Turn the heat down. Simmer the potatoes for about fifteen minutes or so – folding them every few of minutes.

5. When the potatoes are cooked but still firm, add the spinach. Stir a little, and cover the pan again. Leave for about five minutes, stirring a couple of times, until the spinach is cooked. It should be fully mixed now with the potatoes.

6. Serve with rice.

## An International Flavour



We were delighted to welcome Anup Biswas - a long-standing friend of KEVICC - back to KEVICC to lead an Indian Music Workshop recently. Anup is not only a cellist of distinction, but also Founder of our International Link School, The Mathieson Music School, in Kolkata, India.

It was excellent – he had US friends with him, Kaye Boothman playing the Tanpura, and baritone singer Donald Boothman.

It was a very practical workshop where all students were involved in playing from the start (many with no experience of Indian music prior to this experience). Students were GCSE Year 10 and a range of abilities. He worked through several Raga through call and response, improvisation, question and answer and

imitation. He started with the A lap and then moved onto the Gat – where he introduced the tabla and the Tala for the piece. At no point did he tell us what the notes were he was using – only calling them the Indian names. It was very challenging for the students, but they loved it.

Group performances were held twice during the hour and a half session.

Nicky Hansford

## Another Perspective



### Mathieson Music School Kolkata

Stephen and Hilary Jones

KEVICC staff and students have had a link with this magical school, on the edge of Kolkata, since 2006. There are about 60 students at the school with the youngest being just 4 years old and going up to 18 years old. They live here during term time and spend most of their time within the school compound that is not much bigger than a football pitch.

Every single child loves the place and the sense of their happiness, safety and security pervades the school and it feels like one big family. Some of the students have been to KEVICC and Mathieson is keen to continue the link. Any time spent here will make a deep impact on you and put into perspective the lives we lead in the UK. Contact KEVICC for further details.

## It all adds up!



### Year 12 Maths Conference

Earlier this term, students in year 12 attended the Let Mathematics take you Further conference at Plymouth University, organised by the Further Mathematics Support Program. The key aim for the day was to emphasise that mathematics is fun, challenging and essential to a variety of careers. Students soon realised that, by actively choosing to study mathematics at A Level, they will have gained a valuable passport to a range of exciting university courses and inspirational careers. The day was informative and raised students' aspirations.

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contact us on **t 01803 869200** or visit us  
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