



Roasted Leek & Pumpkin Soup

Ingredients

1 1/2 tablespoon olive oil
3 cloves garlic
1.5kg butternut pumpkin, diced
20g butter
1 medium leek, trimmed, halved, washed, sliced
2 medium cream delight potatoes, peeled, chopped
1 litre Massel chicken style liquid stock
1 tablespoon pure cream
1 tablespoon chopped fresh chives
Ciabatta bread, sliced, toasted, to serve

Method

1. Preheat oven to 200°C /180°C fan-forced. Line 2 large baking trays with baking paper. Place pumpkin and garlic in a bowl. Oil & season with salt and pepper. Toss to coat. Arrange pumpkin mixture, in a single layer, on prepared tray. Bake for 40 minutes or until pumpkin is golden and tender.

2. Squeeze garlic cloves from skin. Reserve. Melt butter in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add leek. Cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until leek has softened. Add potato. Cook, stirring, for 5 minutes.

3. Add stock and 2 cups cold water. Season with pepper. Cover. Bring to the boil. Reduce heat to medium-low. Simmer for 15 minutes or until potato is tender. Stir in roasted pumpkin and garlic. Cook for 5 minutes or until heated through. Set aside to cool.

4. Blend pumpkin mixture, in batches, until smooth. Return to pan over low heat, stirring for 2 to 3 minutes or until heated through. Ladle into serving bowls. Drizzle with cream and sprinkle with chives. Serve with toasted ciabatta slices.

Sourced: <https://www.taste.com.au/recipes>

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Picture: Mackellar Care, Apex Road, Gunnedah



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Onward&Outward

We must forge stronger bonds with each other.

The last three months have been incredibly busy with much of this time focused on keeping our residents, clients and staff safe, whilst juggling to achieve so many other exciting things.

On the 3rd March we welcomed Yallambee to our McLean Care family and the Millmerran community has been overwhelmingly gracious, welcoming and supportive as we move through the transition process. We are also very excited to announce that we will be welcoming Mackellar Care Services in Gunnedah to the McLean Care family on 1st July, after Mackellar Care reached out to McLean Care in 2019. McLean Care and Mackellar have been friends and neighbours for a very long time and this is a natural progression of this friendship.

We also launched our latest innovation project 'Smart Homes' earlier this year where 25 of our clients from across the New England and North West of NSW have been trialling a range of smart home technologies designed to support older people to live at home independently. We have again partnered with Deakin University in this project bringing their valuable experience in technology design. Additionally, we have also partnered with Monash University in this project to explore the impacts of the specific technologies on everyday living.

We have a wonderful team of Executives whose focus on our COVID-19 Pandemic Planning have kept us all safe. We know that there is still a long way to go and we will continue to remain vigilant, making decisions that are exclusively focused on keeping residents, clients and staff safe.

We understand that there is confusion and stress at the moment, it's ok to say "right now this is really hard, and I am struggling". We are all struggling in our various ways and what's important is that we support each other and know that we are not alone.

Today, we live in a totally different world and the way we live our lives is also different. In the rush to manage day to day changes that COVID-19 brings, it is very easy to forget about the big picture.

I am so proud that our people have not forgotten that, continuing to prioritise the care of our residents and clients above all else. Please join me in thanking all our McLean Care staff for the work that they do.



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Independent Living Inverell: Goodwood Villas & Killeean Units. Oakey: Casuarina & Grevillea Units. Millmerran: Turallin, Domville, Clontarf, Kokoda

THIS ISSUE:

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If you look the right way, you can see the whole world is a garden.

Historically at Yallambee in Millmerran there have always been garden areas for residents to enjoy access to nature and beauty. Either to sit and enjoy or to be actively engaged in caring for the garden whilst interacting with other residents and families.

The positive effects of having access to a well designed outdoor area within a residential aged care facility is well researched . It has been proven that access to nature and outdoors has healing ability (Kaplan1995). Research indicates that physical and visual access to nature can have positive impacts for individuals with and without Dementia. It can help people recover from illness quicker, reduce stress and lower blood pressure and help maintain circadian rhythms. Access to regular sunlight aids in the absorption of Vitamin D as an extra benefit (Alzheimers Association).

“Beauty surrounds us- but usually we need to be walking in a garden to know it” (Rumi)

With recent refurbishments at Yallambee both staff and residents suggested that a garden committee be established and a project commenced to plan for new garden areas to be created. The Lutheran Church became aware of our project and donated \$2000 to assist us as well as a family of a deceased resident was incentive to commence planning of the area once known as the Harmony Garden - a scented garden with a water feature and meandering pathway for residents with access from the Memory Support Unit as well. The lifestyle team became aware of grants being offered to the Community by the Toowoomba City Council and an application has been lodged to further assist with the garden project.

The importance of the establishment of gardens for residents in aged care facilities work best when sustainability, orientation, accessibility, socialisation and solitude, meaningful activity, reminiscence and sensory stimulation, and safety balanced with independence are all key elements of a successful garden plan. A local gardener and nursery owner, Penny MacKinlay will assist with the garden design in line with Dementia garden guidelines from Alzheimers Association publications.

Never underestimate the healing power of a quiet moment in the garden. We can't wait to show you the finished product!

Looking after your mental health while self-isolating.

To help control the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) across the country, all Australians have been asked to practise social distancing. Older people are required to, or may choose to, self-isolate. Understandably, the challenges associated with social distancing and isolation, including separation from loved ones and loss of freedom are leading some people to experience feelings of anxiety, boredom, frustration and fear.



Positive social connections are essential for our mental health and can help us cope in times of stress. In the current crisis, we are being asked to distance ourselves from others so it is important that we maintain our social networks using available methods of communication.

1. Keep busy. Have a household project you've been putting off or been too busy to get around to? Now's your chance! Organise your pantry or put together that bookshelf that's been sitting in the corner. You might even consider learning a new language or trying a new hobby, like cooking or knitting.

2. Go on a digital detox - While it's important to stay up to date on the latest public health announcements, too much news consumption can increase feelings of stress and anxiety. If endless scrolling leaves you feeling overwhelmed, try setting aside regular time in the morning or afternoon to check your newsfeed and give yourself a time limit.

3. Pick up a book - Although watching TV can be an easy way to pass the time, reading or listening to audiobooks can stimulate your imagination and give your anxious brain a nice reprieve from reality. Research shows that reading for just six minutes can lower your blood pressure and ease tension in the muscles.

4. Communicate with others as much as possible - While physical contact may be limited right now, there are several ways to stay in touch with friends and family. Try to still connect with your friends and family through video chat or phone calls. Host a virtual "happy hour" or "coffee break".

We recommend even setting up recurring calendar invites for FaceTime check-ins with friends and family, as it can be hard to connect around everyone's busy schedules. You don't need to talk about the quarantine or COVID-19, and in fact it might be a good idea to keep that part of the conversation to 5-10 minutes and the rest of the time talk about other things.

5. Make a schedule - Studies show that following a routine can increase productivity, boost happiness levels, and help ward off depression. Even though you may not be heading into your regular activities right now, it's important to still follow a regular schedule. Having set wake up and shower times, as well as a normal meal schedule, can keep you feeling accomplished and energized while in isolation.

6. Practice good hygiene - If you are feeling well enough, continue your regular self-care. By that, we mean, keep showering and getting dressed in real clothes. While lounging in pyjamas with messy hair is fine at first, it is going to start feeling depressing. You don't need to wear a suit inside, but get out of your tracksuit for a while.

7. Stay Active - Just because you've been told to stay home doesn't mean you need to stop exercising. Exercise can help reduce elevated cortisol or stress levels, as well as trigger the release of endorphins, boosting your overall happiness. Go up and down your stairs or dance to some music. Move your body!

8. Practice mindfulness - It's important to remember that quarantine is not a punishment but actually a form of altruism. Focus on the fact that you are doing the right thing by staying home and preventing further spread of the virus and that those around you are grateful for what you are doing, even if they don't say so in so many words.

9. Get some Vitamin D - If you're able to, get outside and soak up some sun. Vitamin D plays a vital part in regulating your mood, as well as strengthening the immune system. Consider sitting out on your porch, balcony, or backyard. If you don't have a private outdoor space, even sitting by a sunny window can help.

10. Eat well - It's easy to neglect your nutrition when you're stuck indoors or not feeling well. When it comes to managing your anxiety, however, a balanced diet is vital for your health. Focus on eating fresh, unprocessed, whole foods in order to maintain a strong immune system.

A police recruit was asked during an exam, "What would you do if you had to arrest your own mother?" The reply, " Call for backup".

Medical Alert Systems. How do I choose the right one?

There are plenty of wearable medical alert options available today that provides first responders and others, information about a persons medical condition, in the event of an emergency or loss of consciousness in public.

From smartphones to jewellery, you may want to consider options that can either sense a fall or be as easy to use as pressing a button in the event of a fall. If you are concerned about falls, your family may want to move to a more advanced monitoring system. Here are some questions for you to consider to help you choose the best possible system for your family:

- What is your budget? Some services have monthly fees.
- Do you want home monitoring or mobile monitoring, or both?
- Do you need a system that works well for the hearing impaired?
- Do you want 24-hour monitoring?
- Do you want a fall-detection option? Medical alert systems may not automatically include fall sensing equipment.

You can also talk to your doctor, pharmacist or health care worker who are familiar with your needs if you are still unsure. It is important that you have the right device for your circumstances.



Smart Home Technology Project.

Our clients are progressing well with their smart technology and even the pets are getting involved. Below is a picture of Phoebe the miniature poodle taking a ride on Roomba the vacuum cleaner.

The smart buttons beside the bed to turn on a light in the bathroom have also become a popular choice for many. Several clients had this installed so that they don't wake up their partner at night, by turning on a bedside light. The bathroom light provides enough visibility to see where they're going.

Also with the recent global impacts of COVID-19 we have started implementing Google Hub Max which are a Smart display with camera so that video conference calls could be conducted while in isolation.

It's great to see so many clients have been loving their Smart home technology and it is evident that when occasionally something goes wrong they are quick to call to have this resolved. Goes to show how this technology has improved their way of live.

