



# Weekend COOKING

**T**he journey we are undertaking finds its roots far earlier than my childhood, when I helped my mother to bake. In fact we need to go back to 1873 when something occurred that would influence me as a child and throughout my adulthood. It took almost a hundred years for there to be any effect on my life, but that happened when as a child I was allowed to borrow some books from the adult section of a library. The first was 'Around the World in Eighty Days.' The author, Jules Verne, was a great visionary in

his writing, with prophecies of going to the moon, and travelling vast distances under the sea. But it was the journey of Phileas Fogg that first captured my imagination, inspired me to write, and gave me a yearning to travel which is still with me this day.

I am not a professional cook or chef; I am an aircraft engineer by trade, as well as an author of crime fiction. From an early age I had an interest in the preparation and consumption of food (particularly the consumption!), often helping my mother

bake. As I grew older, I tried making my own variations of recipes, sometimes with disastrous results, but on occasion something edible emerged.

So it seemed the most obvious thing to do would be to combine my love of food with my desire to travel, and embark upon a journey of discovery of the foods and people of the world.

Welcome to my 'Around the World in Eighty Dishes.'

*Glen R Stansfield.  
Author, biker and nutcase.*



## Colcannon

**T**here is evidence that even as far back as five-thousand years ago, crops such as barley and oats were being farmed, oxen-drawn ploughs were in use, and enclosures were established to contain livestock. Sometimes this livestock was kept purely for milk which was used with the grain to make porridge, but there were periods when the emphasis was keeping the animals for their meat and the grain to feed the livestock. Chickens were kept by individual households for their eggs and meat. Vegetables such as carrots, parsnips, celery, turnip, cabbage and onion, didn't make an appearance until around the 8th century.

The revolution in food came in the late 16th century, when the potato arrived from South America. The conditions in Ireland were ideal for potato growing and they could be stored to provide food over the winter. It turned out to be a blessing and a disaster. The population expanded rapidly, reliant almost entirely on this crop not only to feed their own families, but in many cases to sell to pay rent to the landowner. The poor of the land had become reliant on one crop for food and income and that's when the disaster struck.

In 1845, the crop was devastated by a fungal disease known as potato blight, which renders the potatoes inedible. The primary source of food and income for millions of people had been wiped out in one go. Farmers could no longer pay their rents and were evicted and they could no longer feed their families.

Yet there was no shortage of food in Ireland, just that the wealthy landowners, many of them English, preferred to export crops such as vegetables and grain rather than feed the starving, whom they did not see as any concern of theirs, and the English Government did little to help. More than one million people died of starvation or disease.

Colcannon is a very Irish dish in that it is a simple to make, has few ingredients, yet is a tasty and nourishing dish.

## WHAT TO DO

- 4 potatoes (around 1kg), peeled and cut into large chunks
- 2 tbs salt
- 5-6 tbs unsalted butter
- 3 lightly packed cups\* of chopped kale, cabbage, chard, or any other leafy green
- 3 spring onions (including the green part), finely chopped
- salt to taste
- butter for serving



## WHAT YOU NEED

- In a medium pan, cover the potatoes with cold water by at least 2.5cm.
- Add the salt, and bring to a boil.
- Continue cooking until the potatoes can be pierced easily with a fork.
- Drain in a colander.
- Return the pan to the cooker over medium-high heat.
- Melt the butter in the pan and once hot, add the greens.
- Cook for 3-4 minutes, or until wilted.
- Add the spring onions and cook for a further minute.
- Add the milk or cream, mix well, then add the potatoes.
- Reduce the heat to medium.
- Use a fork or potato masher to mash the potatoes, mixing well with the greens.
- Add salt to taste and serve hot, with a knob of butter in the center.



I hope you enjoyed the sixty-ninth of our eighty dishes from around the world. Please join me next time when we visit England.

## Nibble picks OF THE WEEK

### Lays Kettle Cooked

Everybody loves crunching on chips, especially the unique flavors', one gets to taste on. Lays, which has kept one hooked towards it by coming out with chilly, paprika, ketchup and a variety, has come out with another mesmerizing flavor, which contains 40% less fat, and is rich in cream cheese and chive. One may not find it in stores, but one can shop online and find a list at <http://www.fritolay.com/snacks/buy-online.htm>.



### Devon Ginger Nut Cookies:

Ginger, which started off from being used only for adding spice, is now being extensively used for preparing cookies, which is now becoming a rage among the masses. Devon Ginger Nut Cookies, proves to be the best snack partner, one can ever incorporate with tea or coffee. Try it out!



### Schar Maxi Sorrisi:

One has tasted a variety of biscuits, but tasting gluten free ones have been rare. Schar biscuits, which is free from wheat and preservatives, is a healthy choice one can make, in not bloating their tummies, and enjoying their snack moment, guilt free and dipping themselves in various flavors one can come across.

