



# SEASONS GREETINGS

*fresh news from the farm gate and beyond...*

## Recipe for a very merry market Christmas

### Ingredients:

- Capacious shopping bags/baskets
- Packhorses (if unavailable, partners/children/friends will do)
- Wallet
- An hour or so

### Method:

Gather first three ingredients and assemble at the Clevedon Village Farmers' Market on **Sunday, December 23** – for best results, arrive early. Using wallet, purchase large espresso and tasty bribes to keep your packhorses compliant (suggestions: hot chocolate, pastries, paletas, berries, hotdogs, Hungarian twisters).

Formulate basic Christmas menu. This may be traditional (succulent organic roast, new potatoes, assorted fresh veg), contemporary Kiwi (gourmet steak and sausies on the barbie, fresh salads, roast veg), fusion (Mediterranean spreads and dips, cheeses, chargrilled veg, salads, cured meats, crusty bread), or anything in between.

Purchase all provisions, feeling smug about superior quality of said provisions and congratulating self on avoiding enormous sweaty bad-tempered queues in supermarket.

Remember dessert. Consider purchasing lovely ingredients and making complicated confection to impress friends and relatives. Locate hand-made cupcakes, macarons and Christmas cake. Buy selection of the above and rehearse convincing lie about baking classes.

Mistakenly clobber passing dog in head with overloaded shopping bags. Deliver shopping bags to packhorses; slap packhorses away from cupcake box, take stock.

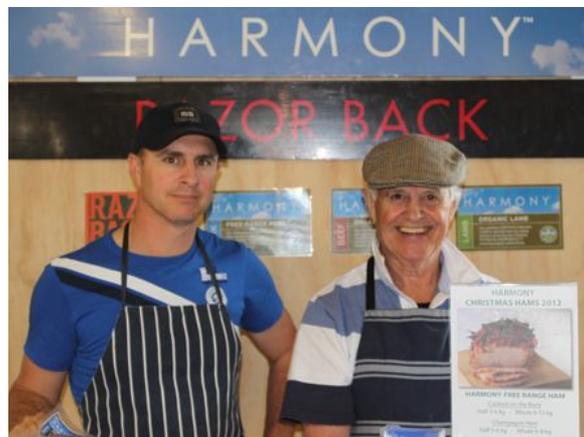
Remember gifts for tricky friends/relatives. Purchase hand-made beauty products/plants/deli items for the ladies, hunks of blue cheese/deli items for the blokes.

Consider home décor. Purchase stunning native bouquets/armloads of scented stock and snapdragons.

Purchase espresso. Breathe, check list. Load up packhorses and head home. Unload provisions and admire gorgeous Jamie Oliver-style still-life on bench. Congratulate self on superior shopping habits again, and open celebratory bubbly.

### Whey to go

Cheese-lovers will be ecstatic to hear that pioneering maker, Albert Alferink of Mercer Cheese, will be at the market in December. Albert has been making Dutch-style cheeses since the mid-80s, and his off-the-beaten-track Mercer shop has drawn foodies from near and far for decades. A Champion of Champions cheese award in 2009 reinforced what fans already knew – that Mercer Cheese produces the best Dutch-style cheese in the Southern Hemisphere ... if not the world.



OLLIE & DOUG  
HARMONY MEATS

The centrepiece of most Christmas tables is a succulent cut of meat – and you can't get better than Harmony Meat's delicious pork, beef and lamb.

Harmony's mission is to present meat of the very highest quality, and that means monitoring the entire growing process, from pasture to plate. The company's pork is SPCA-certified, and its organic beef and lamb has ASureQuality accreditation. Harmony's farmers grass-feed their animals and do not use pens or cages. All this adds up to fresh, succulent meat that you can serve with a clear conscience. Perfect.

### Dear diary...

A reminder that our last market for 2012 falls on Sunday, December 23. We take a break over the New Year period and reopen on Sunday, January 6. We wish everyone a wonderful, restful Christmas and a very happy 2013.

### Sharp thinking

Ensure your spectacular Christmas roast is sliced to restaurant-worthy perfection by visiting knife-sharpener Chris at the Blade Runners stall on December 2. While you're at it, resolve to keep your knives sharp throughout 2013 – Chris is at the market on the first Sunday of each month.

*"Christmas is a season for kindling the fire of hospitality in the hall, the genial flame of charity in the heart." - Washington Irving*

## RHUBARB CHAMPAGNE



Impress the rellies with your own 'homebrew' champagne – it's a beautiful colour, tastes great and has very festive bubbles. As the champagne brews, the sugar is converted into alcohol – so don't serve it to the kids!

20 cups cold water

1 lemon

3 1/2 cups rhubarb (the redder the rhubarb, the pinker the champagne)

3 1/2 cups sugar

11 tbsp cider vinegar

### *Method:*

Wash the rhubarb and lemon (don't peel). Cut up roughly.

Add to the water and sugar in an immaculately clean plastic

bucket. Stand in a cool place for 48 hours (no longer or the rhubarb will sour). Strain, bottle and cap\*. Place bottles in a cool place for two to three weeks. Makes nine bottles.

\* Rhubarb champagne is very fizzy – you may need to release the excess gas every few days if you use corks rather than sealed caps.

### **Top draw**

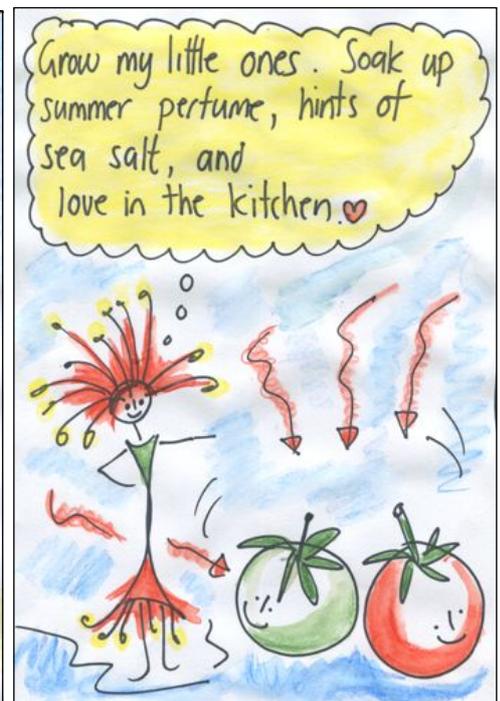
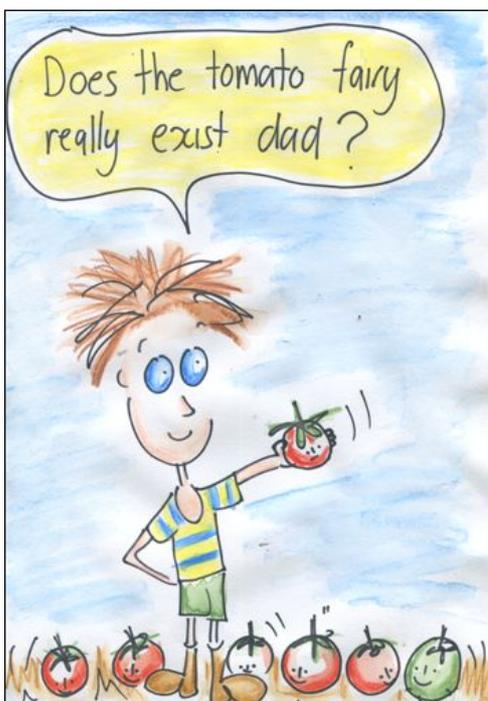
Remember to collect your tickets for the **GREAT CLEVEDON CHRISTMAS HAMPER RAFFLE** from December 2, because one lucky winner will take home over \$600 worth of mouth-watering market produce and provisions.

You will automatically receive entry tickets from stall-holders when you make a purchase over \$10. Once you've filled in your details, pop your tickets into the box outside the Market Espresso stall. The winner's name will be drawn on December 23 at 10:30am – the winner must be present to collect their prize. Good luck.



## TOMATOES IN MY HALLWAY

by the curious croppers



THE CLEVEDON VILLAGE FARMERS MARKET

Every Sunday 8.30am till 12 noon, Clevedon Showground, Monument Road, Clevedon. [www.clevedonfarmersmarket.co.nz](http://www.clevedonfarmersmarket.co.nz)