

THE ANSTEY, BRENT PELHAM & MEESDEN NEWSLETTER

October - November 2026

Diary of upcoming events

Tue 13 th Oct	Quiz Night at The Black Horse, Brent Pelham [see page 9].
Wed 14 th Oct	Anstey Chapel Cakes & Coffee, 10.30 – midday [page 5].
Sat 17 th Oct	Fundraising Quiz for Anstey Church, in the Village Hall. Doors open 7.00pm, quiz starts at 7.30 [page 4].
Fri 23 rd Oct	Anstey 'pop-up' Film & Social Club, Anstey Village Hall. Doors open 7.30pm, film starts at 8.00 [page 5].
Fri 30 th + Sat 31 st Oct	Yew Tree Alpacas 'Early Bird' Christmas Shop, 10.30am – 4.30pm [page 4].
Mon 9 th Nov	Anstey Parish Council Meeting, Anstey Village Hall, 7.30pm [page 5].
Tue 10 th Nov	Quiz Night at The Black Horse, Brent Pelham [see page 9].
Wed 11 th Nov	Anstey Chapel Cakes & Coffee, 10.30 – midday [page 5].
Fri 13 th Nov	Anstey 'pop-up' Film & Social Club, Anstey Village Hall. Doors open 7.30pm, film starts at 8.00 [page 5].
Sat 28 th Nov	Brent Pelham Christmas Market, 11.00am – 3.00pm [page 9].
<i>For Church & Chapel services, see pages 5 and 12.</i>	

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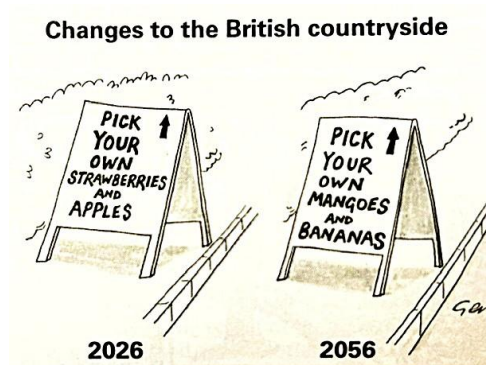
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(Private Eye)

GOOD GARDENING

Garden tips and ideas for October and November

2026 has been another very dry summer, and gardens everywhere are looking rather sad. However, after the recent rain the grass and some plants are starting to recover, so all is not lost. The general advice seems to be not to dig plants out yet, but wait and see what survives. Although the days are beginning to shorten there are still plenty of jobs to do in the garden in preparation for the coming year.

- ❖ October is the ideal month to plant tulip bulbs. Plant 15-20cms depth, 10-15cms apart. The deeper planting helps stabilise tall varieties and reduces the need for staking. 'Crocus' and 'Sarah Raven' have a wide range of different tulip varieties for you to buy on line. 'Darwin hybrid' (20cms) are the most reliable perennial tulip and 'Species tulips' (10cms) naturalise well and return every year.
- ❖ Garlic requires a cold period to help develop its cloves, so plant now for a successful crop next summer. Buy bulbs from a garden centre or online supplier.
- ❖ Don't be too quick to dispose of used tomato grow bags lying in your greenhouse. By cutting open the bags and exposing the compost, try growing winter salad. Varieties such as 'lamb's lettuce' and 'winter butterhead' are ideal to grow in the colder months.
- ❖ Now is a good time to lift, divide and replant perennial plants while the soil is still warm. The roots will have a chance to establish if done now, particularly if we have another hot summer in 2027!
- ❖ November is the ideal time to plant bare-rooted hedging plants. Native hedging mixes are readily available in garden centres, and online, and are excellent for wildlife.

Having recently visited the RHS gardens at Hyde Hall, Essex, here are two plants that were looking good in their dry garden at this time of year.

Zauschneria (California fuchsia 'Ed Carman')

A compact woody shrub with narrow grey/green leaves and bright orange/scarlet tubular flowers in late summer and autumn. Likes full sun, well-drained soil and is drought tolerant once established. Height

and spread 50cms. Trim back in early spring, take soft wood cuttings and overwinter in the greenhouse. Suitable for the edge of a border.



Pennisetum villosum 'White ladies'

A perennial grass forming tufted clumps of narrow arching green foliage with soft, cylindrical, creamy-white spikes, from midsummer to autumn. Likes full



sun and well-drained soil. Height and spread 60cms. Remove dead foliage and older flower stems in spring. Drought tolerant once established.

Why not consider joining the RHS next year and enjoy visiting their many shows and gardens available to members? You will also receive a monthly magazine with a wealth of information, including help and advice to keep your gardens looking their best. The subscription would make an ideal Christmas present!

Happy gardening, Wendy Hillier.

THE BENEFICE 'GOOD NEIGHBOURS' SCHEME

A reminder that local volunteers are available to drive you and help you, should you require it. If you need a lift to a hospital, or a doctor's surgery, or help with the shopping or with any other tasks, just give us a ring on **01763 848536**.

Please try to give advance notice, as same-day trips are rarely possible.

Patricia Hamilton

ANSTEY NEWS

www.ansteyvillage.co.uk

Items unacknowledged are written by the Editor.

ANSTEY CHURCH HARVEST FESTIVAL AND LUNCH

We were blessed with a beautiful day for this year's Harvest Festival on 30th August. During a well-attended Family Service in church, Robert Barker reported on a very tough year for farmers, due to the extreme heat and lack of rain. He also told us all about the Charolais cattle looked after by David and Louise Barker, and it was heartening to hear how well they are doing.

The collection taken during the service came to £339, to be shared equally between Water Aid and the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution. Also, tinned and packet food items were donated for the Buntingford Food Bank.

Following the service, between forty and fifty people attended the Harvest Lunch in the Village Hall and enjoyed delicious food and good company. Many thanks to all who helped organise, cook and clear up.



At the lunch Revd James was bidden 'bon voyage' as he would soon be leaving for a European pilgrimage, following in the footsteps of St Paul, at the start of his three-month sabbatical. All wished him well for this period of travel and study leave. James will be back in the Benefice for the start of the Advent season at the end of November.

Best wishes and a fond farewell were also expressed to Ann Grimsdale who, after almost 50 years living in AnsteY, is moving to pastures new in Eye, Suffolk. Ann has been such a good friend and colleague to many of us in the village, and has given tremendous service to the community as a member of the Parochial Church Council (where she held the positions of Treasurer and later Churchwarden) and the Fair Committee (as Treasurer and Secretary). Ann, you will be hugely missed by us all, but we wish you a long and happy life in your new home and – be warned – we will be visiting!

Ali Cossor

Ann writes:

'We moved to AnsteY in November 1977. I have spent my whole adult life up to now in the village, and I could not have asked for better neighbours and friends. I will miss village life, but I am now embarking on a new chapter as a Suffolk townie!'

ANSTEY FAIR – THE FINAL TALLY

The final tally for AnsteY Fair, which took place on Sunday 5th July, was well over £7,000 – a magnificent effort! This money will go to support AnsteY Church, the Village Hall, AnsteY Chapel and AnsteY School.

ANSTEY PLANT SALE

So far this year we have raised £320, which will be divided between St George's Church and Ukrainian medical charities. Now that the weather is more suitable for gardening, we will be having a variety of plants for sale again. Many thanks to all who have supported us.

Jenny, Wendy and Jan

REMEMBERING MARY PEARCE

Sadly we report the death of Mary Pearce. Mary lived in Roding House with her husband Anthony for many years. She later moved to Buntingford after the death of Anthony, but came back to AnsteY often. Mary died on 18th August and her funeral was in St George's Church on 8th September. She was a great character and will be much missed by her family and friends.

Jackie Godfrey



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FUNDRAISING QUIZ FOR ANSTEY CHURCH

It's time to get the little grey cells working again for Anstey Church's Quiz Night in the Village Hall on **SATURDAY 17th OCTOBER!** Doors open at 7 pm and Quizmaster Supremo Edward Burton starts firing his questions promptly at 7.30 pm. Teams ideally of 6-8, but there is some flexibility.

Entry £12 per head, to include a ploughman's supper. There will be a bar and raffle. Please bring some cash (including coins) if possible, but there will also be an electronic payment machine in operation. All profits will go to the running and preservation of Anstey Church.

Please let Jenny Goymour (01763 – 848271, email goymour@hotmail.com) or Alison Cossor (01763 – 848479, email alicossor@gmail.com) know if you would like to get a team together or join a team on the night.



Friday 30th and Saturday 31st October
EARLY BIRD CHRISTMAS SHOP
10.30am–4.30pm

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NEW ARRIVAL

Congratulations to Gemma and Jack Berry on the birth of their daughter Daphne Isobel, weighing 6 lbs 14 oz on the 3rd of September!



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ANSTEY FIRST SCHOOL AUTUMN UPDATE

The school year has started with energy, smiles and enthusiasm! It has been lovely being back in school with all the children.

Our first week has been focused on learning about healthy eating and nutrition. We are committed to learning far beyond the reaches of the national curriculum, and it was wonderful to see the children developing cooking skills that they can use all through their lives. The highlight of the week was an Italian Feast! Fledglings made insalata tricolore, with mozzarella and tomatoes, Little Owls served up some beautiful looking focaccia, and Wise Owls made us penne pasta with a roasted vegetable sauce. Bellissima! All the children loved trying their homemade food.

Richard McKelvey, Head Teacher

SPORT & EXERCISE CLASSES AT THE VILLAGE HALL

A reminder that there are four weekly classes in the Village Hall:

Tai Chi: Mondays 2.00 – 3.00 pm [£3]

Table Tennis: Wednesdays 9.30 – 10.30 am [£3]

Carpet Bowls: Wednesdays 7.00 - 9.00 pm [£3]

Yoga: Thursdays 9.30 – 10.30 am [£6]

Beginners are always welcome, and the first 'taster' session is free. Thereafter, it's 'pay as you go.' For more details, email:

dikkellett@btinternet.com

oxleydj@yahoo.co.uk

janpled@gmail.com

oxleykn@yahoo.co.uk

- Tai Chi

- table tennis

- carpet bowls

- yoga

ANSTEY 'POP-UP' FILM & SOCIAL CLUB

On Friday 18th September we showed EPiC: Elvis Presley in Concert. Our next two films will be shown on Friday 23rd October and Friday 13th November.

All members should receive an email in advance, with full details of the next film to be shown - please check your Junk / Spam folder if you can't seem to find it! Membership is £15 per annum, which allows free entry to up to 9 films throughout the year. New members can always join on the night, or contact colingsmith@gmail.com in advance.

Guests are always welcome, entry £4.

ANSTEY CHAPEL NEWS AND UPDATE

Everyone is very welcome at our **Harvest Festival** service on Sunday 27th September at 10.30am, with cakes and coffee afterwards. This will include a harvest report from a local farmer and a harvest display. If you like to bring an item of local produce for the display it would be very welcome.

Halloween - In the week leading up to Halloween the Chapel will have several window displays with messages of Light, Love and Hope. Do take a look when walking past, and if you've never been in the Chapel you are welcome to take a look inside.

Services - October and November services will be held at 10.30am on the following Sunday mornings;

October 4th, 11th & 25th
November 1st, 8th, 22nd & 29th

Our **Chapel Cakes and Coffee** is a lovely get together on the second Wednesday of each month. The next dates are Wednesday 14th October and Wednesday 11th November, 10.30 -12 midday. This is a chance to chat, make new friends and enjoy home-made cakes and coffee/tea (no charge) in a lovely, peaceful environment. All ages welcome, arrive anytime from 10.30 onwards.

If you'd like more details or would just like a chat please do call our Anstey Chapel contacts Stephen Wylie (Tel 07979 537689) or David Tweedale (Tel 07970963666).

PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting on Monday 21st September can be found on the village website at www.ansteyvillage.co.uk.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on **Monday 9th November at 7.30 pm** in the Village Hall. All parishioners are welcome to attend.

THURSDAY BRIDGE CLUB

You are welcome to join us at the Thursday Bridge Club, every Thursday from 2-4 pm in the Blind Fiddler. All standards are welcome, £2 per head including tea and biscuits. No need to book, just turn up for a warm welcome.

Jan Pledger

DEFIBRILLATOR

The Anstey defibrillator is located outside The Blind Fiddler, just to the left of the entrance porch. The code to open the cabinet is **3456**.

If you're dealing with a cardiac arrest, and administering CPR, there's a WhatsApp group which members can use to request the defibrillator. Another member of the group, if available, can then offer to deliver it. If you wish to join the group (which currently has 25 members) please text the Editor on 07802 733398.

There is also a defibrillator at Anstey School, available to the public from 8 till 5 during term time. It's located in the school office.

KEEP IN TOUCH - ANSTEY SOCIAL MEDIA

EMAIL - ANSTEYLINK village group:

ansteylink@gaggle.email

The group is managed by Sarah Cruise – contact cruise.s@icloud.com to join.

FACEBOOK: Anstey and Meesden Community Group.

The administrator is Gemma Jacobs.



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BRENT PELHAM NEWS

www.brentpelham-meesden-pc.org

Compiled and presented by Shirley Lacy

HERTS & ESSEX COUNTRY FAIR

The Park, Brent Pelham, Sunday 23rd August

This summer was provisionally the UK's warmest summer since records began in 1884, heavily impacting Hertfordshire with severe heatwaves and drought conditions. In the lead-up to the fair the grass in The Park was very brown. Luckily some rain came a few days before the fair, which helped reduce the fire risk a little... Fortunately, the day of the Country Fair was sunny and people came from miles around. The heavy horses were a great attraction.



Steve Reynolds was the commentator in the Main Ring. Events included falconry, gun dogs, dog behaviour, foxhounds, bassets, beagles, a demonstration by K9 Unity dog training and a parade of vintage tractors. There were also a record number of trade stands and displays, traditional games, and a funfair for children.

Many thanks to the Fair for supporting St Mary the Virgin Church, Essex & Herts Air Ambulance, Khandel Light and other local charities.

VILLAGE HALL TENT



Thanks to all who helped with the Village Hall tea tent this year at the Country Fair. All help from erecting and dismantling the tent, setting up tables and chairs, flowers, cake making and serving with a smile is very, very much appreciated! A huge sum was once again raised to keep our lovely village hall going.

Jackie, Erica and Lizzie



BETH FEATHERSTONE CELEBRATES HER 90th



Beth celebrated her 90th birthday on Tuesday, 25th August. Her flowers were from the Village Hall Committee.

Drinks at Beeches were followed by dinner with her family to celebrate.

KATE HINCH'S WING WALK FOR ABBIE'S ARMY, 23rd AUGUST

Congratulations to Kate Hinch, who has raised over £9,000 doing a Wing Walk, or rather a Wing Sit on the plane from Ethel Dares. Abbie's Army is a leading charity that funds research into childhood brain cancer. DIPG (Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma) is an aggressive and inoperable brain tumour that primarily affects children, usually between the ages of 5 and 10. Children diagnosed with DIPG are typically given a life expectancy of 9–12 months.

You can donate at www.justgiving.com/page/kate-hinch-1?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL



FAMILY FUN DAY, BLACK HORSE, 5th SEPTEMBER



The Black Horse held a great family fun day with a variety of children's games, face painting, a bouncy castle, craft stalls and a BBQ.

UPCOMING VILLAGE EVENTS

Black Horse pub quiz nights – now easier

Test your trivia knowledge at the pub quiz at the Black Horse, with quizmaster Dave Bromage. £3 per person to enter, and a £50 bar tab up for grabs for the winners. Now (slightly) easier!

Next dates: Tuesday 13th Oct, Tuesday 10th Nov.



SOCIAL MEDIA

The Brent Pelham community WhatsApp group (Village People) is administered by Hazel Norris (07850 092437) and Miro (07812 174646). To join the Brent Pelham birds WhatsApp group, message Dave Bromage on 07545 252191.

To add/change your name to the village email distribution list, send a blank email to frasermurray@me.com with your name and address in the header. Facebook pages: **The Pelhams** or Brent Pelham Village Community Group.

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MEESDEN NEWS

www.brentpelham-meesden-pc.org

Compiled and presented by Mike West

As I write we have just had some heavy rain, but as we all know, the summer has been exceptionally dry, something apparently we may have to get used to. All the village ponds dried up, apart from a residual 'wee' puddle next to Steve and Danielle by the green. Like last year, both ponds at Puddles Barn were completely dry and reminiscent of pictures from Sub Saharan Africa, though perhaps the vegetation on the bank was a still bit lush!



Dried up pond at Puddles Barn

Interestingly, as the pond dried, the mud fragmented into large pieces, but as drying continued these subdivided into smaller fragments. Doubtless there is some interesting physics relating degree of mud hydration and size and shape of the fragments ... if you like that sort of thing!



View, just before harvest, looking across the fields in the Anstey direction, near Manor Farm.

Wilfrid writes about the changing methods of harvest: "The idea of a revolution has had many iterations; French, Russian, and Tech are the ones that come to most people's minds, however there is one affecting us all living in the countryside that has been ongoing since the middle of the 19th century and before. Those who were lucky enough to go to the Country

Fair would have seen one of the earliest drivers of this ongoing Agricultural Revolution. This was the Sail Reaper, a machine originally pulled by a couple horses with a driver that could mow ten acres in a day, whereas a man with a scythe, a single acre.

The ongoing march has been relentless; after the reaper, then the binder, followed by the drawn combine harvester and then the combine itself, which has changed out of all recognition since its inception, so that a combination of reaping and threshing in one machine can now be minutely adjusted from the driver's seat. Prior to the combine, the threshing was done usually by a contractor; an operation requiring at least a dozen men, the steam engine and the belt-driven threshing machine. The latest combines can harvest up to 200 acres in a day with the combine driver and two tractors and trailers, whereas the last owned combine at Meesden Bury, on a very good day, would have managed 44 acres - this would have been in 1987. For a glimpse into the ongoing next stage of the revolution, see Clarkson's Farm – a must-see episode on Robotic Machinery.

The next harvesting stage, needless to say, is the conditioning and storage of the harvested crop, a process that too has been undergoing colossal changes."

MEESDEN VILLAGE HALL CLEAN UP

On August 1st and September 5th village hall work parties were held to give the hall a spring clean (except it was summer / autumn!), tidy up and to carry some maintenance and decoration. A band of willing volunteers worked tirelessly, transforming the rather grubby hall. Floors were swept and cleaned, cobwebs (of which there were many) were removed and curtains taken down and dusted. The hall itself



has developed a number of large cracks, some of which appear to be full wall thickness. In addition, there has clearly been some settlement of the porch, (probably because of the extremely dry weather; see

Ken's comment below) because the gap between the door and the frame had got to a point where the door could still be opened, even though it was locked!



Village hall work party taking a well-earned tea break. Photo: Trevor Hughes

Ken Newstead did a sterling job resetting the catch so that the door now closes and locks as it should. Ken also cleaned the patio, clearing the weeds and applied wood preservative to the planter in memory of Fred and Olive Fish (who used to live in the village) and the outside picnic table. The outside looks brilliant! Everyone's efforts are much appreciated, but special mention should also go to Julie Page (Lily's daughter), who painted the kitchen, so that, with the cleaned floor (courtesy of Theresa and Susie / 'Sooze'), the kitchen looks SO MUCH BETTER.

Despite everyone's hard work, there is still plenty more to do, so Chris is organising another work party day in November, (possibly the 14th – more details later). If you have some time to spare on the day, please come along.

MEESDEN PLANT SALES

As always, Elaine and Andrew's plant stall has a beautiful, colourful array. They write: "A very challenging gardening summer, but somehow we managed to keep most of our plants alive through the extreme heat and drought. At its peak we had 30 different plants for sale at our garden gate. Now, since the hosepipe ban, sales have dried up (ho ho!). Our



Look at the size of these hailstones! Photo: Liz Tansley

natural ponds completely dried out and deep ravines have appeared and all our mallard ducks flew away looking for water elsewhere. However, late in August our prayers were answered with thunder, lightning, heavy rain and hail stones in abundance, which



Andrew and Elaine's garden after the hail

coated the ground like a carpet. One could hear the garden sighing with relief, and the grass almost went green overnight. So, we must remember, when it starts to rain and does not stop for days, how much we depend on it to keep everything alive, including us. This year, besides giving some of the profits to our church in Meesden and Cancer Research, we decided to support victims of the earthquake disaster in Venezuela and those affected by Nepal's tsunami flooding. A reminder of how fortunate we are."

MYSTERY DRONE IN MEESDEN

Recently, Susie sighted a drone flying around above their house. As Susie commented; "If the drone pilot wanted to see what we were doing to the house and garden, he / she could have knocked on the door and asked!" One thought was the council might have used a drone to inspect the footpath at the side of Dave and Susie's house, but Ken checked with the council, and they don't own any drones. So, the mystery of who owns the drone remains!

THINGS ASTRONOMICAL

August was a rich month for astronomical observations. On the 12th we had the solar eclipse that



occluded about 90% of the sun. We were coming back from Scotland that day but just got home in time to hastily set up my binoculars to project the sun onto some white paper to

photograph it. Also on that day, the Perseid meteor shower was at its peak. I saw several around midnight and tried to take some photos, but only captured an occasional aeroplane!

INFORMATION FROM KEN NEWSTEAD

Meesden Defibrillator

A reminder about the Defibrillator in our Phone Box (access code C159X). It's there in case you or an ambulance team ever need it.

E-Mail Information

The Parish Council receives emails that could be of interest to all residents, which are forwarded to those on the distribution list. If you don't receive them and would like to, please get in touch with Ken, who will ensure that you get parish council communications. (clerk@brentpelham-meesden-pc.org)

Brent Pelham & Meesden Parish Council

Our next Parish Council meeting will be at 7.30 pm on Thursday 3rd December at Meesden Village Hall. We welcome residents of our Parish to join any of our informal meetings and share their views with the Parish Councillors that run our small Council. There is always a slot at the beginning of our Agenda to hear your views.

Meesden Village Hall

You may have noticed that our village hall has several cracks in the walls. These were reported to our insurer to inspect and see if repairs are covered by our insurance. The insurer sent a subsidence inspector to examine the hall, and he concluded the damage was primarily due to shrinkage of the clay subsoil that the hall is built on, due to the recent dry weather and close proximity of tree roots. They recommend that trees adjacent to the hall are removed or reduced in height and crowns thinned by 40%.

Further site investigations will also be carried out, in the form of trial and borehole excavations to determine the subsoil conditions and in an attempt to recover roots. They have also proposed level monitoring to determine degree and direction of movements precisely. Provided the cause of movement is addressed fairly quickly they anticipate repairs will be implemented in the next twelve to eighteen months.

St Mary's, Meesden services

The Rev. James Sawyer is now on a 3-month sabbatical, but services will continue at St Mary's and will be taken by visiting curates or the ministry team.

Holy Communion, 9:30am; 11th Oct., 8th Nov.
(Remembrance Sunday)

Service of Light, 5pm; 25th Oct., 22nd Nov.



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**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION [Dec-Jan]:
TUESDAY 10TH NOVEMBER**

The background of the poster is decorated with watercolor illustrations of autumn-themed items. At the top left, there are branches with leaves in shades of red, orange, and purple. At the top right, a large, light-colored pumpkin is partially visible. On the right side, there are more yellow and orange leaves. On the left side, there are green leaves. At the bottom left, a large green pumpkin is shown. At the bottom right, there is a yellow pumpkin and a branch with small red berries.

Anstey Chapel

HARVEST

Service

SUNDAY

27TH SEPTEMBER

Start 10.30am

A SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING
INCLUDING FARMER'S REPORT

If you would like to bring fruit or
vegetables for the harvest offering you
are very welcome

Coffee & Cakes after the service

**Anstey Chapel, Anstey, Herts.
SG9 0BP**

MANICOTTI

Manicotti means "little Sleeves", instead of making pancakes, you can use large ridge tubes of pasta.

Recipe

50g plain flour
15ml olive oil
100ml cold water

2 eggs, beaten
½ level tsp salt

For the sauce

15g butter
400ml tomato sauce

225g minced turkey meat

Filling

225g Ricotta or cottage cheese
Salt, pepper
100g Mozzarella, coarsely
grated

15ml grated Parmesan
cheese
1 egg beaten

Method

1. Beat together the flour, eggs, oil and salt with a wooden spoon until they are well blended. Add the water and beat the batter until smooth.
2. Brush a small frying pan lightly with oil and place on moderate heat.
3. To make pancakes, pour a small amount of batter into the pan, coat the bottom. Cook for about 30 seconds until the top is set and dry and the underside browned. Repeat with remaining batter.
4. Melt the butter in a large frying pan, add the meat and cook it until it is well browned stirring occasionally. Stir in the tomato sauce.
5. Simmer the meat sauce for 10 mins, then spoon one third of it evenly over the base of a roasting tin or ovenproof dish. Keep the remaining sauce hot.
6. Mix together the Ricotta and Parmesan cheese, add the pepper, salt and egg and stir well.
7. Spoon some of the cheese mixture down the centre of each pancake and sprinkle over the Mozzarella cheese.
8. Fold the pancake sides over the filling, so that it completely enclosed. Arrange the Manicotti seam down in the tin.
9. Spoon the remaining sauce over the top and bake at 190°C, gas mark 5, for 30 mins or until hot and bubbling.

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