

GECKO PRESS

# EGG & SPOON

An Illustrated Cookbook



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## Pipi Café

is my restaurant.

You'll find it in a little pink building  
in a village called Havelock North.

If Pipi was a cake – well, I am not sure she would  
want to be a cake – but if she absolutely had to be,  
she would be a rather old-fashioned one like a sponge.  
But not a normal sponge with cream and strawberries.

She would be very tall with about six layers so  
you might worry she'd fall over, but she wouldn't ever.

If Pipi was a dog, she would always be there right next to  
you or just behind, making sure you were safe, and she'd  
only leave your side at night when you were fast asleep.  
And no one would ever be quite sure where she went  
no matter how often they tried to follow her.

If Pipi was a mythical beast, of course she would be  
a dragon – I know unicorns are all the rage, but to be  
a green Chinese dragon covered in different-coloured  
lights would really be quite wonderful.

But the thing is, Pipi is a café . . . so for most  
of the time anyway she's not a cake or a dragon  
or a dog. Still, if she were to be a cookbook  
she'd be this one.









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## GETTING STARTED IN THE KITCHEN

Cooking is all about anticipation and hunger — neither of which are conducive to preparation! But to cook well, it's worth taking the extra time to follow these steps.

- Read the recipe through so you have an idea of each stage and how long it might take.
- Assemble your pots, pans and utensils.
- If you need to line a tin, do that first.
- Get out all the ingredients listed and check you have everything you need.

See the 'how to' entry in the index for a list of cooking tips and techniques. And below for the cooking equipment I use often and refer to throughout the book.

### FOR MIXING

**Food processor** (also called **kitchen whizz**, **blender**) for blitzing up soups or hummus, making nut butters, making quick pastry. A **hand-held blender** (stick mixer or wand) can do some of these jobs too.

**Electric beater** for mixing ingredients when making cakes and biscuits, or whipping cream and egg whites. You can use a whisk but an electric beater makes things much quicker and easier, especially for cakes.

**Whisk** to beat up batters like pancake mix and to whisk eggs.

**Scales** for weighing ingredients, particularly when baking.

**A variety of bowls** of different sizes for mixing.

### FOR COOKING ON THE STOVETOP

**A variety of pots:** a large pot for making stock, soup, popcorn, or large amounts of rice and pasta; a medium-sized pot for smaller soups, rice, pasta and sauces; and a small pot for cooking smaller quantities of sauces and mixes to add to a recipe – and for boiling eggs, of course.

A wide, flat **frying pan** for cooking pancakes and French toast, browning meat, frying fritters. For fritters in particular, use a heavy-based pan – often the oldest one will be the best.



### FOR COOKING IN THE OVEN

**Oven-proof pan:** a round-shaped heavy pan, often with a lid, that can go in the oven and on the stovetop. For making stews, or anything that you start cooking on the stove then finish in the oven.

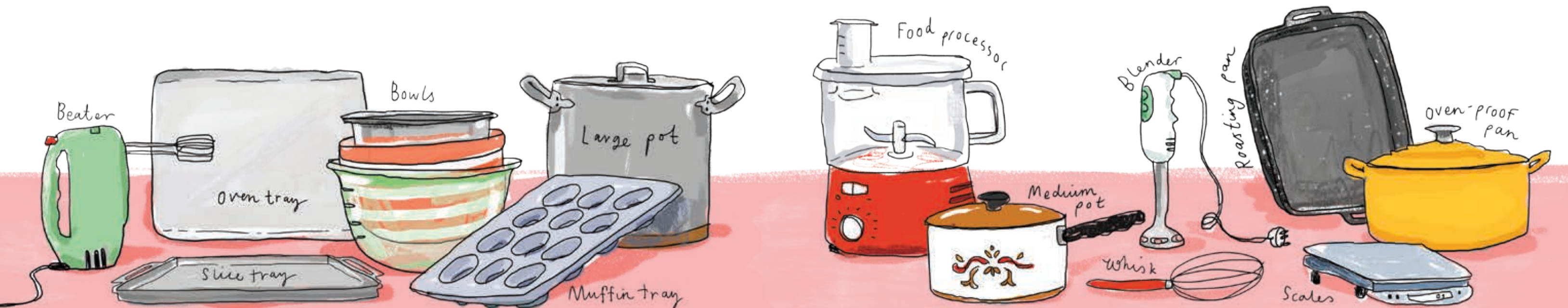
**Oven tray** for cooking biscuits, bread or toasties.

**Slice tray** (or **sponge roll tin**): a rectangular tray with sides, for making slices or flat cakes or toasting nuts.

**Roasting pan** with deepish sides for roasting vegetables, chops, a chicken.

**Muffin tray** for muffins and small cakes. It's a good idea to line the muffin tray with paper cupcake wrappers so the muffins come out easily.

**Cake tin** – very important!





BREAKFAST





## STRAWBERRY CHOCOLATE TOASTED MUESLI

*Makes 8 servings.*

Muesli can be very boring, I know – but it doesn't have to be. If you make it yourself you can have absolute control over what goes into it. Make this recipe as it's written here first and then use it as a guide, adding your favourite nuts, fruits and any other bits and pieces you can sneak in ...

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Line a roasting pan with baking paper.

In a large bowl, mix the oats, seeds and nuts together. In another bowl, combine the oil, honey and orange juice, then pour this over the oat mix. Stir well until all of the oats are covered with the liquid mixture.

Pour the mix into the roasting pan and spread it evenly over the bottom.

Cook in the oven for 30 to 35 minutes until golden brown and crisp, stirring every 10 minutes so it cooks evenly. Once it starts to brown, it's a good idea to check it more often.

When the muesli is toasted, take it out of the oven and let it cool in the pan. Once cool, add the strawberries and cacao nibs (or chocolate or yoghurt drops) and mix them through.

This will keep in an airtight container for 2 to 3 weeks.

- 3½ cups oats
- ½ cup pumpkin seeds
- ½ cup sunflower seeds
- 1 cup cashew nuts
- 1 cup coconut or light olive oil
- 3 tablespoons runny honey
- juice of 2 oranges
- ½ cup dried strawberries, roughly chopped
- ½ cup cacao nibs, dark chocolate or yoghurt drops

**GF** use wheat-free oats

**DF**

**V** use maple syrup instead of honey






RASPBERRY CHIA JAM

- 1 cup raspberries,  
fresh or frozen
- 1 tablespoon water
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoon chia seeds

TO ASSEMBLE

- 1 ½ cups plain yoghurt
- ½ cup muesli (see page 13 –  
or any muesli you have  
in the pantry)

-  use gluten-free muesli
-  use non-dairy yoghurt
-  use maple syrup instead of honey  
and non-dairy yoghurt



BREAKFAST POPSICLES

*Makes 6 to 8 popsicles.*

Perfect when you're running late for school and don't have time to sit down and eat breakfast. You'll need to make these a day ahead, and also find some ice block moulds.

Get started on the jam first. While it's cooking, stir the yoghurt and muesli together in a bowl so you are ready to assemble the popsicles once the jam is done.

RASPBERRY CHIA JAM

In a pot on a low heat, stir the raspberries with the water for 5 to 10 minutes until the berries soften and break down. Add the honey and keep stirring on a low heat for a couple more minutes until well combined.

Remove from the heat, mix in the chia seeds, and let stand for 20 minutes while the jam thickens. Stir it once or twice during this time, so that the chia doesn't set in clumps.

TO ASSEMBLE

Once your raspberry chia jam is cool, spoon a 1cm layer of it into the tip of each ice block mould. Spoon the yoghurt and muesli mix into the moulds on top of the jam. Fill them right up, put the sticks in, then freeze.

The popsicles will be ready in 4 hours or the next day, and will keep in the freezer for 1 to 2 months.

Use leftover jam for the next batch of popsicles or on toast. It keeps well for 2 or 3 weeks covered in the fridge.

If you like bananas, mash a soft banana in with the yoghurt and muesli – the popsicles will be sweeter.







## HOW TO BOIL AN EGG

You might think that boiling, poaching and scrambling eggs doesn't require much skill and certainly not a recipe. This is not the case. A perfectly boiled egg is a thing of beauty, and the care and attention it takes to achieve should not be underestimated. It's the same for a poached, fried or scrambled egg, but I'm going to focus on the boiled version as this is the most versatile and definitely the most portable.

The cooking method works for as many eggs as you need.

### TO COOK

Put the egg in a small pot and fill with cold water to just above the egg. Cover with a lid. Put on a high heat and bring to the boil. Once boiling, turn off the heat with the lid still on. A glass lid is helpful so you can see what's going on.

Leave the egg in the water for 6 minutes, then take it out with a spoon and plunge it into cold water. At this point the egg will be soft-boiled with a slightly runny yolk. For a medium-boiled egg, leave it in the hot water for 7 minutes, and for a hard-boiled egg – the sort you can put in your pocket for later – leave it for 8 minutes.

### EATING BOILED EGGS

Once your egg is cooked just the way you like it, put it in your favourite egg cup and eat it with some thin toast cut into strips and spread with lots of butter, or you could wrap it in paper with some salt and pepper for later.

Maybe best of all, peel your boiled egg while it is still just warm, place it inside a fresh buttered bun with some salt and pepper and take a big bite. I was sent away to boarding school when I was young and these buns, which we had every Sunday morning for breakfast with pots of stewed coffee, were one of my favourite memories of my time there.



*It's important to use free-range eggs. If we stop buying eggs from producers who keep their hens in tiny cages, they'll be forced to open the cages and let their hens run free in paddocks. Much nicer for the hens and their eggs taste better too.*



## BAKED BEANS, KIND OF . . .

*Serves 3 to 4.*

While I've called these baked beans because that's what they are – beans baked in the oven in a tomato sauce – I don't want to mislead you into thinking they'll be exactly the same as the ones that come in tins. Tinned baked beans have a flavour uniquely their own, which would be silly to try to replicate. An important part of enjoying these beans is to go into the process with an open mind and heart, and let go if you can of the memory of the tinned variety – trust me, you won't be disappointed. These beans are delicious on toast with lots of cheese.

Preheat the oven to 170°C.

2 to 3 tablespoons olive oil

1 medium-sized onion

6 chorizo sausages

680ml bottle tomato passata  
(or 2 × 400g tins of whole  
peeled tomatoes, mashed)

2 × 390g tins haricot or  
cannellini beans,  
drained and rinsed

200ml water

medium-sized chunk of Parmesan  
rind or grated cheese

salt and black pepper

**GF** use gluten-free sausages

**DF** omit the cheese

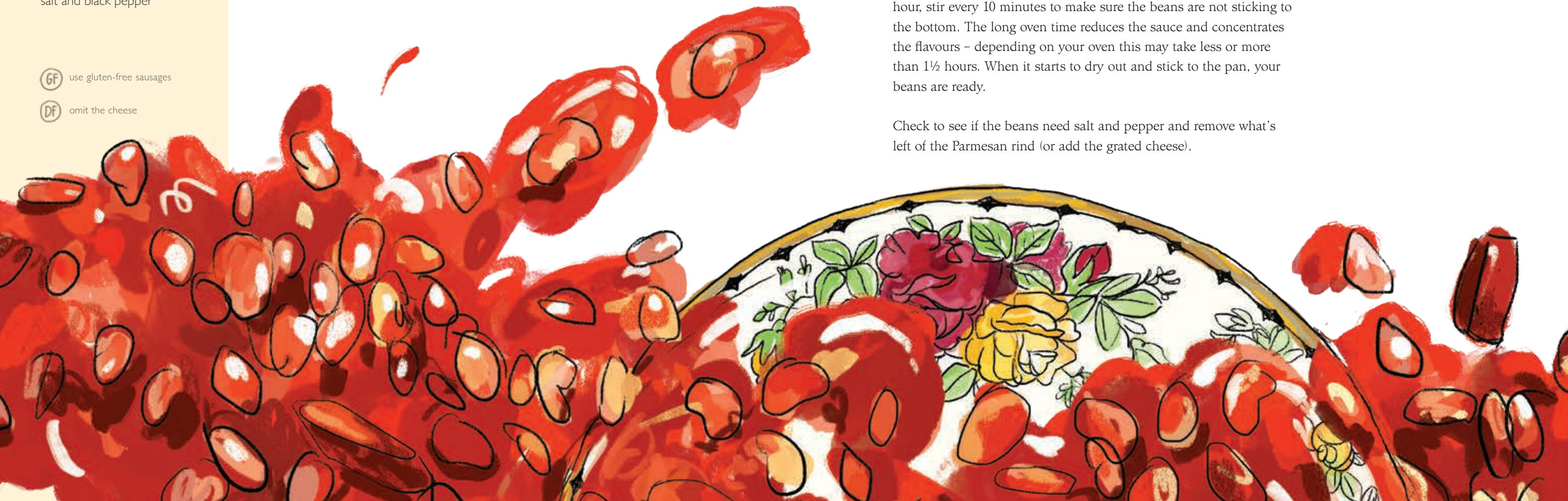
Put a medium-sized oven-proof pan on the hob on a low heat and add the olive oil. While the pan warms, chop the onion into small pieces, then add to the pan and stir around to coat with the oil. Cook the onion for a few minutes until soft and barely brown, stirring every so often to stop it burning.

Slice the sausages on the diagonal into 2cm widths and add to the pan, mixing together with the onion. Continue cooking and stirring for another few minutes until the sausage has browned a little.

Now add the tomato passata or tinned tomatoes, beans, water and whole Parmesan rind to the pan. If you don't have Parmesan with a rind, you can just add some cheese at the end. Stir everything together until it's well mixed.

Place the pan in the oven for about 1½ hours. After the first half hour, stir every 10 minutes to make sure the beans are not sticking to the bottom. The long oven time reduces the sauce and concentrates the flavours – depending on your oven this may take less or more than 1½ hours. When it starts to dry out and stick to the pan, your beans are ready.

Check to see if the beans need salt and pepper and remove what's left of the Parmesan rind (or add the grated cheese).





## STRAWBERRY FRENCH TOAST

*Serves 2.*

I wouldn't restrict your Strawberry French Toast eating to breakfast – you could quite legitimately have it for lunch or even halfway between lunch and dinner.

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Lay the slices of bread on the bench, then spread cream cheese on top of each slice. Cover two of the bread slices with strawberries, then make sandwiches by putting the other pieces of bread on top, cheese side down.

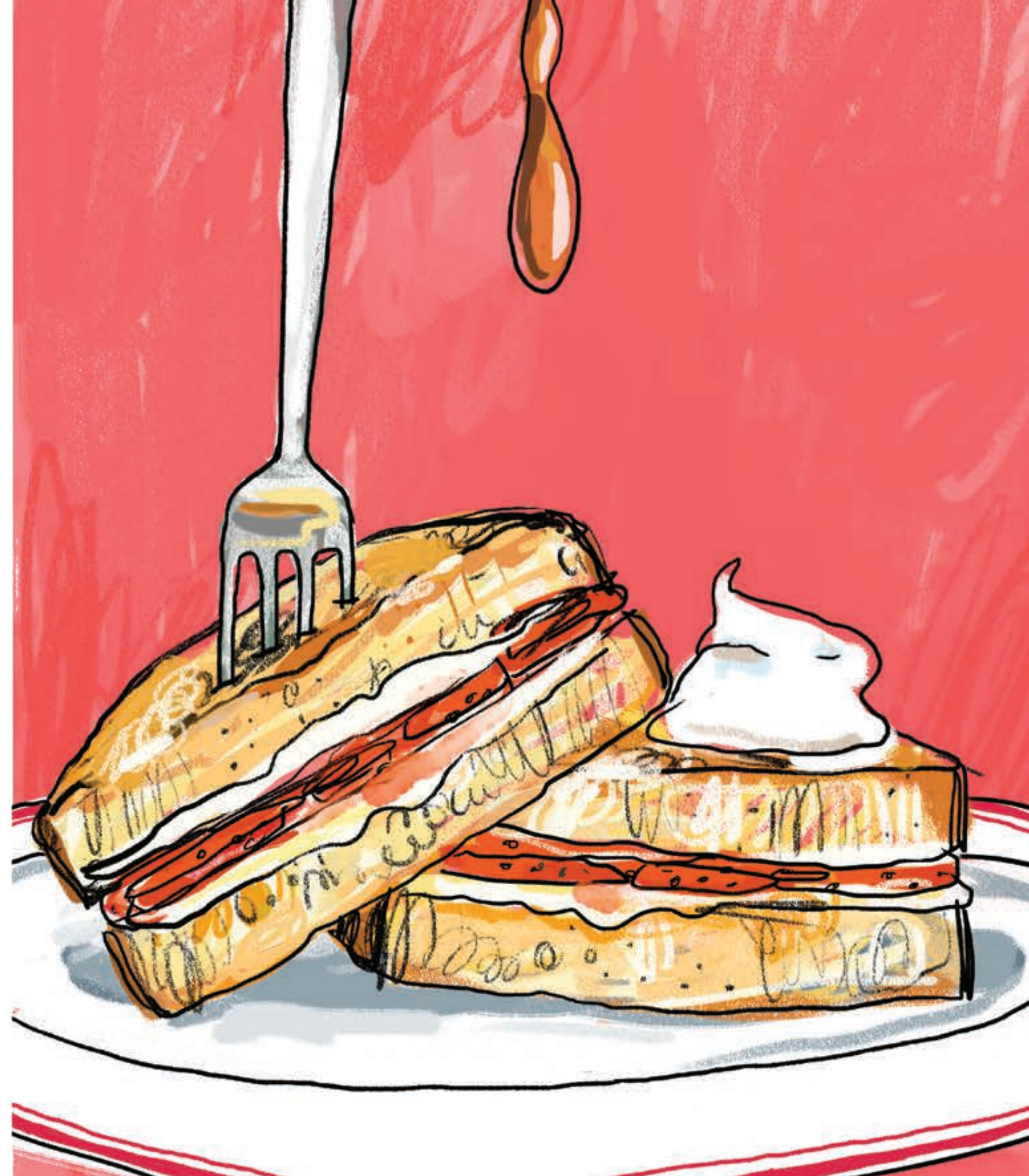
In a large bowl, beat together the eggs, milk, salt and pepper.

Heat a large frying pan on a medium heat, adding the oil and butter to the pan. Now dip the sandwiches into the egg mixture, turning them over until they are completely covered. Place the sandwiches carefully in the pan and reduce the heat to low.

Turn them over when they are a lovely crispy brown underneath, then cook the other side just the same – they'll take about 2 or 3 minutes each side. Serve cut in half with maple syrup and yoghurt.

4 slices fluffy white bread  
4 tablespoons cream cheese  
small punnet of fresh  
strawberries, thinly sliced  
2 eggs  
2 tablespoons milk  
pinch of flaky salt  
good grind of black pepper  
1 tablespoon light olive oil  
1 tablespoon butter  
2 tablespoons maple syrup  
2 tablespoons plain yoghurt

 use gluten-free bread



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Chocolate Chip Peanut Butter Biscuits	29	Thumbprint Biscuits, Walnut	28	Walnut Thumbprint Biscuits	28
Chocolate Rice Bubble Crackles	112	toast toppings		Watermelon and Feta Salad	79
Secret Ingredient Brownies	31	Baked Beans	18		
Walnut Thumbprint Biscuits	28	boiled egg	17	yoghurt	
smoothies		cashew nut icing	36	<i>in</i> Breakfast Popsicles	14
Cooling Smoothie for Summer	60	Chocolate Hazelnut Spread	56	<i>in</i> Butter Chicken Drumsticks	92
Pink Smoothie	61	hummus	55	coconut, to replace dairy	123
Soda Bread, Pumpkin	32	Raspberry Chia Jam	14	<i>in</i> Cooling Smoothie	60
Soup, Lettuce	84				



# EGG & SPOON

is a scrumptious collection of good healthy food  
and an occasional indulgence — afternoon snacks,  
things on sticks, cakes, slices and dinners,  
a boiled egg to slip into your pocket for later.  
Many recipes are naturally gluten-free or vegan,  
all are delicious.

Alexandra Tylee is the owner and chef at Pipi Café,  
a little pink house, cottage garden and pizza truck —  
a place to celebrate eating together and pleasure in small things.

Sometimes you need a layered cake,  
a crispy roast chook, a popsicle for breakfast ...  
quite often all you need is an egg and a spoon.



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