

How we eat now

The rise of the video star



Short, simple and effective, recipe videos are dominating our social media feeds. **Emma Freud** meets one of the creators of the popular under-£10 recipe videos

@emmalfreud

On an otherwise unassuming day in November last year, Delia Smith shocked the culinary world by declaring that the cookbook is dead and she will not be writing another. 'Printed recipes are pointless now that we can browse the web', she said.

Delia is right about virtually everything in life, but despite competition from every quarter, the cookbook is still going strong. Last year, we spent over £90 million on food and drink books – our highest total ever. We're still devoted to cookbooks – and, of course, cookery magazines, like your very own *Good Food*, which is still Britain's best-selling food magazine. However, our search for recipes is expanding into additional platforms where video is king.

On Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and websites, mini movies are quick on the info, big on the lighting, and oozing in the results. In an industry that used to rate its heroes by the amount of stars they'd gained from Michelin, the online rating system is all about the numbers of followers on social media. The Instagram versions of these videos tend not to feature cooks or voiceovers – just the ingredients, busy hands, upbeat music and simple captions – and most of them last under a minute. (Check out what our team do on [instagram.com/bbcgoodfood](https://www.instagram.com/bbcgoodfood)). That's enough time to learn how to deep-fry ice cream which has been wrapped in cookie dough, or how to make a 12-inch wide double hamburger which explodes a volcano of melted cheese when you cut into it.

Over on YouTube, the video chef is more dominant – but doesn't have to be the realm of young millennials. Mastanamma Karre has some of the highest viewing figures. Her videos are longer – around 10 minutes – and demonstrate the traditional way of cooking Indian food using a pestle and mortar, her hands instead of spoons and a single pan over an open fire in front of her house. She is 106 years old. Despite her resistance to using a hairdresser, makeup or special lighting, her YouTube channel has 824,000 subscribers and she gets an average of 2-4 million hits per video. Her recipe for chicken cooked inside a hollowed out watermelon was seen by over 10 million people.

And at the newer end of this spectrum is Mob Kitchen ([mobkitchen.co.uk](https://www.mobkitchen.co.uk)), started by a Deliveroo driver called Ben Lebus with no training, apart from a teenage spent watching TV cooking shows, but a driving desire to show his peer group how to cook a meal for four people for under £10. A year ago, his only follower was his mum, whose kitchen he took over to make his one-minute videos. He posted them twice a week

regardless, and asked anyone who viewed his recipes to tag a friend they thought would like the meal. Mob Kitchen now has over 47,000 followers on Instagram.

Ever keen to jump on a bandwagon, I went to Bermondsey to spend a morning with Ben. He's just moved into a new studio flat to the delight of his mum who was overjoyed to get her kitchen back, and above his hob is a locked-off camera so every video can be shot from an aerial view. What you can't see is the student environment behind the camera: the lovely chaos surrounding the clean cooking shot, the tiny larder and the lack of anything which isn't part of that day's recipe. 'If it's not in the video, I basically don't have it,' he admitted.

'Was there a need for another set of one-minute videos?,' I asked. 'It's really important to us not to be creating food porn. Those melty cheesy, mass chocolatey, deep-fried dishes

which look amazing are basically clickbait – they aren't real food. We want to make proper meals that are delicious, healthy, inexpensive and cooked from scratch – but always feed a family of four for under a tenner. That's our bible. All you need on top is olive oil, salt and pepper. Which is pretty much all I have here.'

He's very driven, and not just for more followers... 'The point is, something needs to change. The average UK student arrives at college knowing how to cook four meals. Lots of young people just switch off when a real chef talks but people love that I'm not trained. I have no knife skills, no firm cooking times, I'm all about a splash of this and a handful of that – I want to leave people feeling confident about cooking without

measuring. And if I make mistakes, our followers let me know about it.'

So we spent the morning co-creating the recipe opposite. It's a mixture of his most popular dish with some Freud additions – my homemade coriander flatbreads filled with his spicy veg with chickpeas, my amazing, almost-legendary green spicy sauce, and Ben's tzatziki. It's properly delicious, healthy, teen-friendly, messy to eat, fun to cook (though maybe not quite as much fun as I had with Ben), and will cost four people less than a tenner.

4 *Good Food* contributing editor Emma Freud is a journalist and broadcaster, director of Red Nose Day and a co-presenter of Radio Four's *Loose Ends*.

Photograph EMMA BOYNS | Shoot director GARETH JONES | Food stylist SOPHIE GODWIN | Stylist FAYE WEARS

The brilliant taste explosion vegetarian wrap

SERVES 4 PREP 40 mins COOK 45 mins
EASY V

2 red onions	32p
3 tbsp cider vinegar	80p
2 courgettes	80p
1 large red pepper	40p
1/2 cauliflower	50p
400g can chickpeas	50p
3 tsp coriander seeds	85p
2 tsp garam masala	85p
350g self raising flour	15p
500g natural yogurt	85p
small bunch coriander	70p
100g pot coconut chunks	£1
small bunch mint	70p
2 limes	70p
1/2 cucumber	25p
2 garlic cloves	30p
1 shallot	10p
1 green chilli	20p

Total cost **£9.87**

This covers everything. All we assume you have in your kitchen beforehand is salt, pepper, sugar and olive oil.

SWEET PICKLED ONION TIME

Slice 1 red onion into thin half moons. Put 2 tbsp cider vinegar in a small pan with 1 tbsp sugar and 1 tsp salt. Heat until almost boiling, then pour over the onions and leave for 2 hrs, by which time they will be sweet and crunchy.

ROAST VEGETABLE TIME

Heat oven to 180C/160C/gas 4. Chop the courgettes, remaining red onion, the red pepper and cauliflower into bite-sized pieces.

Tip into a baking tray with the chickpeas, plus 1 tbsp of the starchy water from the can. Pour over a good glug of olive oil, add 2 tsp of the coriander seeds, the garam masala, a sprinkle of salt and pepper, and mix everything together with your hands. Cook in the oven for 45 mins, but give them a good shake after 30.

FLATBREAD TIME In a bowl, mix the flour with 350g of the yogurt, the remaining 1 tsp coriander seeds, and all the coriander stalks, finely chopped. It will come together quickly into a lovely dough. Take a golf ball-sized chunk and roll it out on a floured board until it's the thickness of a 20p coin, then dry-fry in a hot frying pan for about a minute on each side until it looks like a perfect

flatbread. When you've made your little stack, brush each flatbread on one side with some olive oil.

COCONUT TZATZIKI TIME

Blitz 1/4 of the pot of coconut chunks in a blender until it resembles breadcrumbs, then set aside. Pour the remaining 150g yogurt into a bowl. Finely chop half the mint leaves and add to the bowl along with the juice of 1 lime. Grate in the cucumber and a garlic clove, then add the coconut. Season and mix.

SPICY GREEN SAUCE TIME

Put the rest of the coconut chunks in a blender with the rest of the coriander, the rest of the mint

leaves, a peeled clove of garlic, the peeled shallot, chilli, the juice of a lime, 1 tbsp cider vinegar, and 1 tsp brown sugar. Blitz until smooth.

ASSEMBLY TIME Take the flatbread, load it with a handful of vegetables, then a big spoonful of tzatziki, a big spoonful of your spicy green sauce, then a sprinkling of sweet pickled onions. Wrap it up, and tuck in.

GOOD TO KNOW calcium • folate • fibre • vit c • iron • 5 of 5-a-day
PER SERVING 732 kcal • fat 20g • saturates 11g • carbs 103g • sugars 24g • fibre 16g • protein 27g • salt 1.4g

For video recipes go to [bbcgoodfood.com/feature/videos](https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/feature/videos)