

What's cooking

Food editor Anna Crane helps out in the kitchen with tips, recipes and best buys



KITCHEN WHIZZ

I'm ashamed to say I am a complete technophobe. At work, and in the kitchen. I'm not one to fall for the latest cheffy gadget. I have a slow cooker that's still in its box, a cook's blowtorch that's never been used and electric beaters that are at least 40 years old, an heirloom from my granny. Every time I use them I think, 'Surely, they'll give up on me this time,' but they never have. Why don't I like gadgets? Mostly because I hate to read instructions, but also because I don't like to clutter up my kitchen with too many shiny, modern things. One gadget I couldn't do without, however, is my Magimix Le Micro mini chopper. It's small and light enough to lift down from the cupboard without rupturing anything, it only has *one* button, and I use it at least once a week to make houmous, breadcrumbs or, my new favourite, tapenade. I've had it for eight years now. Here's to another 30...

Do you have a favourite kitchen gadget? Let me know what it is and we'll print your answers in a future issue. Email

acrane@therivergroup.co.uk. Magimix Le Micro, £49.99



Cheers to low cal wine

Over the last decade or so you may have noticed that, where once you could knock it back with the best of them, a few glasses of wine now knock you for six. That's not (only) because you are getting older and can't take the pace any more, it's because our tastes have changed. We fell in love with Australian cab savs and juicy New Zealand chardonnays that, because they hailed from a hotter climate, were higher in alcohol, and it became the norm for wines to pack a punch of 14 per cent ABV, instead of the kinder 11 or 12 per

cent we were used to with wines from French and Italian grapes. Now consumers are starting to ask for lower alcohol wines again. Weight Watchers has its own range, of course – red, white and rosé – that comes in at 8.5 to 9 per cent ABV. Tesco, Sainsbury's and Marks & Spencer have followed suit with their own ranges. For a treat, splash out on Bella, the UK's first ever low cal

and low alcohol sauvignon blanc by New Zealand winery Invivo Wines, £14 at Harvey Nichols. It has 30 per cent less alcohol (9 per cent ABV) and 30 per cent fewer calories (94 per 150ml glass) than the average sauvignon blanc. Try it with fish and seafood.



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