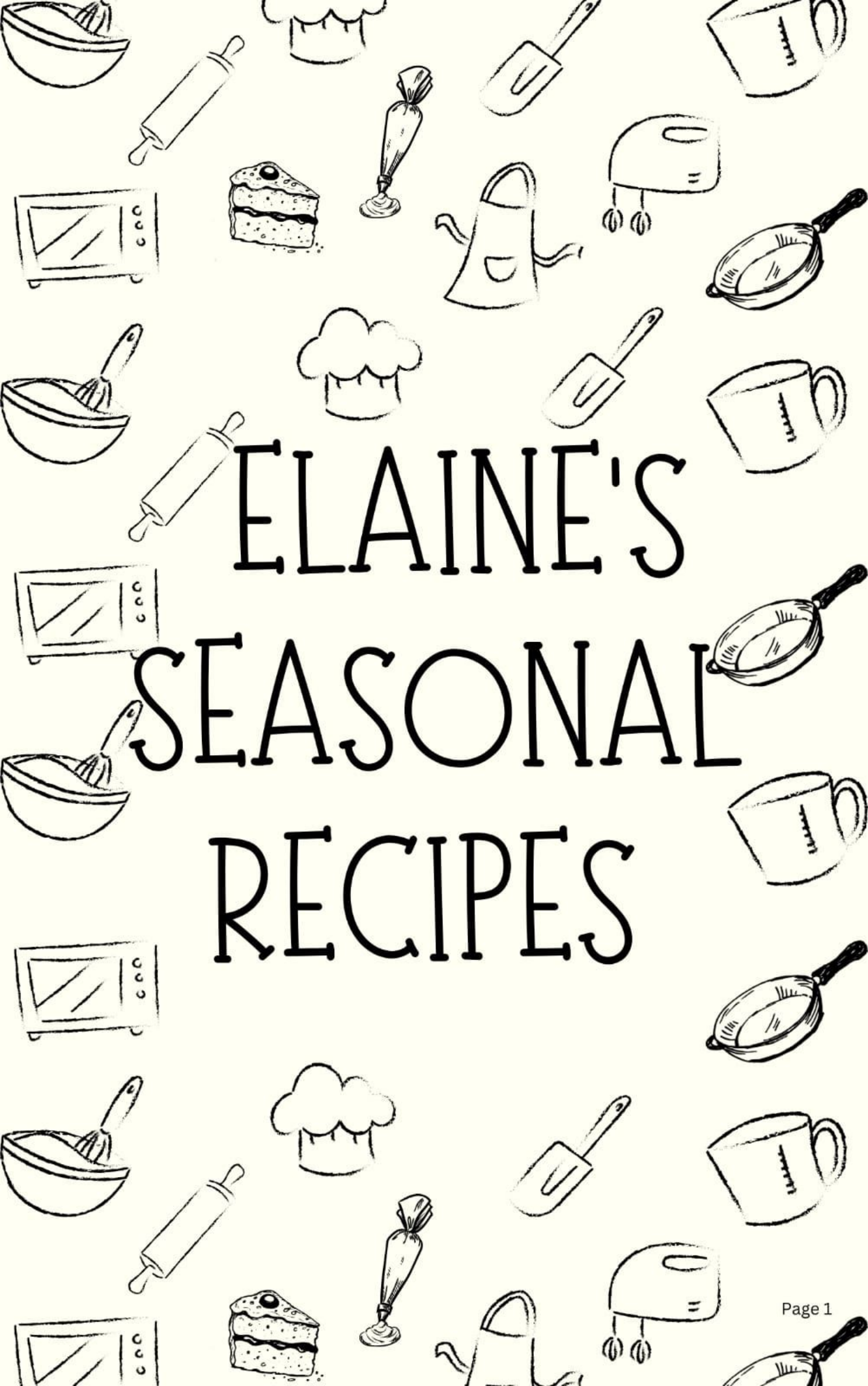




ELAINE'S SEASONAL RECIPES

The Annual Strawberry Festival (this year April 25th 2025) is one of the most popular days on the Maltese culinary calendar.

It is the perfect PFFA celebration connecting local farmers, professional chefs, food enthusiasts in Mgarr village

The peak season for strawberries in Malta, when they are freshest and sweetest are around the festival in April and May, while strawberry planting season begins in October.

Can you imagine if every town had it's own festival connected with the produce of the area and celebrate Malta's rich agricultural heritage.

Notwithstanding the great flavour of strawberries..... there are numerous
Health Benefits of Strawberries

1. **Rich in Vitamin C**
Strawberries are an excellent source of vitamin C, which supports your immune system and promotes healthy skin.
2. **High in Antioxidants**
They contain antioxidants like anthocyanins and ellagic acid, which help fight free radicals and reduce inflammation.
3. **Supports Heart Health**
The potassium and fiber in strawberries help lower blood pressure and improve cholesterol levels, reducing the risk of heart disease.
4. **Improves Digestion**
Their high fiber content supports healthy digestion and helps regulate bowel movements.
5. **Boosts Brain Function**
Flavonoids in strawberries may help improve memory and cognitive function, and may reduce the risk of age-related brain decline.
6. **Helps Manage Blood Sugar**
Despite their sweetness, strawberries have a low glycemic index and can help regulate blood sugar levels.
7. **Supports Weight Management**
Low in calories and high in water and fiber, strawberries help keep you full longer and are a great snack for weight control.

Salsa Style Strawberry Salad

- 4 medium tomatoes
- diced
- 300g diced strawberries
- 1/2 cucumber diced
- 1 small can of corn (add more as you wish)
- 1/2 red onion diced (optional but delicious)
- 1-2 diced jalapeños (again optional but delicious)
- a handful of coriander to taste
- salt and pepper as required
- chili flakes or fresh if that is how you like it



Toss all ingredients together and stir through 1-2 tablespoons of apple cider vinegar for some sharpness and a health boost

Add a squeeze of lemon as needed

Enjoy immediately

If stored in the fridge bring out at least 30 minutes before to take the chill off the salad

Strawberry Cake

- 500g / 1 lb strawberries, hulled (ie tops removed)
- 1/2 cup buttermilk 1/2 cup of honey
- 2 eggs, large (approx. 50g each)
- 3 tbsp grated lemon rind
- 1/4 cup lemon juice (1 large lemon)
- 1 cup plain yoghurt , unsweetened (Greek or just plain)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract (or essence)
- 2 1/4 cups flour, plain/all purpose
- 4 tsp baking powder (or 1 1/4 tsp baking soda)
- 50g cup sugar, superfine best but granulated ok too
- Pinch of salt



Place wet ingredients in a bowl and whisk well for 1 minute.

Add dry ingredients then whisk well until lump free.

Pour half into cake pan, tap to smooth surface.

Scatter over diced strawberries and top with remaining batter and tap the pan to smooth the surface before topping with the halved strawberries, cut face down.

Bake 50 minutes or until skewer inserted into centre comes out clean. Importantly leave to stand around 15 minutes in the cake pan before turning out onto a cooling rack.

Allow to cool a further 15 minutes or more before serving (still warm) or at room temp.

Dust with icing sugar, and serve with cream or if serving warm, ice cream!