

## War & Peace, Brownies and a Nice Loaf of Bread

Sunday, 07 June 2009

They say that a week in politics is long (and it certainly has been this week!). Well a week in food is equally as arduous. Whilst I've had a week off my day job &ndash; I really haven't stopped. So here's a round up of my culinary week.

Adventures are fun aren't they. And foodie ones are the best. Since I joined the UK Food Bloggers Association and Twitter, I've discovered so many interesting, passionate foodies. Who would have thought there were so many of us out there? So back to my adventure. UKFBA has been given a fantastic opportunity of running a stall at the Covent Garden Real Food Market. Being a little crazy, I volunteered to run the first day which was last Thursday. So the beginning of this week has been running around collecting supplies. And Wednesday night, after a full day at work, the ovens went on for a night of baking. To bed at 3.30am and up at 5am, the last quiche came out of the oven about half an hour before the taxi pulled up to take us to Covent Garden, loaded with Wholemeal Loaves, Fig & Walnut Loaves, Brownies, Banana Cake, Custard Tart and Stilton & Leek Quiches. The small food market was an interesting experience, but the chance to sell at Covent Garden was surely a once in a lifetime opportunity for a small time food blogger. And I couldn't have done it without my partner, Daniel, whose excellent design skills were put to the test in producing a charming stall display. My current project is a short online food series on home cooking. So, inviting my cameraman friend along and his colleague, we started filming the first episode, &ldquo;Bread&rdquo;. As well as an introduction piece to camera in a back alley behind a theatre, I had the joy of interviewing Chris Young from the Real Bread Campaign &ndash; in the very cute Primrose Bakery. What Chris doesn't know about the virtues of real bread just aren't worth knowing. I was thrilled to have visits from JuliaCherryPie, Ginger Gourmand and MsMarmiteLover. For those of you who think I've just been working too hard and have finally gone mad click on the links. These are fellow food bloggers. It was thanks to Julia's hard work in setting up the UK Food Bloggers Association that I was able to host the stall. I'll confess now, but don't tell anyone, that we closed up shop a little earlier than the 7pm official end time. I was so knackered &ndash; to the point of feeling a little drunk. So we gave away the last few remaining loaves to deserving passers-by. After a good nights sleep, it was back to the stove. Daniel and I were hosting a little dinner party for a friend over from Paris. It was a bit of an entente cordiale menu starting in France: Foie Gras with a Red Onion and Tomato Chutney, Individual Shepherd's Pie with Steamed Green Vegetables and Sticky Toffee Pudding with Ginger Butterscotch Sauce. For those who don't know, MsMarmiteLover runs a superb underground restaurant. Having bought the last Fig and Walnut Loaf at Thursday's market I was very pleased when she told me that she had eaten the lot and wanted more for her restaurant service on Saturday. So back to the baking on Saturday morning, and after an indulgent visit to Borough Market, I delivered to freshly baked loaves to MsMarmiteLover. The front room was laid out wonderfully, ready for the diners to arrive and the waft of mouthwatering food filled the house. It was delightful to also meet Shuna, a very passionate pastry chef, who was helping MsMarmiteLover in the Kitchen. I ended up staying a good two and a half hours, hopefully not getting in the way, but the discussions were brilliant and varied. From the different types of flour and gluten to kitchen management and the power of persuasion. The conversation drifted to 9/11 and the excellent way that New York rallied together. In particular we talked about how restaurateurs fed the emergency services. This has got me thinking that food is such a big part of life. It brings people together. It comforts. It's part of celebrations and grievance. Could a worldwide dinner party be the solution to the World's ills?