

## Food news by Carolyn Hart

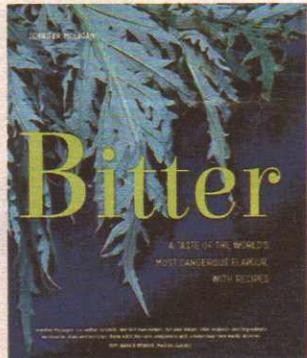
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### Book of the week

#### **Bitter** by Jennifer McLagan

Jacqui Small, £25

Jennifer McLagan's previous books include *Bones, Fat and Odd Bits*, so she is running true to form with *Bitter* – or 'The World's Most Dangerous Flavour', as her book's subtitle has it. Just as with fat, bitter is not often the flavour at the top of one's list as you venture into the kitchen to cook supper. But in McLagan's hands it takes on an altogether more seductive character. She is interested in the taste and history of such ingredients as grapefruit, chicory, dandelion and rocket, chocolate, beer and tobacco,



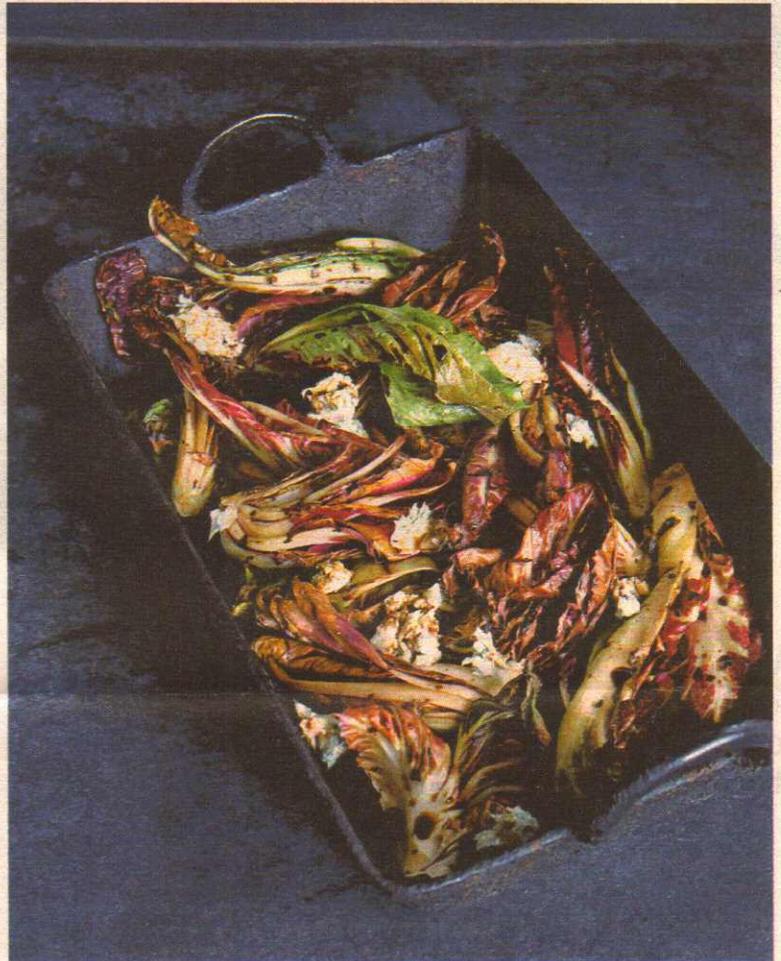
and has provided 100 ways to cook them. Grilled radicchio is a 'flexible recipe', she says. The best cheese to use is Camembert or a Brillat-Savarin.

#### **Grilled radicchio with creamy cheese**

serves 4 as a side dish

- 2 heads Treviso radicchio, about 200g each
- olive oil
- 75g creamy cow's milk cheese
- 2 tsp balsamic vinegar

Cut the radicchio heads into quarters and drizzle with olive oil, turning to coat the pieces. Season with salt and pepper. Heat the grill to medium or set a heavy cast-iron pan over a medium heat. When it is hot, add the radicchio and cook, turning often, until it is soft, brown and lightly charred – about 12 minutes. Cut the cheese into pieces. Transfer the radicchio to a serving dish. Top with the pieces of cheese and sprinkle with the balsamic vinegar. The heat of the radicchio will melt the cheese.



**Scrummy snacks** Designed by a quartet of rugby stars (Mike Tindall and three Simpson-Daniels) to fit in with their training diet, Kings Elite's cured-meat snacks – biltong, pulled-pork jerky and barbecue beef jerky – are high in protein, low in calories. From £1.99 for 40g, [kingselitesnacks.co.uk](http://kingselitesnacks.co.uk).



#### **Super cups**

To celebrate its 10th anniversary the British design company Wild & Wolf has issued a range of mugs and gardening products featuring three designs from mid-century V&A prints. Mugs, £8.95 each, from [bloomsburystore.com](http://bloomsburystore.com).



**Track lunch** A train company doing something that does not immediately provoke stress, rage and anxiety in the long-suffering passenger is something to note. So good for First Great Western for serving local produce on board (ranging from Hampshire buffalo mozzarella to Cornish tea) and for sponsoring Bristol's excellent Food Connections festival, on until May 9 ([bristolfoodconnections.com](http://bristolfoodconnections.com)).



#### **Hamish Anderson's tasting notes** Party reds

**Simply Bulgarian Merlot NV** £4.20, **Tesco** Any bottle recommendable under a fiver is a rare thing today, but for £1.45 worth of wine (the rest being tax) this – made for Tesco by the impressive Domaine Boyar – is outstanding. Its sweet, plummy fruit and leafy, tobacco undercurrent are typical of merlot. I'd give it focus by chilling it ever so slightly and ask your friends to guess the price.

**2012 Almeida Garrett Entre Serras, Beira Interior, Portugal** £5.95, [thewinesociety.com](http://thewinesociety.com) Beira is in the centre of Portugal on the border with Spain, and this is made from local varieties such as trincadeira and tinta barroca. Mid-weight, its blackberry fruit is underpinned by a pleasantly rustic bite of earth and tannin. It will be fantastic with red meat cooked on the barbecue.

**2014 Gamay, Vin de Pays de l'Ardèche, France** £6, **M&S** I recommended the 2013 of this a year ago and make no apologies for the repetition. At £6 I can think of no other red I would prefer to drink during the summer. Its juicy fruit is fresh and red; spice and herbal elements add interest. Extraordinarily versatile, it can be lightly chilled and drunk on its own or served with cold meats.