

Roasting when cold



Can you believe November's coming? I can't. This year has flown by faster than any other. I've celebrated my children's first birthday, moved house, written my first book, turned thirty-six years old and seen my husband through chemotherapy for Leukemia. And now we're staring down the barrel of another Christmas. How can that be?

November is a delicious month. It's delicious because there's all the anticipation of the build up to Christmas. There's also all the fun that goes in to planning for this time; the parties, the gifts, the food and the events. But I find it delicious because by now, in my family and circle of friends, we're well and truly into the roasting season. When it gets cold outside we roast and invariably we roast at my house. Sundays are dedicated to the papers and a joint. NO, not that kind of joint * shocked * the kind of joint that one buys at the butchers and has in the AGA all night if need be, especially when it comes to a huge hunk of brisket.

I wake in the morning on a Sunday and head outside to the garden in jeans and a sweater pulling on my Dubarry's as I go. I pick the rosemary for the roast potatoes fresh from the bush and the horseradish straight from the pot (I never grow it in the ground as it takes over). The oven is on waiting for whatever it is that I'm slowly going to cook and before I know it the house starts to creep to life. Where it was once just me, pottering about waiting for the sun to come up, now there's my kids, my husband and soon there will be family members and friends chewing the cud, throwing back hot mugs of tea and good red wine with abandon in equal measure and food, glorious, glorious food.

At this time of year colour in the garden is in short supply. One terrifically windy day has seen off the last of the leaves and now all we have is the chance of snow to brighten the place up. Which is why I'm always really pleased and annoyingly smug about the fact that I

bothered to dry my Hydrangea heads and Sedum. Milky, faded colour in vases is a welcome sight even if it is so subtle that it blends in to the rest of the room. To see some colour in the month of November before the baubles are brought down from the loft is a good thing.



Of course it's always my goal to get all of my craft projects complete before November comes to an end but everybody knows that this is never going to happen. Mostly because year after year I add to the projects I'd like to try having been manically inspired by surfing the web. But this November has been about getting the house ready for the final month of 2011. We've been painting and decorating like crazy and I've enjoyed every second of it (although I never want to wash another brush up again in my life) And while I love being in a newly decorated home I would like to do it at a slower pace next time around.

If I can leave you with any tips to take you through November it would be these:

- No matter what recipe you use make sure the oil in to which you pour your Yorkshire Pudding batter is so hot it's almost smoking. Then get it in to the oven in an instant.
- Make a list at the start of the month of all the craft projects you'd like to have completed by the 1st of December. That way you'll be less tempted to start a million new things and not finish any.
- Aim to have the first relaxing December ever by doing all the Christmas prep you can in November.

One can but try and if you give it a go so shall I!
See you next month for an update.

Lots of love Cherry x