

For starters

Don't really know how to garden or cook? Don't worry – Wellington's Unna Burch is here to help us just get on with it.

RECIPES & FOOD PHOTOGRAPHY **Unna Burch**
LIFESTYLE PHOTOGRAPHY **Bonny Beattie**



BECOMING SELF-SUFFICIENT CAN seem like something you'll do later, at some magical point in the future when you have that plot of land, your own home, more time. Unna Burch – who rents in suburban Wellington and has no plans to move to the country – thinks otherwise, and reckons we should all just grow what we can, now.

The mum of two is a self-taught cook who turned her love of it into a career after her blog and Instagram took off and saw her segue into food writing, styling and photography. With her husband Aaron owner of a beekeeping business, she produces honey alongside the organic veges she grows and eggs she gathers from their heritage-breed chooks.

In her second book, *The Forest Cantina Home*, Unna shares 80 recipes from her kitchen and a comprehensive guide to suburban self-sufficiency. It makes us wonder what we're waiting for. theforestcantina.com

SAUSAGE, ORZO & WHITE BEAN SOUP

SERVES 8

6 free-range pork sausages
1 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, finely diced
4 cloves garlic, minced
2 celery sticks, grated
2 large carrots, grated
2 bay leaves
1 small bunch thyme
2 litres (8 cups) chicken stock
1 tsp brown sugar
1 cup orzo pasta
1 x 400g can cannellini beans
2 cups greens (baby spinach, cavolo nero, kale, silverbeet)

To serve

Grated parmesan
Bread (optional)

With damp hands, squeeze the sausage meat out of the skins and roll it into small balls (I got seven little meatballs from each sausage). Heat a large pot over a

high heat, then fry the meatballs in the olive oil until slightly browned. Add the onion and garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute, before adding the grated celery and carrots and cooking for a further minute.

Tie the bay leaves and thyme together tightly with kitchen string (so they're easy to discard later) and add them to the pot with the chicken stock, brown sugar and orzo pasta. Cover and bring to the boil. When the liquid is boiling, reduce the heat to medium-high and cook for 5 minutes or until the pasta is almost cooked. Rinse and drain the cannellini beans and add to the soup with the greens. Cook for 2 minutes. Discard the bay leaf and thyme.

Taste the soup and season it with pepper (it may or may not need salt, depending on your stock, and remember the parmesan will season it too). Ladle into bowls, top with parmesan and serve with bread. Or cool to room temperature and freeze for up to 2 months.

If you're reheating the leftovers the next day and the soup is too thick (the pasta will absorb the liquid), simply add a little water. ▷