CAULIFLOWER AND CHEESE SOUP

50g (2oz) blue cheese  
1 medium-sized cauliflower  
200g (8oz) onions, chopped  
1lt (1 3/4pt) vegetable stock  
40g (1 1/2oz) butter  
25g (1oz) plain flour  
pepper

Grate the blue cheese using the coarse side of the grater. Wash the cauliflower and trim off the bigger outside leaves. Cut the cauliflower into sprigs and place them in a large saucepan with the chopped onion and vegetable stock. Cover and cook slowly for 10-15 minutes until the cauliflower is just tender. Puree the cauliflower and stock using a sieve or liquidizer.

Gently melt the butter in a large saucepan. Stir in the flour and cook for 1 minute. Gradually add the cauliflower puree, stirring all the time. Bring to the boil and cook gently for 3 minutes. Add the grated blue cheese, a little at a time, and stir until dissolved. Taste and adjust the seasoning. Serve with butter-fried croutons and chopped parsley.

CARROT AND ORANGE SALAD

450g (1lb) carrots, peeled  
grated rind and juice of 1 orange  
25g (1oz) currants  
1 teaspoon cumin seeds  
9 tablespoons French dressing

Grate the carrots into a salad bowl and add the orange rind, currants and cumin seeds. Combine the orange juice with the dressing and toss well into the salad. Cover and chill in the refrigerator before serving.
TURKEY CREOLE

15g (1/2oz) butter
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 onion, chopped
1 tablespoon plain flour
1 teaspoon chilli powder
125ml (4floz) tomato juice
125ml (4floz) chicken or turkey stock
350g (12oz) cooked turkey, chopped
125g (4oz) button mushrooms, sliced
freshly ground black pepper

Heat the butter in a saucepan and cook the garlic and onion over a medium heat for 3-4 minutes or until the onion is soft. Stir in the flour and chilli powder and cook. Stirring for 1 minute. Stir in the tomato juice and stock. Bring to the boil, stirring, over a medium heat, then reduce the heat and simmer, stirring, until the sauce thickens. Add the turkey and mushrooms, season to taste with black pepper and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 5 minutes until heated through.
Serve on a bed of cooked rice.

HAM WITH SPICY ORANGE AND RAISIN SAUCE

1 medium orange, zest and fruit
120ml (4floz) apple juice
60g (2oz) raisins
4 cloves
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 tablespoon soft brown sugar
2 teaspoons cornflour, blended with a little water
360g (12oz) cooked ham

Place the orange zest in a shallow pan with the apple juice, raisins, spices and sugar and simmer for 10 minutes.
Segment the orange, removing all the pith. Add to the pan, then thicken the sauce with the blended cornflour. Add the sliced ham and heat through gently for 2-3 minutes. Remove the cloves and serve.
HOT MANGO & BANANA SALAD

2 large oranges
2 firm but ripe mangoes, about 700g (1/2lb) total weight
4 small bananas
25g (1oz) very low-fat spread
1 teaspoon light soft brown sugar
2 tablespoons rum
2 tablespoons lemon or lime juice

Thinly pare the rind from one orange and squeeze the juice. Cut the pared rind into very thin strips and blanch in boiling water for 1 minute, to soften. Set the rind and juice aside. Peel the other orange with a serrated knife and slice the flesh crosswise into rounds. Peel the mangoes with a vegetable peeler. Slice the flesh either side of the central stone, then remove any flesh from around the stone. Cut all the flesh into bite-sized pieces. Peel and thickly slice the bananas. Melt the low-fat spread in a large non-stick frying pan. Add the sugar, mango and banana and sauté; for 2-3 minutes or until just beginning to soften. Pour in the rum, lemon or lime juice. Add the orange slices. Bring to the boil, then serve immediately, decorated with the reserved orange rind.