

Featherstone Kitchen - A Short Guide

⚔️ For happy healthy fae, living on a happy healthy planet ⚔️

Some of the things I did, didn't do and would want to do if I did it again! The possibilities are endless, there's no right or wrong way to do things, but most importantly... a happy, flowing kitchen is co-created with love, kindness and care (..and be kind to yourself if you're feeling a little off-balance and happen to forget this one important thing..)

I hope others will find this guide useful, if not long. Please add to it and edit it, as if it were your own - it belongs to all of us.

Fruit & Vegetables

- ★ We bought our veg from a wholesaler in Carlisle, but speaking to other fae that have run the kitchen in the past, Billy Bells in Haltwhistle may work out better. Speaking to them, they say you can place orders up to a week before delivery and make changes up to a couple of days before.
- ★ In the moot we said we'd aim to buy more local and seasonal produce - it's cheaper, tastier and probably needs less chemicals to grow/store. They're also less likely to be wrapped in plastic.
- ★ You can put a call out for home grown vegetables too - fae have brought their own produce in the past :)
- ★ The recommended portion size for fruit and vegetables is 500 grams a day, so 200-250 grams per meal - this is helpful for calculating orders as well as portion sizes in the castle. This is separate from carb portion sizes (potato, squash etc).
- ★ We put a few big boxes of fruit in the upstairs wash up area (next to the daily schedule) - I would bring a few bowls down to the kitchen before breakfast each day, but this wasn't always easy to remember - perhaps there's a better place for them :)
- ★ The order spreadsheet estimates the portion size per vegetable (*link tbc*) - this is a rough estimate and would reduce as you increase the number of different vegetables in a dish. It's just a guide to give you an overall estimate of the number of kilograms you need which will then help decide how many standard size cases (or half size cases) you want to order. It's an art not a science.
- ★ The fancy veg tends to get used up first, leaving lots of swedes, potatoes and onions etc. towards the end of the week. It's worth mentioning this to the lead cook before they come up with their recipe and asking them to be mindful in their usage.
- ★ It may help to hang a sign in the veg pantry with some guidance on the above (written in verse if poss..) - "please use veg that's turning first and please try to balance 'fancy' veg with the stodgy cheaper stuff so we're not eating swede soup

on the last day” also a guide on veg portion sizes that’s easy to understand - a potential creative project..

Cooking tips

- ★ Add asofaetida to beans when soaking and kelp when cooking - this helps break down the hard to digest bits.
- ★ Cooking always takes longer with larger quantities. Allow a few hours to prepare and an extra hour buffer for things to cook.
- ★ Pasta tends to be quite difficult to cook in quantity and leftovers don’t last well (especially white pasta gets squishy and turns to a solid block), rice can also be difficult to cook - potatoes and other root veg are a popular, versatile alternative and last well.
- ★ Please add more tips here...

Ordering (healthy, cost savings and gaia loving shopping ♥)

- ★ For the most part, healthy foods tend to also be cheaper and better for the planet - especially when bought in bulk! Here are some intentions that could potential help guide any fae placing an order:
 - Try to reduce our plastic and packaging footprint
 - Buy local and seasonal produce
 - Buy fairtrade where possible
 - Buy wholewheat/wholemeal where possible
 - Limit processed and ultra-high processed foods - including vegan cheese, vegan mayo etc. - these are usually expensive and have lower nutritional values
 - Try to reduce our reliance on big supermarkets
 - Use cleaning products without nasty chemicals - ethicalsuperstore.com sells them in 5L bottles to reduce plastic too :)
 - Buy organic to reduce pesticides in our soil and water (where organic vs non-organic costs don’t differ too much)
 - Use ‘joosh’ ingredients - iceberg lettuce can be jooshed with spinach. Seed, berries and nuts also make good joosh ingredients.
- ★ Leaving out a shopping list so fae can add any missing essentials is helpful.
- ★ Encourage fae to use what we have before placing an order for something similar.
- ★ Placing orders during the gathering can be stressful and take way longer than expected. You can ask other fae to help with this, but on the other hand I found the lack of continuity made it harder to judge how much milk, bread etc was being used each day.
- ★ Ordering the night before during/after dinner, for the order to arrive the morning after allows the next day’s Oddess to secure any important ingredients.
- ★ Remember that tescos has an overall order limit (currently 135 items) and sometimes an item order limit.

- ★ Some fae may donate food, bring homegrown produce or food from other gatherings. It's worth asking beforehand for anyone who plans to do this to let you know, so that you can reduce any big veg/wholefood orders as needed.

Wholefoods... and Protein!!

- ★ To reduce our reliance on big supermarkets and reduce our packaging waste we bought most of our dry goods from buywholefoodsonline.com. Here are some guideline amounts (more quantities in big spreadsheet):
 - Approx 75g of rice/pasta per fae per meal
 - 30-35g lentils/beans per fae per meal
 - 30-50g muesli, cereal, porridge per fae per breakfast
 - 15-30g protein powder per fae per meal
 - 100g of spices is approx 3 supermarket spice jars and would feed 60-80 fae (although this depends a lot on the recipe!) - I bought 125g of less used spices and 250g of more used spices. Herbs I'd stick to just 125g each (although I think we have a lot of these).
 - Suggested 1kg of mixed seeds, and a few kg of other nuts for the entire gathering.
- ★ [Buywholefoodsonline.com](http://buywholefoodsonline.com) also sell TVP (texturised vegan protein, or simply soy protein chunks/mince) and protein powders - Lots of TVP isn't really loved amongst fae but...
- ★ Pea, hemp and rice protein powder may help save our fae from protein deficiency!!! These can be stirred into soups and stews once cooked or added to breakfast and can add lots of protein without altering the flavour. They also seem to be pretty affordable gram for gram too! Be careful not to cook them as this can reduce their nutritional values.
- ★ Other ideas to boost protein are to make protein snacks / side dishes - e.g. roasted chickpeas, dhal, protein nut balls, snacking nuts (chocolate coated, monkey nuts etc) etc.
- ★ You can also add some cheese and eggs to the order for vegetarians to help themselves - meat products can also be cooked and stored in the annex kitchen but aren't usually included in the budget.

Dietary Requirements

- ★ It's probably easier to write them on the wall yourself - asking fae to write them up has led to lots of confusion in the past.
- ★ Some Oddesses have said they feel intimidated by the complexities of the dietary requirements which has meant they feel unable to lead a meal - it could be suggested that we have a lead cook and a special dietary requirement cook that can focus on the extra dishes needed.
- ★ The Gluten Freeeee cupboard worked well just behind the kitchen door - it's useful because once the normal bread etc run out the non-GF-fae tend to turn to the GF-fae's food, which is much more expensive. Here it's hidden..!

- ★ You can buy specialist ingredients for specific dietary requirements (e.g quorn for no soy fae, tins of certain beans for loveable - especially as they don't need a pre-planned soak)
- ★ Specialist ingredients are often more expensive, so limit them to those with dietary requirements and use named labels in the dining room.
- ★ Labels... colourful flash-cards work well for dietary requirement labels as they don't blow away (we'd need to get some as we don't have any left in storage) - there's lots of felt tips in the castle tower. Remember to bring the labels down with the leftovers so the next days' cook knows what is what :)
- ★ A potential sign for the dining room might be "Please help the racoons by taking down empty pots. Any leftovers can go in the pantry, but please take the dietary labels with them so tomorrow's Oddess knows what's what :)"

Signage, structure and layout amongst the chaos..

- ★ There's lots of ways of doing this, and things tend to evolve over the gathering. Here's what worked for me/ what I would do next time:
- ★ Get a team together to help co-create how the kitchen could be run and organised - they can then help you maintain some of that structure throughout the gathering.
- ★ Maybe have the rota on a board so it can move around the castle (there's a wooden chalk-board in the tower storage - but I'd probably stick paper to this as chalk isn't that easy)
- ★ The most important role to agree in advance in the kitchen lead, or the Oddesss, a gender neutral Goddess - this is so they can plan ingredients, mentally prepare etc etc. Other roles include the kitchen helpers, racoons (washer uppers) and sparkle fae.
- ★ You may also want to think about how the different 'support' roles can be shared between different fae - the pantry pansy making the orders and organising any pantry chaos, may be different from the fae that makes sure we have lunch and dinner Oddesses and that they're happy and comfortable with portion sizes, dietary requirements etc, which may be different to the fae that makes sure the castle is clean, tidy and the pots get washed. Or any other combination, or indeed none, because it's all everyone's responsibility ;p
- ★ The metal shelves in the pantry worked well as this meant all the cooking ingredients were in one place (except oils etc above the cooker) and made more room around the sofa
- ★ Have a sign saying 'to help yourself to left overs in the back' as some fae won't know this and it's healthier and tastier than toast.
- ★ Label where EVERYTHING should go, to help people find things and put things away after the delivery.
- ★ The tiles and wipe-board markers are super useful - putting cooking tips and tricks didn't really work, maybe a to do list, or anything else useful?
- ★ The weird knob next to the toaster is a tin opener for large industrial tins.

- ★ There are approx 7 bathrooms and 2 big dorm sinks.
- ★ There's an upstairs wash up station and a sink for mops etc. in the pantry.
- ★ There is a double standing fridge and small fridge in the kitchen and a medium size chest freezer in the back.
- ★ The annex kitchen also has a small fridge and freezer and a clothes washing machine.

Decor

- ★ Encourage any fae that feel called to decorate the kitchen
- ★ Not every fae will want to use only seasonal local produce - one idea is to paint a sign with the seasonal fruit and vegetables for March and October that we can hang in the kitchen each year. There might be a still-life-loving fae attending next time..

Cleaning and Sparkle Fae

- ★ We bought 5L bottles of eco cleaning products from the 'ethicalsuperstore.com' - save the old washing up liquid, toilet cleaner, and multipurpose spray cleaner bottles to be topped up. Multipurpose cleaner can also be used for mopping.
- ★ You may want to hang a sign above the sink in the kitchen asking people not to throw away bottles as we can top them up to reduce our plastic waste. They tend to get thrown away otherwise.
- ★ Plastic free cloths and sponges weren't particularly popular and are also quite expensive. We'll probably just have to buy the plastic versions until the world catches up to reality :(
- ★ We should have plenty of clothing washing liquid to wash the tea towels. I would try to wash the tea towels about half way through and again at the end. Also agree a plan for where they are stored and where they travel to next.
- ★ We got unbleached toilet paper and kitchen rolls from 'nakedsprout.uk' - sheet for sheet it's priced quite well compared to other recycled papers.
- ★ I'd suggest asking fae to do a deep clean about half way through the gathering - mop floors, wipe walls etc. this helps with the cleaning at the end of the gathering.
- ★ It might be worth mentioning in the circles that sparkle faeries can also clean around the sinks, baths and toilets on their sparkle faerie journey around the castle.

Equipment and other bits

- ★ The castle seems to be quite well stocked after the last gathering but you can reach out to fae if anything feels like it's missing.
- ★ A food processor and weighing scales are usually quite useful and are not kept at the castle.
- ★ We have a stick blender and a tea urn in storage, as well as extra kettles etc.
- ★ Extra tea towels and sharp knives are usually good to bring along too.

- ★ The Woodpigs may ask you for (eco)firelighters and matches - plus a box of matches is useful for the cooker.
- ★ Cling-film dreaded plastic, but actually quite useful.
- ★ Felt tip pens and big rolls of plain wallpaper are stored in the tower :)
- ★ Lots of tea lights
- ★ The first aid kit is stored in the tower - it's worth checking the stock and sell by dates and replacing what is missing.

Deliveries and the first night..

- ★ We had the following deliveries for a Tuesday (organisers arrived on the Monday) to next Thursday gathering:
 - Tuesday and Saturday morning veg wholesale deliveries
 - Monday evening and Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, Monday and Wednesday morning tesco deliveries
 - Wholefoods and cleaning deliveries arriving the first Tuesday/Wednesday.
- ★ Everyone will always arrive hours later than expected..! And Gary is never very happy when we ask him to collect our tesco deliveries. Try to order the first tesco delivery late on Monday (after 7pm), so it's ready for breakfast but not for Monday dinner. Chip-shop is a top recommendation for the first night, or ask fae to bring their own food or buy ingredients together from the coop on Monday evening. Alternatively, someone could cook in advance and bring it in their car.
- ★ Pre-book your tesco orders with something that you wouldn't mind receiving if you forgot to update the order - not balsamic vinegar.
- ★ Double check the address on the orders - obvious, but not ideal having 20 oat milks arriving at your home address by mistake.. eekk.
- ★ Order more veg on the first delivery so you don't run out before the second one arrives, but then underestimate the second order because you can always top up with tesco.
- ★ For the wholefoods, cleaning supplies and toilet paper deliveries we paid for next day delivery and ordered them on the Sunday before. Again so Gary didn't have to be home to sign for them. Alternatively get them delivered to someone's address who is driving to the castle on the Monday or Tuesday.
- ★ Include something useful in the delivery note, but you have to be creative to stay within the limited characters ("ask for faeries.. the door is open" this one worked for me), perhaps address it to the Albion Faeries rather than yourself so anyone knows to pick it up, and maybe mention to the veg wholesaler that the archway isn't all enough for larger vans (it was an issue in the past).
- ★ Deliveries sometimes don't get put away in a sensible place (or at all) - perhaps have a sign out back asking fae to "please keep the pantry tidy and group similar items together with open packets on top - this helps us use ingredients in a sensible order and reduce waste" - or something similar. Lots of signs saying where things should go is also helpful - there can never be too many signs!

Recycling

- ★ The castle sadly doesn't recycle anymore (except for cardboard, but this is also useful for starting fires, and for storing things in)
- ★ We took our clean recycling to the Haltwhistle recovery centre which was open Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday.
- ★ They accepted glass, tetra-paks and mixed recycling (paper, card, plastic bottles, aluminium and steel cans all in one bin!)
- ★ The co-op will take soft plastics and foil wrappers (e.g. bread bags, crisp packets etc) but not cling film.
- ★ Food waste is the one thing we can't recycle - but we could put a call out for anyone with a car and a desire for extra home composting :)

Seasonal Produce Grown in the UK (from vegsoc.org)

January

Apples, Beetroot, Brussels Sprouts, Carrots, Celeriac, Celery, Chicory, Jerusalem Artichokes, Kale, Leeks, Mushrooms, Onions, Parsnips, Pears, Red Cabbage, Salsify, Savoy Cabbage, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Squash, Swedes, Turnips, White Cabbage.

February

Apples, Beetroot, Brussels Sprouts, Carrots, Celeriac, Chicory, Jerusalem Artichokes, Kale, Leeks, Mushrooms, Onions, Parsnips, Pears, Purple Sprouting Broccoli, Red Cabbage, Salsify, Savoy Cabbage, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Squash, Swedes, White Cabbage.

March

Artichoke, Beetroot, Carrots, Chicory, Leeks, Parsnip, Purple Sprouting Broccoli, Radishes, Rhubarb, Sorrel, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Watercress.

April

Artichoke, Beetroot, Carrots, Chicory, New Potatoes, Kale, Morel Mushrooms, Parsnips, Radishes, Rhubarb, Rocket, Sorrel, Spinach, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Watercress.

May

Artichoke, Asparagus, Aubergine, Beetroot, Chicory, Chillies, Elderflowers, Lettuce, Marrow, New Potatoes, Peas, Peppers, Radishes, Rhubarb, Rocket, Samphire, Sorrel, Spinach, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Strawberries, Sweetheart Cabbage, Watercress.

June

Asparagus, Aubergine, Beetroot, Blackcurrants, Broad Beans, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cherries, Chicory, Chillies, Courgettes, Cucumber, Elderflowers, Gooseberries, Lettuce, Marrow, New Potatoes, Peas, Peppers, Radishes, Raspberries, Redcurrants, Rhubarb, Rocket, Runner Beans, Samphire, Sorrel, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Strawberries, Summer Squash, Sweetheart Cabbage, Swiss Chard, Tayberries, Turnips, Watercress.

July

Aubergine, Beetroot, Blackberries, Blackcurrants, Blueberries, Broad Beans, Broccoli, Carrots, Cauliflower, Cherries, Chicory, Chillies, Courgettes, Cucumber, Gooseberries, Greengages, Fennel, French Beans, Garlic, Kohlrabi, Loganberries, New Potatoes, Onions, Peas, Potatoes, Radishes, Raspberries, Redcurrants, Rhubarb, Rocket, Runner Beans, Samphire, Sorrel, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Strawberries, Summer Squash, Sweetheart Cabbage, Swiss Chard, Tomatoes, Turnips, Watercress.

August

Aubergine, Beetroot, Blackberries, Blackcurrants, Broad Beans, Broccoli, Carrots, Cauliflower, Cherries, Chicory, Chillies, Courgettes, Cucumber, Damsons, Fennel, French Beans, Garlic, Greengages, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce, Loganberries, Mangetout, Marrow, Mushrooms, Parsnips, Peas, Peppers, Potatoes, Plums, Pumpkin, Radishes, Raspberries, Redcurrants, Rhubarb, Rocket, Runner Beans, Samphire, Sorrel, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Strawberries, Summer Squash, Sweetcorn, Sweetheart Cabbage, Swiss Chard, Tomatoes, Watercress, White Cabbage.

September

Aubergine, Beetroot, Blackberries, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Butternut Squash, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Courgettes, Chicory, Chillies, Cucumber, Damsons, Garlic, Kale, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce, Mangetout, Marrow, Onions, Parsnips, Pears, Peas, Peppers, Plums, Potatoes, Pumpkin, Radishes, Raspberries, Red Cabbage, Rhubarb, Rocket, Runner Beans, Samphire, Sorrel, Spinach, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Strawberries, Summer Squash, Sweetcorn, Sweetheart Cabbage, Swiss Chard, Tomatoes, Turnips, Watercress, Wild Mushrooms, White Cabbage.

October

Aubergine, Apples, Beetroot, Blackberries, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Butternut Squash, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celeriac, Celery, Chestnuts, Chicory, Chillies, Courgette, Cucumber, Elderberries, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Marrow, Onions, Parsnips, Pears, Peas, Potatoes, Pumpkin, Quince, Radishes, Red Cabbage, Rocket, Runner Beans, Salsify, Savoy Cabbage, Spinach, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Summer Squash, Swede, Sweetcorn, Sweetheart Cabbage, Swiss Chard, Tomatoes, Turnips, Watercress, Wild Mushrooms, Winter Squash, White Cabbage.

November

Apples, Beetroot, Brussels Sprouts, Butternut Squash, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celeriac, Celery, Chestnuts, Chicory, Cranberries, Elderberries, Jerusalem Artichokes, Kale, Leeks, Onions, Parsnips, Pears, Potatoes, Pumpkin, Quince, Red Cabbage, Salsify, Savoy Cabbage, Swede, Swiss Chard, Turnips, Watercress, Wild Mushrooms, Winter Squash, White Cabbage.

December

Apples, Beetroot, Brussels Sprouts, Carrots, Celeriac, Celery, Chestnuts, Chicory, Cranberries, Jerusalem Artichokes, Kale, Leeks, Mushrooms, Onions, Parsnips, Pears, Potatoes, Pumpkin, Quince, Red Cabbage, Salsify, Savoy Cabbage, Swede, Swiss Chard, Turnips, Watercress, Winter Squash, White Cabbage.