

Spinach, feta and
cranberry parcelsPhotographs by
Ian GartickFiona Faulkner, right,
with her daughter Elsie

with them in the kitchen, messing around with vegetables to allow them to experience different tastes at their own pace."

Faulkner lives in Somerset, where the merry-go-round of play dates led her to the fashion designer Alice Temperley, who invited Faulkner to come and give her son and his cousin a cooking lesson. "Fiona created huge fun in the kitchen," says Temperley, who happily stomped out in the rain to the vegetable patch with her boys to pick ingredients. For Donna Air's kids' party, Faulkner cooked watermelon mocktails, edible flowers and a pea and lime dip, "among a sea of the most gorgeous little girls in beautiful frocks".

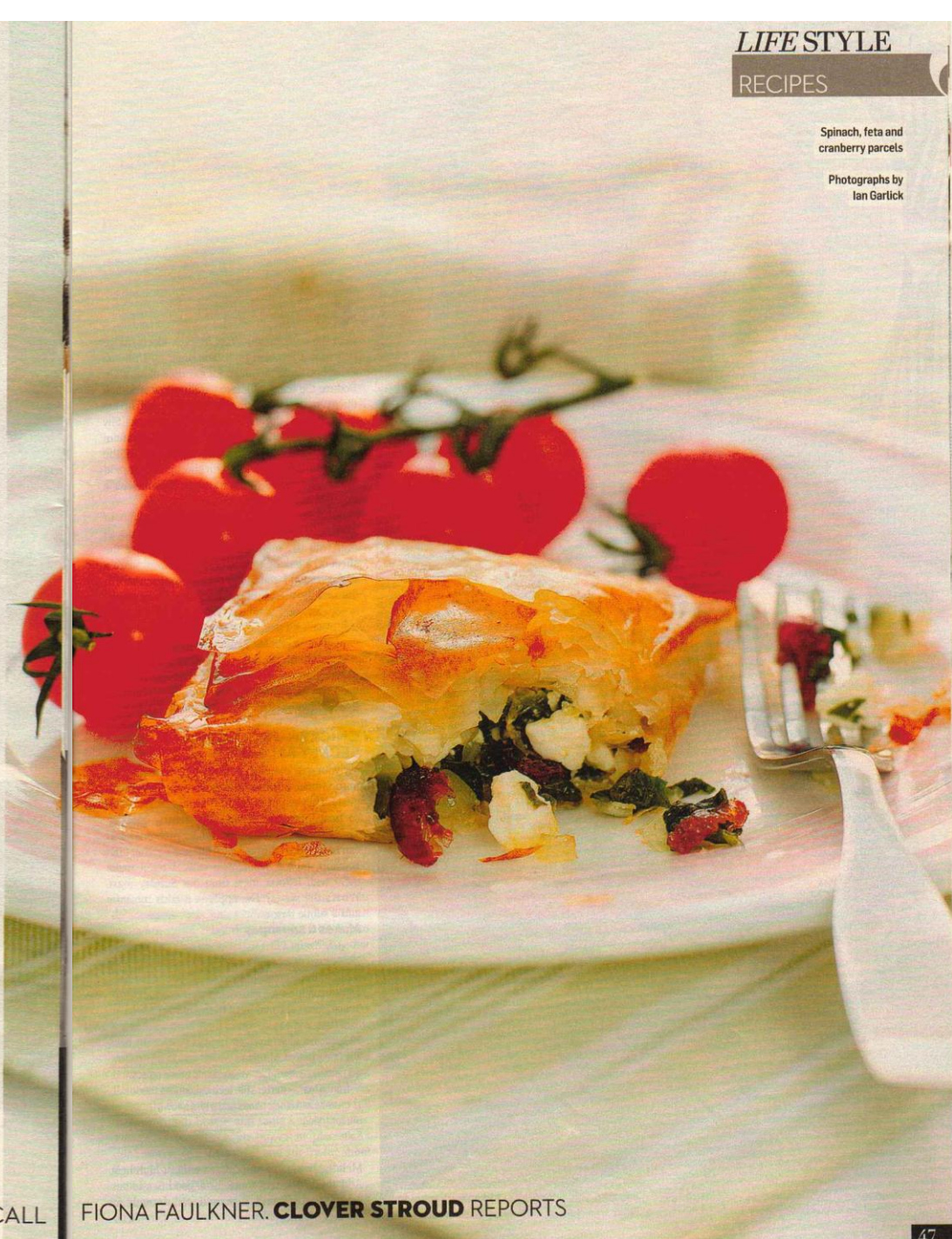
Sarah Beeny has booked Faulkner for a party in October, and even Gwyneth is now interested in booking a children's bash, which might mean Apple and Moses will be swapping agave nectar and soba noodles for Faulkner's rather more tasty-looking orange spaghetti and spiced tortilla chips. If you fancy having a go yourself, rope your kids in to try a few of the following.

SPINACH, FETA AND CRANBERRY PARCELS

This may seem quite a sophisticated recipe for a youngster, but it's simple – both in concept and preparation. What really counts is the reaction, and most kids in my workshops enjoy these. (I think the cranberries help, and it's easy to create a fairy story around the idea of looking inside a parcel: "Ooh, look, little rubies... and forest leaves from the fairies... and sparkly snow!" You get the idea.) For adults, you could add a dollop of home-made chutney.

Makes about 10

1 tbsp olive oil
1 small onion, finely chopped
About 200g of fresh spinach
200g feta cheese, crumbled or in small chunks
50g dried cranberries
Salt and pepper
10 sheets of ready-made filo pastry
50g butter, melted, or olive oil



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FIONA FAULKNER. CLOVER STROUD REPORTS