

Lamingtons!

By Helen Smale

A lamington is a sponge cake of Australian origin in the shape of a cube, coated in a layer of traditionally chocolate icing and then desiccated coconut. Lamingtons are sometimes served as two halves with a layer of cream and/or strawberry or raspberry jam between, and are commonly found in Australian, New Zealand and South African outlets such as cafes, lunch bars, bakeries, home industries and supermarkets. You can also make them in other colours by substituting "runny" jelly for the chocolate icing - but that's another story!!

Most accounts of the creation of the lamington agree it was named after Lord Lamington who served as Governor of Queensland from 1896 to 1901. However, another claim says they were named after the town of Lamington, South Lanarkshire, Scotland.

For the Sponge:

200 grams softened butter
 1 1/2 cups caster sugar
 3/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
 4 eggs
 2 1/2 cups self-rising flour
 3/4 cup milk



For the Icing:

4 cups icing sugar mixture
 1/4 cup cocoa powder
 1 tablespoon of softened butter
 1/2 cup boiling water

You will also need about 2 -3 cups of desiccated coconut

METHOD:

1. Preheat oven to approx. 180c / 160c fan forced and grease a "lamington tray" measuring approx. 33cm x 23cm x 3cm deep. I purchased my tray from Cold Storage, Pelangi Plaza. Line the tray with baking paper leaving an overhang on each side to make it easier to remove the sponge.
 2. Cream the butter, sugar and vanilla until creamy, light and fluffy and then add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Don't worry if the mixture curdles, just keep beating it and it should come out well. If it doesn't, don't panic, it will come together when you mix in the flour.
 3. After adding the eggs, stir in the flour and milk alternately, combining well after each addition. The finished mixture should be of a "soft dropping" consistency.
 4. Spoon mix into prepared tin and bake for about 20 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Obviously all ovens are different so you might need to "judge" the temperature and cooking time.
 5. Let the sponge stand in the pan until it cools a little then turn it out onto a wire cooling rack. Cover with a clean, dry tea towel and set aside overnight. In Malaysia's hot conditions the cake would be better placed into the refrigerator.
- ◆ To make the icing, sift the icing sugar and cocoa into a bowl, then add the softened butter and boiling water. Stir until smooth, adding more water if necessary. The icing should be quite runny so it will soak into the sponge.
 - ◆ Trim the hard edges from the sides of your sponge (don't worry about the top and bottom) then cut into cubes of desired size.
 - ◆ The next bit is quite messy - dip your sponge cubes, a few at a time, into the icing - let them soak for a few seconds - then take them out one at a time. Let some of the excess chocolate drain off and roll the cube in coconut until it's completely covered.
 - ◆ Place the finished lamingtons on a wire rack to set. Should the icing start to thicken too much you can add a little more boiling water to thin it out. Once prepared, lamingtons can be kept in the fridge for a few days - just take them out a little while before you wish to serve them.