

FAMILY FAVORITES

Our Mom let us loose in the kitchen on Sunday evenings. It was a great time to experiment. There were many inventions and faux pas—but we eventually arrived at our favorites! Here are some of them.

Louise's Hot Milk Sponge
Louise's Gingernut Dessert
Louise's Toasted Sandwiches
Lissa's Pistachio Amaretti Biscuits
Lissa's Asparagus Pie
Lissa and Garth's Vegetarian Bobotie
Jo's Lemon Meringue Pie
Jo's Apple Spice Cake
Celia's Famous Scones
Granny Harden's Yorkshire Pudding
Melk Tart
Granny's Lemon Curd
German Breakfast
Some Basic Kitchen Conversions

PLEASE NOTE: These are not the healthiest of recipes, but when you need a treat, go ahead and indulge!

Louise's Hot Milk Sponge

I have been making this recipe since I was 10. It never fails, although if you're not living at the coast, make sure you use slightly less baking powder.

Ingredients:

1 cup castor sugar
1 cup flour (slightly more flour than sugar)
1 stick of butter and half cup of milk, melted
3 large eggs
2 t vanilla essence
3 t of baking powder

Method:

Blend the sugar and eggs. Add the vanilla essence and slowly blend in the flour.
Add the melted butter and milk while it is still hot
Add the baking powder
Place in 2 round tins, greased and floured
Bake at 400 F for 15 to 20 minutes or until a needle comes out clean

Chocolate Frosting:

Blend half a cup soft butter with 2 t vanilla essence, 2 T milk, half a cup of baking cocoa and 2 cups confectioners' sugar. For vanilla frosting, add 2 T of soft cream cheese, remove the cocoa

Louise's Gingernut Dessert

This is a super-easy dessert and you can make it ahead and keep it in the fridge.

Ingredients:

2 packets of gingernut biscuits
Half a glass of white wine, mixed with half a glass of sherry
Pint of fresh cream, whipped
Chopped walnuts
Red glace cherries

Method:

Dip the gingernut biscuits one at a time, in the white wine and sherry mixture
Place a layer of the dipped biscuits on the bottom of glass bowl until it is covered
Cover with a layer of whipped cream
Keep adding layers of gingernuts, with cream in between the layers
Top with more whipped cream
Decorate with chopped nuts and cherries
Place in the fridge for a few hours before serving, or even overnight

Louise's Toasted Sandwiches

You can add any leftovers you have, replacing the zucchini with cooked onion or mushrooms.

Ingredients:

Slices of buttered white or brown bread
Chopped up chicken or other left-over protein
Grated zucchini
Sliced tomatoes
Sharp cheddar cheese, grated
Slices of bacon

Method:

Layer ingredients with the bacon on top, and the cheese next
Grill until bacon is cooked and cheese is melted
Serve on top of fresh spinach

Lissa's Pistachio Amaretti Biscuits

Lissa makes these cookies with her grandson—especially fun for little people!

Ingredients:

300 g almond meal
80 g finely ground pistachios
1 t pistachio paste
150 g sugar
2 egg whites
120 g crushed pistachios
120 g icing sugar
120 g red or green glace cherries

Method:

Preheat oven to 350 F

Combine almond meal, ground pistachios, pistachio paste and sugar in a food processor. Add egg whites and process to make a firm dough. Roll into walnut-size balls and coat half in crushed pistachios and half in icing sugar. Place biscuits on a baking sheet lined with baking paper and press a glace cherry into the middle of each biscuit.

Bake for 16 minutes or until bases are pale golden brown. The middle should still be squishy. Eat with strong coffee or amaretto.

Lissa's Asparagus Pie

In summer this can be made with fresh asparagus.

Ingredients:

2 ozs (60 g) butter
1 cup flour
1 t sugar
Half a t salt
2 level t baking powder
4 oz (120 ml) milk

Filling:

2 large onions
2 TBS butter
1 tin of asparagus cuts
Quarter of a pint (120 ml) thick, sweet cream
1 large egg
Half a cup of grated cheddar cheese

Method:

Rub butter with dry ingredients until they are like fine breadcrumbs
Add milk to form a dough
Press pastry into a shallow pie dish
Chop onions and fry in the butter until glassy but not brown.
Spread on pastry and cover with asparagus.
Beat cream until thick and fold in beaten egg
Pour mixture evenly over the top of the asparagus
Sprinkle with grated cheese
Bake for about 20 minutes at 400 F

Lissa and Garth's Vegetarian Bobotie

Bobotie is a popular dish of Cape Malay origin. You can also change this recipe by adding Hake (stockfish) fish or minced meat. Serve with rice, chutney, coconut and chopped nuts.

Ingredients:

2 eggs
1 cup milk
1 large onion
3 T olive oil
1 T curry powder
4 T cider vinegar
4 T water
2 T fruit chutney
2 cups lima beans, minced
2 cups lima beans, whole
1 large carrot, coarsely shredded
Half a cup of cashew pieces
1 cup soy sauce
Half a cup of sultanas
2 cups of blanched almonds or sunflower seeds
6 bay leaves

Method:

Saute onion in oil
When onion is soft add curry powder
Add vinegar, water, chutney
Add remaining ingredients (except the eggs and milk) and place in casserole dish
Place almonds and bay leaves on top
Bake at 350 F (180 C) for 30 to 40 minutes
In last 10 minutes, pour a mixture of the eggs and milk over the whole dish

Jo's Lemon Meringue Pie

Jo makes this pie with fresh lemons from the tree in her garden. It is utterly amazing!

Pie crust:

1 cup flour

2 T sugar

115 g melted butter

Mix and press into greased pie plate

Bake at 350 F (180 C) while you prepare filling

Filling:

1 tin condensed milk

Quarter cup lemon juice

3 egg yolks

Beat together

Beat egg whites and then add 4 T castor sugar and pinch of cream of tartar

Bake at 350 F (180 C) for 20 minutes and then turn oven down to 260 F (140 C) for 10 to 15 minutes to harden the meringue

Jo's Apple Spice Cake

Jo is a big bridge player, and this is a favorite with her card players.

Ingredients and method:

Beat 2 eggs and a cup of sugar together

Add a cup of oil and beat well

Add in these sifted, dry ingredients:

1 and a half cups flour

1 t bicarb

1 t cinnamon

Half t mixed spice

Half t ground cloves

Half t nutmeg

Pinch salt

Add 200 ml apple sauce and mix lightly

Place in loaf tin and bake for 1 hour at 320 F (160 C)

Icing:

Mix 1 T soft butter and 2 t brown sugar

Add in icing sugar with teaspoons of water until slightly stiff

Celia's Famous Scones

Our Mom made these all the time, but especially when a new family moved into the neighborhood. She always took them round when introducing herself!

Ingredients:

1 pinch salt
2 T sugar
3 T butter
1 cup of fruit (currents or raisins)
6 t baking power
3 cups of flour

Method:

Mix with milk, using a knife, dry ingredients first
Cut in the butter
Press out with your hands
Bake in hot oven (450 F) for 10 minutes
Add a cup of sharp cheddar cheese for a change, replacing the cup of fruit

Granny Harden's Yorkshire Pudding

Our maternal Granny was born in Yorkshire and always made this on Sundays with a roast.

Ingredients:

2 heaped T flour
1 large egg
1 t of salt
1 cup lard
1 level t of baking powder

Method:

Make a hole in the center of the flour. Break the egg into the hole and gradually stir in the flour. Then beat well. Let these ingredients stand a while. Add rest of ingredients. Pour into a baking dish of very hot cooking oil and cook for about 15 minutes at 400 F.

Melk Tart

This is a famous South African dessert, and mostly always on the menu in restaurants.

Ingredients:

1 cup flour

1 T sugar

Quarter pound melted butter

Mix and press into pie dish and place in oven at 375 F for 3-5 minutes

Filling:

2 cups milk

4 level t flour

6 t sugar

2 eggs

2 ozs butter

Pinch of salt

1 t vanilla essence

Method:

Bring milk to boil. Mix flour, sugar and salt to smooth paste with extra milk if necessary

When milk boils, stir paste into milk on stove until thick. Take off stove and add butter

Allow to cool and add beaten eggs

Put filling into pie shell and bake in hot oven until center rises

Sprinkle with cinnamon

Usually served at room temperature or chilled from being in the fridge

Granny's Lemon Curd

This was always a treat to slather on fresh white bread when we were staying with our grandparents. (Our mother didn't approve of white bread!)

Ingredients

Juice of 2 lemons

4 oz butter

4 ozs sugar

2 eggs

Method

Melt butter

Whip eggs and sugar together

Add lemon juice

Pour mixture into melted butter, stir until it thickens

German Breakfast

I hated cereal for breakfast, but German Breakfast was delicious! I have no idea why it is called "German Breakfast"

Ingredients

Oats

Lemon juice

Honey

Grated apple

Cream or milk

Method

Soak 2 T oats overnight in half a cup of water

The next morning add the juice of half a lemon, 1 T honey and a grated apple.

Add a T of whipped cream or milk to taste

Some Basic Kitchen Conversions

I must have missed the conversion classes we had in school when South Africa went metric, so I always need a quick cheat sheet. Also, our recipes are often done by taste and feel, so you may want to use them more as a guide than as a baking/cooking bible!

t = teaspoon

T = Tablespoon

ML = milliliter

Oven Temperatures

250 F = 120 C

320 F = 160 C

350 F = 180 C

400 F = 205 C

425 F = 220 C

Baking in Grams

1 cup flour = 140 grams

1 cup sugar = 150 grams

1 cup confectioner's sugar = 160 grams

1 cup heavy cream = 235 grams

Volume

1 t = 5 ML

1 T = 15 ML

1 cup or 8 fluid ounces = 240 ML

34 FL ounces = 1 liter

Cup Measurements

1 cup = 8 fluid ounces

1 cup = 16 T

1 cup = 48 t

1 cup = Half a pint/quarter of a quart/one sixteenth of a gallon/240 ML

Butter

1 cup butter = 2 sticks = 8 ozs = 230 grams = 8 T