

~ Recipes from Sunny South Africa ~



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Forward

It would be difficult to describe the flavors of South African cooking. Centuries of combined cultures have created recipes intermixed with European, African, and Asian influences of spices.

The diversity of the food reflects the diversity of the country, often referred to as a world within one country.

For every recipe, there are dozens of variations, each reflecting the favoritism of the cook's heritage and each delightfully different than the next.

When I married my South African husband, I was introduced to the wonderful world of South African food and the recipes I share with you here are some of the favorites.

I hope you enjoy them as much as I have.

**Warmest regards,
Robin van der Merwe**

Bobotie

Pronounced “bo-boo-tie”, this wonderfully spiced ground beef casserole will have your dinner guests asking for the recipe!

Preheat oven to 350F

Lightly grease the bottom and sides of a casserole dish

2 pounds ground beef
2 medium sized onions, chopped
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 tablespoon curry powder
1½ tablespoons sugar
2 teaspoons salt
½ teaspoon turmeric
½ teaspoon black pepper
2 tablespoons white vinegar or lemon juice
6-12 whole almonds quartered or 1 tablespoon sliced almonds
½ cup golden raisins
3 tablespoons fruit chutney *
4 bay leaves (or lemon leaves or the grated rind of 1 lemon)
1 slice white bread
1 cup milk
1 egg

- 1. Brown the meat and the chopped onions together in a pan with the vegetable oil. Pour off any remaining liquid.**
- 2. Soak the bread in half of the milk, then mash the bread with a fork.**
- 3. Combine all of the other ingredients EXCEPT the egg, the other half of the milk and the bay leaves.**
- 4. Put mixture into a casserole dish, and tuck the bay leaves lengthwise into the top of the mixture. Cover the casserole**
- 5. Bake for one hour**
- 6. Then, remove bay leaves**
- 7. Beat the egg with the remaining milk and gently pour over the casserole.**

- 8. Return to the oven for 30 minutes and bake uncovered**
- 9. Serve in the casserole dish along with white rice and chutney on the side**

*** Chutney can be hard to find in the U.S. and other countries. Try looking in the international section of your grocery store or at “World Market” or other imported food stores. Mrs. Ball’s Chutney is the most recognized brand in South Africa. Also, Indian chutneys have a different taste than traditional South African chutneys. There is a recipe for South African apricot chutney in this cookbook.**

Apricot Chutney

Chutney is made by boiling fresh or dried fruit with vinegar and spices to make a soft jam-like consistency. Its sweet/sour taste goes well with meats.

Quick version:

**1 cup apricot jam
¾ cup white vinegar
½ teaspoon ground ginger
½ teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper**

- 1. Mix all ingredients**
- 2. Boil until the mixture is thick (not runny)**

Fresh fruit version:

**25 apricots, dried or fresh (if using dried apricots, soak overnight in cold water then cook in the same water until tender)
¼ large white onion
½ clove garlic
¼ teaspoon powdered mustard
1 teaspoon ground ginger
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 ¼ cup white sugar
¾ cup white vinegar**

- 1. Chop onion and garlic and boil in the vinegar for 10 minutes**
- 2. Add sugar, salt and spices and the fresh or cooked apricots to the vinegar mix and cook for 30-60 minutes, stirring occasionally.
Cook until mixture is very thick**
- 3. Refrigerate and use within one week.**

Poor Man's Pudding

This cake-like desert is too good to just eat one serving!

Preheat oven to 350F

Grease bottom and sides of glass Pyrex casserole dish (with cover)

½ Cup white sugar

½ Cup all-purpose flour

1 Cup milk

1 Egg

2 Tablespoons margarine

1 Tablespoon apricot jam

1 Teaspoon baking soda

- 1. Cream together the sugar and margarine**
- 2. Add the egg and beat well**
- 3. Mix the soda into the milk and then add to the sugar/margarine mixture and mix well**
- 4. Put mixture into baking dish, cover, and bake for 1 hour**
- 5. Serve with custard or vanilla ice cream**

Melktert (Milk Tart)

This custard-like pie is creamy and delicious!

**Preheat oven to 350F
Lightly grease a pie dish**

First, the pastry crust:

**1 cup flour
1 egg beaten, then divided in half
1 teaspoon baking powder
¼ cup sugar
Pinch of salt**

- 1. Beat together the butter and sugar, add ½ of the egg mixture, then add the dry ingredients**
- 2. Press the crumbly mixture into a pie dish and bake for 20 minutes**

Then, the filling:

**1½ eggs beaten (use the other ½ of the beaten egg mixture from above)
1¼ tablespoons flour
1¼ tablespoons cornstarch
2¼ cups milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon butter**

- 1. Boil the milk**
- 2. In a separate bowl, beat the eggs and the sugar. Then mix in the flour and cornstarch and beat this all together**
- 3. Add to the boiled milk and cook until it thickens**
- 4. Remove from heat and add vanilla and butter, beat well and pour into baked pie shell.**
- 5. Sprinkle with cinnamon or nutmeg and refrigerate to cool.
Serve chilled**

Rusks

I call these the South African version of biscotti. These are great to dunk in coffee or tea or eaten plain. You can add fruit and nuts to the recipe as well.

Preheat oven to 400F

Prepare a well-floured surface for rolling dough

Grease a baking sheet with butter or margarine

2 cups unbleached white flour

2 cups whole wheat bread flour

1/3 cup white sugar

1/2 teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons baking powder

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1/2 cup melted butter

2 eggs

3/4 cup buttermilk

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

2 teaspoons almond extract

- 1. In a large bowl, mix all dry ingredients**
- 2. In a separate bowl, mix all wet ingredients then pour them into the dry ingredients and mix until you have a soft dough**
- 3. Turn the dough onto a well-floured surface**
- 4. Roll or pat dough to about 1/2 inch thickness.**
- 5. Cut dough into rectangles about 2 inches by 4 inches**
- 6. Bake the rusks about 2 inches apart on greased baking sheets for about 25 minutes until the tops are just browning a little**
- 7. You can eat some of them now, but the rest should be loosely piled together on a baking sheet and kept in the oven at 200F for 12 hours to dry. The finished rusks will be very dry and hard (like a biscotti)**
- 8. Cool them, then store them in an airtight container for weeks.**

Malva Pudding

A sweet cake-like desert with a spongy-caramelized texture

Preheat oven to 350F

Grease a glass or porcelain casserole dish

1 cup cake flour

1 teaspoon baking soda

1 teaspoon baking powder

¼ teaspoon salt

1 cup white sugar

1 egg

1 teaspoon white vinegar

1 tablespoon melted butter

1 tablespoon apricot jam

1 cup milk

For the sauce:

1 cup whipping cream (or ½ cup milk and ½ cup cream)

1 cup white sugar

½ cup hot water

½ cup butter

- 1. Sift the flour, baking soda and baking powder into a bowl**
- 2. Stir in the sugar and salt.**
- 3. In another bowl, beat the egg well and add jam, vinegar, butter and milk**
- 4. Mix the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and beat**
- 5. Pour batter into the baking dish, cover and bake for 45 or until a toothpick inserted in the pudding comes out clean.**
- 6. When the pudding is almost done, make the sauce.**
- 7. Heat all the sauce ingredients until the sugar is completely dissolved**
- 8. When pudding is done, remove from oven and pour sauce over the pudding.**
- 9. Serve hot or at room temperature with cream or custard sauce on the side**

Cape Brandy Pudding

Similar to Malva Pudding, this cake-like desert is delicious!

Preheat oven to 350 F

Grease a glass or ceramic baking dish

¼ cup dates finely chopped
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 cup boiling water
¼ pound butter or margarine
1 cup sugar
2 eggs, beaten
2 cups cake flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
1 cup walnuts or pecans, chopped

For the sauce:

1 cup sugar
1 tablespoon butter
¾ cup water
2 teaspoon vanilla extract
½ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon brandy

- 1. Divide chopped dates into 2 portions. Add baking soda and boiling water to 1 portion, mix well and leave to cool.**
- 2. Cream margarine and sugar then beat in eggs.**
- 3. Sift flour, baking powder and salt over mixture and fold in. Add dry portions of dates and walnuts, mix well.**
- 4. Stir in baking soda mixture, blend thoroughly and turn batter out into a large baking dish. Bake for 40 minutes or until firm.**
- 5. For the sauce: Heat sugar, butter and water for 5 minutes. Remove from stove and stir in vanilla extract, salt and brandy. Pour sauce over pudding as soon as it comes out of the oven and serve hot or cold with whipped cream.**

Koeksisters

Pronounced “cook-seesters” these are sweet, syrup-coated pastries

2 cups flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1 egg
½ cup milk (approximately)

The syrup:

4 cups white sugar
1 cup water
½ teaspoon cream of tartar
juice of 1 lemon
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon or ½ teaspoon ground ginger

- 1. Make the syrup the night before by adding the dry ingredients to the water and bringing the mixture to a boil. Allow it to simmer for 10 minutes or until it has the consistency of thick syrup. Divide the mixture in half, pouring into two separate bowls and refrigerating overnight**
- 2. The following day, make the pastries – Sift the flour, baking powder and salt into a mixing bowl. Mix the butter into the dry ingredients with a fork.**
- 3. Beat the egg and the milk in a separate bowl, then add to the dry ingredients, mixing gently and only as much as necessary**
- 4. Refrigerate the dough for at least one hour**
- 5. Roll out the dough to ¼ inch thickness**
- 6. Cut into 3-½ inch by 1 inch strips**
- 7. Cut each strip into three strips lengthwise, leaving the top of each strip uncut (you will be braiding each strip, thus the need to make three slices with them all connected at the top).**
- 8. Braid the strips and press the ends together at the bottom of each braid**

- 9. Preheat vegetable oil in a deep pan and remove one bowl of syrup from the refrigerator**
- 10. Deep-fry the koeksisters until golden brown**
- 11. Drain on paper towel a few seconds**
- 12. Dip the koeksisters into the cold syrup for a few seconds while they are still hot then place on a plate or tray**
- 13. When you have done ½ of the braided dough pieces, get the other bowl of syrup out of the refrigerator and use it. Syrup must be cold when dipping to make the pastries come out right.**

Monkey Gland Steak

Don't worry.....it's not what it sounds like. I think someone may have named this as a joke years ago, but the name stuck and it is now a very popular dish. It reminds me a bit of Swiss steak.

Cube steak (or round steak, minute steak, skirt steak or rump steak)

½ cup water

oil for frying

1 large onion diced

2 large tomatoes diced (or canned tomatoes)

1 cup of ketchup

½ cup of Worcestershire sauce

2 cloves of garlic finely chopped

³/₄ cup of chutney

1/2 cup of brown sugar

2 Tablespoons white vinegar

1 teaspoon. Tabasco sauce

In a heavy skillet, heat oil. Sauté onions and garlic until soft. Add remaining ingredients, mix well and simmer for a few minutes. Fry the steaks separately. When done frying spoon the sauce over the steaks. Serve with rice.

Bread and Butter Pudding

5 slices of stale white bread (with or without crusts)

4 tablespoons butter

½ cup golden raisins

2 cups milk

¼ cup white sugar

2 large eggs

1 teaspoon cinnamon

Preheat oven to 325 F

Grease a glass or ceramic baking dish

- 1. Thickly butter the slices of bread on one side and place the slices buttered side down in the greased dish**
- 2. Sprinkle the raisins on top of the bread**
- 3. Beat eggs and add sugar and milk and pour this mixture over the bread and allow it to soak into the bread for 30 minutes**
- 4. Cover and bake for 30 minutes**
- 5. Uncover and bake for an additional 10 to 15 minutes until golden brown.**
- 6. Serve warm and top with honey, jam or golden syrup (similar to maple syrup and can sometimes be found in the international foods section of grocery stores).**

Pineapple Pudding

- 1 can crushed pineapple (15 ounces approx) drained**
- 2 ½ cups water**
- 1 tablespoon custard powder (found in some international food aisles or substitute vanilla pudding powder if you must)**
- 1 cup white sugar**
- 2 eggs, separated (yolks from whites)**
- 1 small packet of pineapple jello powder**

- 1. In a saucepan, heat drained pineapple and water for 10 minutes**
- 2. Mix custard powder ½ cup of the sugar and a little water into a paste and add to pineapple mixture**
- 3. Beat egg yolks with ½ cup sugar and add to pineapple mix and cook thoroughly**
- 4. Remove from heat and add jello powder and stir until well-blended**
- 5. Cool slightly, then fold in stiffly beaten egg white**
- 6. Refrigerate until firm like jello**

Serve chilled with custard sauce below:

- 2 cups milk**
- 3 tablespoon white sugar**
- 1 tablespoon custard powder**

- 1. Mix custard, sugar and ¼ of the milk together**
- 2. Boil ¾ cup milk and add custard mix**
- 3. Return to boil then remove from heat and serve warm**