

Boston cream pie



bite
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-Geoff Scott

The Boston cream pie is actually a cake comprising two sponge discs filled with vanilla flavoured custard and smothered with rich chocolate. It was first made at the Boston Parker House Hotel in 1856 by an Armenian-French chef. Unlike our pavlova, the cream pie is not mass-produced in Boston and was only declared the official dessert of Massachusetts in 1996.

Boston sponge

225 g	Butter
225 g	Caster sugar
1 tsp	Vanilla extract
4	Eggs
200 g	Self raising flour
25 g	Cornflour
4 Tbsp	Milk
1 tsp	Baking powder

Vanilla cream filling

125 ml	Cream
125 ml	Milk
3	Eggs, yolks only
1 tsp	Vanilla extract
50 g	Caster sugar
15 g	Flour

Chocolate ganache glaze

150 ml	Cream
1 tsp	Vanilla extract
1 Tbsp	Butter
150 g	Dark chocolate, chopped or buttons

Directions

For the sponge

1. Heat oven to 180C.
2. Grease a loose-bottomed 20cm sponge tin.
3. In a food processor cream butter, sugar and vanilla.
4. Add eggs and mix thoroughly, then mix in flour, cornflour, baking powder and lastly milk.
5. Pour into tin and bake for 40 minutes, until a test skewer comes out clean, the sponge is beginning to come away from the edges and it is springy to touch on top.
6. Allow sponge to cool in the tin for 15 minutes then take out and place on a cake rack.

For the cream filling

1. In a saucepan bring cream and milk to the boil.
2. Whisk together egg yolks, vanilla, sugar and flour.
3. Pour boiling liquid on yolk mix, whisk well, then pour back into the saucepan. Continue stirring over a medium heat until custard begins to thicken - about 3 minutes.
4. Remove from heat and pour into a bowl, cover with plastic wrap, pressing it on the cream filling to prevent a skin forming.

For the ganache

1. Bring cream, vanilla and butter to the boil, and remove from heat.
2. Allow to cool until warm. Whisk in chocolate until smooth and thickened.

To assemble

1. Use a bread knife to trim the top of the cold sponge so it is level.

2. Turn sponge over, cut in half, spread vanilla cream filling on to make an even layer.
3. Place the second sponge piece on top.
4. Pour glaze on the centre of the sponge and spread to the edges, allow glaze to dribble over the sides. It is best eaten the same day.

Geoff recommends

- For a light airy sponge, have the butter, eggs and milk all at room temperature.
- I like to use good quality dark chocolate with a minimum of 70 percent cacao — this is less sweet and has a more intense rich flavour.