

COOKING TO CONNECT

Everyone has a story to share.

SRI LANKAN WATTALAPPAM

Ingredients

10 eggs
450 grams dark Jaggery
1 tea cup thick coconut milk
3-4 Roasted and crushed cardomons
Sugar as needed (around 2-3 tbsp)
Cashew nuts

Method

1. First crush the jaggery. This sounds difficult. Here is how I crush it easily. Usually I keep jaggery inside the fridge. The day before I want to use it, I keep it out from the fridge. When I need to crush it, I use the grater and grate it easily.
2. Roast the cardomon in a hot pan for 5 minutes and crush it immediately in a mortar and pestle
3. Beat the eggs with a fork or whisk
4. Add crushed jaggery into the egg mixture and mix well
5. Add coconut milk and crushed cardamon and whisk until all the jaggery is dissolved
6. Strain the mixture into the bowl which you will use to steam the watalappam. I use an ovenproof Pyrex dish.
 - a. Garnish with a few cashew nuts on top
 - b. Watalappam can be cooked in a few ways:
 - c. Steam in a steamer for 20-25 minutes
 - d. Steam using a pan for 20-25 minutes
 - e. Bake in an ovenproof bowl
7. I steam in a pan so here is how to do it, you need a pan with a lid to fit it. The pan should be bigger than the bowl used for the watalappam.
8. Place a tea towel in the bottom of the pan. This is to steam the watalappam gently and evenly. Cover the watalappam bowl using aluminium foil. Then place bowl on the pan
9. Slowly add hot water to the pan just about half-inch from the bottom of the pan
10. Cover with the lid
11. Cook on medium high heat for 20-25 minutes
12. Rest the watalappam till it cools. To unmould run a knife/spatula along the edge all the way to the bottom of the dish to loosen it. Then set a serving plate over the mould, invert the plate gently. Garnish with more cashew nuts and enjoy!



OUR KATANNING RESIDENT RAZEENA MOHAMED HUSSAIN

My name is Razeena Mohamed Hussain and I was born in Kandy, Sri Lanka. I have an elder sister and younger brother. My parents are business people and my father now owns a shop in Kandy. We are of Muslim faith and practice Ramadan which is a holy month according to the lunar calendar. We fast for the whole month from sunrise to sunset. At the end of the month we have the Eid celebration. At that time God wants us to be happy because we've practiced Ramadan so we have a great celebration. Eid is a special festival for every Muslim in the world. As a child we would celebrate Eid with my father's brother and his family. It was such a happy time and we would prepare and eat so much delicious traditional food. My mother would make this special dessert, Wattalappam for every Eid. It is a must have dessert for every special occasion. If you want to make an event special, you must make this! Now I make it for my family in Katanning so they can carry on our traditions.

I came to Australia with my husband and two small children in January 2020, just before the covid issues started! So we feel really lucky in that regard. My husband works in Wagin. I was a teacher in Sri Lanka and worked as an Education Assistant in Katanning. I do miss Sri Lanka and my family very much. Having a baby was hard for me in Katanning. Not having my mother here to help and not being able to deliver my baby in Katanning was difficult for my family.

We like living in Katanning and how quiet it is and friendly. My three children are really happy and I am happy here. We have lots of beautiful people around us and are lucky.

I will celebrate Eid and make Wattalappam just like my mother made for us. I hope you enjoy it with your family too.