

Bobotie

One dish that's sparked a bit of 'foodie debate' is the South African classic, bobotie. Many claim it firmly as a Cape Malay dish, while others say it is Boerekos food.

Bobotie has been linked to Dutch and Malay cooking traditions and to the ancient Roman recipe, patinam ex lacte. The dish usually consists of spiced minced meat (a little like meatloaf) topped with egg custard and lemon or bay leaves. It's possible it got its name from the Indonesian words boemboe (an Indonesian spice mix) or bobotok (made from grated coconut and eggs).

Adapted from Jeanette C. Slade (1938) *Mrs Slade's South African Cookery Book*, South Africa, Central News Agency, Ltd.

Serves 4

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 large slice of white bread
- 1 cup milk
- 500 g minced beef
- 2 eggs
- 1 tbsp curry powder
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tbsp lemon juice or vinegar
- a few lemon or bay leaves
- butter or dripping for the top
- salt and pepper to taste



Soak the bread in half the milk.

Heat the oil on medium in a pan, add the onion and fry until golden.

Allow to cool slightly.

Mix the fried onion, curry powder, sugar, salt and vinegar or lemon juice together and add to the mince, together with the soaked bread and one egg.

Mix well, then put into a well-greased pie dish.

Whisk the other egg and the rest of the milk, season with salt and pepper and pour over the mince.

Put a few lemon leaves or bay leaves on top and bits of dripping or butter.

Bake in a moderate oven at 180°C (conventional), standing the dish in a pan of water.