



## TREATS FOR ALL

*Real Housewives of Melbourne star Susie McLean, known for her love of baking, spends a day with patisserie chef Liran Adika of Glazed Gluten Free to learn the secret to creating a mouthwatering vegan, nut-free and gluten-free lamington.*

*Let them eat cake!*

**Q.** Susie, what is it about baking that you love so much, and how did you develop such a strong interest in the art of patisserie?

**Susie:** Cakes make you happy! When you eat cakes, you feel joyful and happy as your body releases those feel-good chemicals that we're always craving. I love baking for my family and friends, it's how I show my affection. There is also that wonderful sense of satisfaction in creating something that is not only aesthetically pleasing, but delicious too.

I grew up on a farm in a remote area of country Victoria, where I developed a passion for baking and a voracious sweet tooth. My mother was on a perpetual diet and had issued a sugar ban on us children to save our teeth from the absence of fluoride in the tank water.

If I craved something sweet, I had to make it. I was lucky to have at my disposal a wonky old hand mixer, a 5-oven AGA stove and a very productive chook coop. I got most of my recipes from an old *Women's Weekly* magazine and from watching Margaret Fulton on the television.

**Q.** What are some of your signature cakes/dishes?

**Susie:** Due to my country upbringing and the practice of utilising produce from the land, I would usually lean towards traditional egg-based sweets, like sponges, pavlovas, puddings and soufflés. My signature dish would probably be a classic pavlova.

**Q.** Why are you interested in learning about creating allergy-friendly and vegan treats?

**Susie:** It would be amazing to have the tips, tricks and secrets to create allergy-friendly and vegan versions of my favourite cakes. I have always experimented with my baking over the years, trialling different recipes and alternative ingredients, with varying degrees of success. Also, I am a member of the Country Women's Association (CWA) and former president of a branch based in Toorak. Most of our fundraising is through baking stalls and fairs – it would be great to offer vegan and allergy-friendly options of a similar quality.

**Q.** What are some difficulties you have experienced in the past when it comes to hosting guests with dietary requirements?

**Susie:** When I host guests at a dinner party, I usually call ahead and ask if there are any dietary restrictions. I would feel terrible if anyone was to miss out on the main dishes, or God forbid, go hungry! I once had a friend who brought a vegan-coeliac with an allergy to soy and dairy as a plus-one to dinner. All I could muster for them was a plate of steamed broccolini. I did learn from that traumatic experience to always present a number of diverse and interesting side dishes, just in case.

**Q.** Do you feel dietary preferences are a passing fad, or are people becoming more conscious about their food choices?

**Susie:** Oh they're not at all a fad! Food and dietary restrictions have been around since the ancient times. It is only through modern medicine that we have been able to identify the exact foods that trigger adverse reactions and allergies.

Also, I think society as a whole has become far more conscious in general, but in particular, what we nourish ourselves with, whether for health or humanitarian



reasons. To be able to enjoy a range of foods that would have made you unwell in the past is one of the blessings of living in a modern world.

**Q.** What was it about chef Liran and his patisserie Glazed Gluten Free that impressed you?

**Susie:** To offer a full variety of cakes, breads and pastries that taste as good, if not better, than the readily-available patisserie and bakery items is a testament to Liran's outstanding creativity and skills. The colours, tastes and textures of the products at Glazed Gluten Free are what you are likely to find in the best patisseries in the world.

I would love to learn how to create a vegan sponge cake from Liran. I have attempted to make egg-free cakes in the past and they have turned out to be epic baking fails!

## Pushing the boundaries

**Q.** Liran, what inspired you to start a completely gluten-free and allergy-friendly patisserie and cafe?

**Liran:** Throughout my journey in the hospitality industry, including training under Shannon Bennett of three-hatted institution Vue de Monde, I recognised a need for freshly made high-quality baked goods such as breads and desserts that are gluten-free, nut-free, dairy-free, along with providing a variety of vegan options. I saw this as a great opportunity for us to bridge the 'great divide'.

While there are many eateries that offer selected gluten-free items, there always remains a risk of cross-contamination with traces of gluten. Our vision is to create a place for people with coeliac disease, gluten intolerances and other food allergies to feel safe and free to enjoy gluten-free, nut-free and dairy-free foods that taste authentic – just like everyone else.

**Q.** Why was it important for you to cater to a variety of intolerances and allergies?

**Liran:** Nut-free products are important because many kids suffer from common allergies related to nuts. Schools and other communities relating to childcare do not allow or strongly discourage products containing nuts from entering their premises, and we see a growing need among parents searching for a variety of nut-free products such as cakes, breads and savouries for their kids' lunchboxes.

We've also recognised that it is very difficult to find desserts that do not contain any dairy and actually taste good. We constantly strive to be creative and innovative with our desserts and artisan breads that we make daily for an increasing number of customers who are lactose intolerant.

We're also responding to a large community of vegans who have expressed their frustration about the lack of vegan-based patisseries available in Melbourne's cafe scene. We try to close this gap and offer vegan options at our patisserie so that vegans can enjoy what other people take for granted when it comes to the renowned Melbourne cafe-dining experience.

**Q.** Why are you keen to educate people on gluten-free cooking?

**Liran:** It is important for us to learn more about gluten-free cooking and have more GF recipes because increasingly, we see people around us with evolving dietary requirements.

By having more knowledge and practical skills on how to cook GF foods, it will help us add another skill to our cooking repertoire, but also help gluten-intolerant people around us by allowing us to cook for them or by passing on our GF culinary skills. As the old saying goes: "Teach a man how to fish and he will never go hungry."

**Q.** What exciting new things can we expect from Glazed Gluten Free once lockdown restrictions are lifted?

**Liran:** We've been busy creating even more exciting and innovative desserts, and are working on an indulgent and luxe high tea menu. We have plans to expand our breakfast and lunch menus, and of course, add to our constantly evolving array of sweet treats.

We opened in February 2020, just six weeks before the pandemic hit, but we took this as a great opportunity in the midst of adversity to push ourselves harder as the 'new kid on the block'. Resilience, a 'never give up' attitude, humility, and a dash of luck are the best ingredients for a strong business!

*Glazed Gluten Free is currently offering in-store pick-up and a delivery service for all their sweet and savoury offerings.*

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Glazedglutenfree.com.au

► HEAD TO OUR WEBSITE TO WATCH SUSIE AND LIRAN CREATE THESE DELICIOUS LAMINGTONS.



## Chef Liran's Vegan Gluten-Free Lamingtons

MAKES 6 SMALL LAMINGTONS

### INGREDIENTS

#### FOR THE SPONGE CAKES

300ml soy/rice milk  
5ml apple vinegar  
325g gluten free flour  
200g sugar  
150g oil  
10ml vanilla  
10g baking powder  
50g raspberries

#### FOR THE GLAZE

50g cacao powder  
50g icing sugar  
Cold water

#### FOR THE COATING

Fine coconut

### METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 170°C.
2. In a mixing bowl, lightly whisk soy/rice milk, apple vinegar and oil. Then, add sugar, flour and baking powder until combined.
3. Lightly grease six silicon moulds.
4. Using a piping bag, fill up half of each mould with cake mixture, then place a raspberry in the middle of each mould. Pipe in the rest of cake mixture until it fills 3/4 of the height of the mould. Be careful not overfill the moulds until full.
5. Bake for 30 min until golden, then set aside to cool down.
6. In the meantime, make the cacao glazing in a bowl by combining sifted cacao powder and sifted icing sugar.
7. Add cold water slowly and stir the mixture until the glaze has a thickened consistency.
8. Dip each cooled lamington sponge into the cacao mixture and shake off any excess mixture.
9. Dust each coated lamington with fine coconut and serve at room temperature.

These lamingtons can be stored in the fridge for up to 3-4 days, or you can freeze them for up to a month.



Photos: Peter Haskin.