



Choux Pastry - Eclairs and Profiteroles



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Choux pastry is an easy pastry to make, it's mixed and made in one saucepan and there is no rolling needed. You can make cream puffs, savoury puffs, eclairs, and profiteroles, the fantastic Croquembouche, as well as using it as a base for a flan called Gougere.

Craquelin Topping

Ingredients – made from almost equal quantities of flour, sugar and butter

35 gms plain flour

50gms sugar

35gms soft butter

gel colours

1. Blend the flour, sugar and butter into a paste.
2. Divide mixture and colour each batch as required.
3. Roll mixture out between 2 sheets of baking paper, until very thin. Freeze until required.

To make the Pastry

Weighing all the ingredients is the best way for reliably, perfect choux pastry.

Ingredients

120gms butter - chopped

250gms water

good pinch of salt

2 t sugar

200gms Bread flour

240gms (about 4) large eggs

1. Put the butter, salt, sugar and water into a saucepan, heat until boiling.
2. Sift the flour onto a piece of paper.
3. Remove from the heat, and using the paper, immediately tip in all of the flour, stirring continuously with a silicone spatula until all the flour is mixed in.
4. Return the pan to medium heat, stirring thoroughly, until it leaves the sides of the saucepan. Keep heating and stirring for a couple of minutes to allow a good deal of moisture to evaporate out of the mixture, this allows more egg to be incorporated.
5. Leave to cool a little, until you can comfortably hold your hand on the saucepan.
6. Add eggs one at a time, beating each egg in very well before adding the next. The mixture should be smooth and tacky, it should not flow, and be thick enough to pipe.

Cream Puffs or Profiteroles or Eclairs - makes about 30 medium size.

1. Remove a sheet of craquelin from the freezer, peel off top sheet.
2. Pipe uniform sized mounds or lines (eclairs) of choux pastry onto silicone paper/baking mat lined trays, spaced well apart.
3. Cut circles from the craquelin about the size of your puffs.
4. Put a craquelin circle on top of each puff, or sprinkle on hail sugar.
5. Lightly spritz the tray with water.
6. Bake in a hot oven for about 25-30 min, until puffed and brown. Don't open the oven door until at least 25 mins.
7. Cut a slit in each puff/eclair, lower oven temp 30°C and leave puffs in oven until quite dry and crisp.
8. Pipe fillings into each puff through the slit.
9. Sprinkle with icing sugar, or top with chocolate sauce and toasted flaked almonds, or coloured fondant.
10. Store in a covered container in the fridge, serve within a couple of hours.

Profiterole ring (Paris Brest)

Place 10-12 heaped spoonfuls of choux pastry around a 20cm ring. Bake for 40-45 mins, until golden, lower temperature and leave for another 10-15 minutes more, to dry out. When cold, fill with favourite fillings and drizzle with chocolate sauce or sprinkle with icing sugar.

Modern Eclairs

Toppings - softened and coloured fondant then a coating of brightly-coloured shiny flangel, add freeze dried raspberries, chocolate and orange slices, or torched meringue, or salted caramel and decorate with caramel popcorn.

Fillings – custards flavoured with citrus or berries, cream and raspberries or mango, chocolate or fruit mousse or whip 2 T Creamy Custard Mix with 300mls of whipping cream.

Some Suggested Fillings -:

1. Chocolate mousse.
2. Flavour whipped cream with 1 t of Dutch cocoa mixed with hot water, or citrus zest.
3. Blend equal quantities of creme patisserie custard and whipped cream.
4. Fresh fruit such as strawberries or raspberries, blended with whipped cream.
5. For a fantastic entree use hot savoury fillings that you would normally use in vol-au-vents, such as chicken and mushroom, or chicken and asparagus.

Make Toffee.

Method 1: - a trick of the trade used by bakers.

1. Place at least 250gms of soft fondant icing into a saucepan, add 2 T of hot water.
2. Heat on high, you can tilt the pan but do not stir, until a light golden brown. (do not overheat or toffee will burn).

Method 2: - ordinary toffee making.

1. Place 2 C of sugar and 1 C of water into a wide, heavy-based saucepan.
2. Heat gently, stirring all the time until sugar is dissolved.
3. Bring to the boil and boil fairly rapidly, without any stirring, until toffee is lightly golden, remove from heat.

"Cadbury's Magic Mousse".

Cadbury Chocolate has a newsletter and this is my version of their "Magic Mousse" that takes only 5 min to make and can be piped into any of these choux pastry treats. In a bowl place 250gm softened cream cheese & 100gms caster sugar. Cream together until smooth and light. Melt 250-350gms Cadbury Dark or Milk chocolate buttons and whisk quickly into the cream cheese mixture. Add 600ml fresh thickened cream, whisking continuously to make sure the chocolate does not become cold and hard.

Quick chocolate sauce - this is a thin ganache.

Heat together in either a saucepan on the stove or plastic jug in the microwave, 300ml thickened cream, 125gms cadbury dark or milk chocolate buttons, and 2 t of flavouring (rum, any liqueurs or grated orange or lemon rind) Stir well. Pour over profiteroles or eclairs.