

CHOCOLATE ECLAIRS

Ingredients

Pastry Cream

2 cups milk
2 tsp. vanilla
3 oz. chocolate
3 eggs
1/4 cup sugar
1/2 cup flour
6 gelatin leaves¹

Puff Pastry Dough

1 cup water
6 Tbsp. butter
1 pinch salt
1 Tbsp. sugar
1 cup flour
4 eggs

Icing

1/2 cup powdered sugar
2 Tbsp. water
1 tsp. vanilla
6 oz. chocolate
3 Tbsp. butter

To make the Pastry Cream, heat the milk, sugar, and flour until bubbles begin to form on the sides of the pan. Beat the eggs in a bowl. Little by little add the hot milk to the eggs, stirring constantly. Put the mixture back in the saucepan over moderately low heat. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Remove from the heat and add the vanilla and chocolate, mixing until the chocolate has melted. Add the gelatin leaves, which have been dipped briefly in warm water. Refrigerate.

To make the Puff Pastry, bring the salted water with the butter cut into pieces and the sugar to a boil. Remove from the heat when it boils and pour in all the flour at once, stirring well. Return to the heat and beat until the dough pulls away from the sides of the pan. Continue to beat adding the eggs one by one; beat the dough at least 3 min. before adding another egg. Place the dough in a pastry bag.² Pipe 4-5 in. lengths of dough onto a buttered baking sheet and bake in a 350-degree oven for 20-25 min. (They should be golden brown and firm to the touch). Let cool on a wire rack.

Slice open the eclairs on one side and fill with pastry cream. Prepare the icing: dilute the powdered sugar with very little water; the mixture should be thick. Melt the chocolate with the water, butter, and vanilla in a double boiler. Pour the chocolate over the powdered sugar and mix well. Ice each eclair by drizzling a spoonful of icing over each one. Makes 12-15 eclairs.

ACTIVITIES

1. What other flavors can one use for eclairs?
2. What other forms can be created with Puff Pastry Dough? Have you seen/tasted them?
3. Why is it important to beat the dough for 3 min. each time an egg is added?
4. Look for other recipes in this book that use Puff Pastry Dough. What do they have in common?
5. Design illustrations for the preparation of this recipe that could accompany this text.

Notes

¹ If you can't find gelatin leaves, you can substitute powdered gelatin dissolved in a Tbsp. of boiling water. One packet of powdered gelatin equals 6 gelatin leaves.

² To make a large pastry bag, cut a large square of freezer paper. With the coated side to the inside, form a large cone, sealing the edges with tape. Fill with dough or pastry cream. Fold over the top to close and cut off the tip with scissors to make an opening of the right size.