

Berry Mint Profiteroles

Choux pastry bakes up into puffy profiteroles for a classic dessert. The new twist in this version is the addition of fresh mint and berries to the traditional pastry cream filling. The profiteroles are best filled shortly before serving but each component can be made ahead to allow for quick and easy assembly.

Profiteroles:

1 cup (250 mL) water
1/3 cup (80 mL) unsalted butter, cut into cubes
1 tbsp (15 mL) granulated sugar
1/8 tsp (0.5 mL) salt
1 cup (250 mL) all-purpose flour
4 eggs

Garnish:

Icing sugar
Berries and mint sprigs

Custard:

1-1/4 cups (310 mL) 35% whipping cream
1/4 cup (60 mL) granulated sugar
5 egg yolks
2 tbsp (30 mL) all-purpose flour
1 tbsp (15 mL) packed finely chopped fresh mint
1 tsp (5 mL) vanilla
1 cup (250 mL) berries, slightly mashed

*For berries, you can incorporate blueberries, blackberries or raspberries, chopped if necessary

1. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C).
2. In a medium-size, heavy-bottom saucepan, combine water, butter, sugar and salt and bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring until butter is melted. Reduce heat to medium and add flour all at once. With a wooden spoon, stir until incorporated.
3. Cook, stirring vigorously, for about 2 minutes or until a ball of dough forms and comes away from the sides of the pan and a film covers the bottom of the pan. Remove from heat.
4. With wooden spoon, beat in 3 of the eggs, 1 at a time, stirring vigorously until incorporated. (Alternatively, transfer dough to a warmed bowl of a stand mixer and beat with paddle attachment to incorporate eggs.) In a small bowl, whisk remaining egg until blended. Beat in just enough egg until dough is smooth, paste-like and shiny, but still thick enough to hold its shape.
5. Line 2 large baking sheets with parchment paper. Using a piping bag fitted with a 1/2-inch (1-cm) tip, pipe mounds about 1-1/2 inches (4 cm) in size, onto prepared baking sheets, at least 2 inches (5 cm) apart, to make about 24 profiteroles. With moistened fingers, smooth surface. If you don't have a piping bag, use moist spoons to drop mounds of dough onto sheets.
6. Bake in top and bottom thirds of the oven for about 20 minutes, switching the position of the baking sheets on oven racks halfway, until puffed and golden and they sound hollow when tapped on the bottom. Turn oven off. Remove baking sheets from oven. With the tip of a paring knife, poke a slit in the side of each profiterole. Return to oven; let stand for 15 minutes. Transfer to wire racks to cool completely. (Profiteroles can be stored in a cookie tin at room temperature for up to 2 days).
7. For the custard, in a small, heavy-bottom saucepan, heat 3/4 cup (175 mL) of the cream over medium heat until bubbles form around the edge. In a heatproof bowl, whisk together sugar and egg yolks until well blended. Whisk in flour. Gradually pour hot milk mixture into egg mixture while whisking constantly. Return to pan and cook over medium-low heat, whisking constantly, for about 3 minutes or until thick. Strain through a sieve into a clean shallow bowl and stir in mint and vanilla. Place plastic wrap directly on surface to prevent a skin from forming and refrigerate for at least 2 hours, until chilled, or for up to 1 day.
8. In a chilled bowl, whip remaining 1/2 cup (125 mL) cream until stiff and fold into chilled custard. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour, until set, or for up to 1 day.
9. To serve, fold mashed berries into custard. Cut profiteroles in half crosswise, almost, but not all the way through. Spoon into profiteroles and replace lid. Place 3 on each serving plate, dust with icing sugar and garnish with berries and mint.

Serves 8.

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