

Napoleons

Makes four Napoleons



Ingredients

For the Mille Feuille

1 large sheet puff pastry
(or 1 package puff pastry such as
Pepperidge Farms)

For the Pastry Cream

2 cups milk
¼ cup sugar
2 egg yolks
1 whole egg
¼ cup cornstarch
⅓ cup sugar
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

For the White Icing

2 cups confectioners' sugar
2-3 tablespoons milk or water

For the Chocolate Syrup

Makes 3 ½ cups

1 ½ cups sugar
1 ½ cups water
1 cup good quality cocoa powder
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Steps

1. Begin with the pastry cream. In a medium-size saucepan, stir together milk and ¼ cup of sugar. Bring to a simmer over medium heat, stirring to prevent scalding.

2. In a medium-size bowl, whisk together the egg yolks, egg, cornstarch and ¼ cup sugar. Make sure there are no lumps. Remove milk from heat and slowly pour milk into the egg-sugar mixture while continually whisking. Be careful. Too much too quick will curdle the eggs. Pour that mixture back into the pot and put it over medium heat, stirring and cooking until the mixture thickens (enough to completely coat the back of a spoon). Remove from the heat and stir in butter and vanilla. You may want to press this mixture through a strainer to ensure there are no lumps before putting into a bowl. Cover the top with plastic wrap so that the plastic is touching the cream (this will prevent a skin from forming) and refrigerate until well chilled before using.

3. Preheat oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet pan with parchment paper. If you are using puff pastry that comes folded you'll need to thaw it first in the fridge for a few hours before attempting to lie it flat. You may need to roll it with a pin just to smooth out the folds. Then cut the sheets into four equal pieces. Place the pieces on the parchment-lined pan and prick the pieces all over with the tines of a fork. Place another piece of parchment paper on top followed by a piece of foil and another baking sheet pan of equal size and bake for 15 minutes. Remove from oven, take the sheet pan, foil and parchment paper off the top and continue baking for another 15 minutes. Remove again, flip each piece over and bake for another 10 minutes. Let these pieces fully cool before attempting to cut and fill them.

4. Now make the icing by combining 2 cups sifted confectioners' sugar and 2-3 tablespoons super hot water. You want the consistency to be ultra smooth and thin enough to spread but not too thin that it runs down your pastry.

5. For the chocolate sauce combine sugar and water in a medium pot over medium heat stirring until sugar is dissolved. Simmer for a few minutes before adding cocoa powder. Whisk well to ensure no lumps. Cook for another minute before adding vanilla. Stir and remove from heat. Refrigerate. This should thicken as it cools.

6. To build the Napoleons, take each piece of pastry and trim the edges to make neat rectangles. Cut each rectangle into three equal pieces. You should have four sets of three. Spread or pipe pastry cream on the bottoms of four pieces. Top with another rectangle. Spread another layer of cream and top with remaining pastry pieces. Apply the white icing to the top before piping two rows of chocolate sauce. Using a toothpick, make a pattern. These can be refrigerated up to one day in advance.