

CREAM PUFFS (Croquembouche)

Makes 10 buns

Preparation 20 minutes

Cooking 30 minutes

Ingredients

100ml (7 tbsp) milk
100g (3/4 cup) plain flour
1g (1/2 tsp) vanilla sugar
4 eggs
1kg (5 cups) whipped cream
100ml (1/2 cup) water
100g (7 tbsp) unsalted butter
8g (2 tsp) caster sugar
2g (1/2 tsp) salt



Line an oven tray with baking paper and preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F.

In a saucepan, bring water, milk, butter, vanilla, sugar and salt to a boil. Add the flour at once and cook over medium-high heat, stirring constantly until the mixture pulls away from the sides. This should take about 5 minutes. Transfer to the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a paddle attachment. Mix on low speed for 2 minutes, then add the eggs one at a time and beat until well-combined. Spoon the batter into a piping bag fitted with a flower nozzle. Pipe the dough onto a baking sheet, making circles as small or as large as you wish (depending on how much cream you want in the centre).

Make sure you leave enough space between them as they will more than double in size as they cook.

Bake for 20 minutes at 180°C/ 350°F, then lower the temperature to 140°C/285°F for 10 minutes. Do not open the oven door or you will end up having deflated puffs. Let cool out of the oven, make a hole at the bottom of the puff and fill in with the whipped cream.

If you want to make your own whipped cream, beat 750ml (3 cups) of heavy cream with 350g (1 and 3/4 cups) of caster sugar until the sugar has fully dissolved and the mixture is light and airy.