

1 hour

Makes 6

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Ingredients

Choux pastry:

- 1½ cups (225g) cake flour + extra for dusting
- Pinch fine salt
- ⅔ cup (200g) butter
- 1⅔ cups (450ml) boiling water
- 6 eggs + 1 beaten egg, for brushing
- ½ packet (50g) almond flakes
- Icing sugar, for dusting

Filling:

- 2 cups (500ml) milk
- 1 vanilla pod, sliced open
- ½ cup (110g) castor sugar
- 4 extra-large eggs
- ⅓ cup (40g) cornflour
- 2 Tbsp (30g) butter
- 60g dark chocolate

Method

1. Sift flour and add salt.
2. Place butter and water in a pot, cover and bring to a rolling boil.
3. Remove from heat and immediately add flour all at once.
4. Vigorously stir until a dough forms - it should pull away from the sides of the pot.
5. Return to heat for about 1 minute to cook, then set aside to cool.
6. Preheat oven to 200°C.

7. Grease 2 baking trays with non-stick spray then dust lightly with flour, shaking off excess.
8. Once cool to the touch, break eggs into dough, adding one at a time until fully incorporated before adding the next. The dough should be smooth and shiny.
9. Place in a piping bag with a 1cm nozzle.
10. Pipe twelve 10cm ring shapes on the prepared tray.
11. Pipe another ring on the inside of it, making sure they touch, and finally pipe a third ring on top of the other two where they touch.
12. Brush pastry with beaten egg and bake for 15-18 minutes until golden.
13. Remove, prick base (this allows steam to escape and creates crisp pastry) and sprinkle half the circles with almond flakes.
14. Return to oven to bake for an extra 5 minutes.
15. Cool on a wire rack.
16. Heat milk, vanilla and half the sugar over medium heat until steaming hot.
17. Combine eggs with remaining sugar and cornflour in a bowl.
18. Pour hot milk into egg mixture while continuously whisking.
19. Return mixture to heat and bring to a boil for 2-3 minutes, while continuously whisking.
20. Stir in butter, then chocolate and mix to create a smooth custard.
21. Transfer to a piping bag and pipe custard onto 6 pastry discs.
22. Sandwich closed and dust with icing sugar.

GOOD IDEA

Decorate with chunks of honeycomb (Crunchie chocolate works well too), chocolate shavings, cake decorations or edible flowers.

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