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Recipe by: Laura Vitale

Makes 1 dozen or so

Prep Time: minutes
Cook Time: minutes

Ingredients

For the Dough:

- 1 cup of Water
- 1 cup of All Purpose Flour
- 1/4 tsp Salt
- 1/2 cup of Unsalted Butter
- 4 Eggs at Room Temperature

For the pastry cream:

- 2-1/2 cups of Whole Milk
- 1/4 cup of Granulated Sugar
- 1/4 cup of All Purpose Flour
- 2 Tbsp of Cornstarch
- 1 Small Strip of Lemon Zest
- 4 Egg Yolks

Start by making the custard.

1) In a saucepan add the milk and lemon zest and bring to a simmer. In a large bowl, whisk together the egg yolks and sugar until thick and pale (this takes a couple minutes) then whisk in the flour and cornstarch and when the milk is ready, remove the lemon zest and slowly stream in the milk into the egg yolk mixture and whisk until smooth.



2) Pour the mixture back into the saucepan and cook on medium-low heat until the mixture thickens, stir in the vanilla and then pass it through a sieve into a bowl, cover with plastic wrap and pop it in the fridge to cool completely.

3) Preheat your oven to 400 degrees, line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

4) In a large saucepan, add the water, butter and salt and bring to a boil, add the flour and salt and cook stirring the whole time for about 3 minutes.

5) Add the dough to the bowl of a food processor fitted with a paddle attachment and let it mix for several minutes to cool the mixture a bit.

6) Add one egg and mix until incorporated and then continue to mix one egg at a time until you have a smooth mixture, allow to sit at room temperature for about 10 minutes.

7) Place the dough in large piping bag fitted with a large round tip, then start piping out little nests about 2-1/2 inches wide and about 3 levels high (watch video for visual instructions) a few inches apart from each other.

8) Bake them for about 40 minutes or until deeply golden brown, allow to cool before filling the center with the pastry cream and top with a maraschino or amarena cherry.

For the Fried Version:

1) Pipe out the nest (same size as listed above) on small pieces of parchment paper, fry a few at a time in some very hot vegetable oil (350 degrees) the parchment paper will peel away instantly as they hit the hot oil so remove them as soon as you can. Fry them for a few minutes or until deeply golden brown on both sides then drain them on a paper towel lined platter.

2) Fill them with the pastry cream, top with a cherry and sprinkle a little powder sugar over the top.