

# **CHOUX PASTRY**

## **HISTORY:**

It was invented by the French chef Antonin Carême. The name comes from the French for cabbage, chou, because of the characteristic shape of the cream-filled puffs.

The cream puff is believed to have originated in Italy. When Catherine de Medici moved to France in 1533 she brought with her to France her entire court, which included her chefs. Her head chef by the name of Panterelli made gâteaux with a dried hot dough he invented, called pâte à Panterelli. The pastry later became known as pâte à Popelin, and Popelins were a form of cake made in the Middle Ages in the shape of large puffs. Perfected by Avicenne and later by Antoine Carême, this dough became the same recipe for choux pastry as it is used today.

The Choux Pastries dough, called panade, is a dough that is cooked before being baked. It starts with simple dough of water, butter, flour, and eggs. During baking the eggs help form a thin crust on the outside, while the steam trapped inside expands giving to the pastries a typical puffed hollow shape.

The pastries can be filled and assembled to form Profiterols, Croquembouche (stacks of profiteroles glued together with caramel), gâteau St.-Honoré, etc. In Italy Choux Pastries filled with custard are often stacked in a tall pyramidal shape. Chocolate is poured on the stack and decorated with whipped cream.

## **POINTS AND PRECAUTIONS TO BE KEPT IN MIND WHILE MAKING THE CHOUX PASTRY:**

- 1) The quantity of egg should be just right. If the recipe calls for 4 eggs I add the first 3 and the last a little at the time in order to control the consistency. Too much egg will cause the *panade* to be too liquid and unable to hold the shape when is baked.
- 2) The *panade* needs to be cooked carefully till is smooth and dry. If it is undercooked the ingredients could be un-evenly mixed, and it would retain too much moisture.
- 3) Do the preparation very quickly. Piping and baking the *panade* immediately when is still warm will help lightness and expansion.
- 4) Bake the pastries until they are crisp, dry and golden. If the pastries are undercooked they could collapse when they are removed from the oven. Also it is preferable to cool the pastries slowly in the oven.
- 5) When making choux, cut the butter into small pieces so it melts quickly and evenly, reducing the amount of water that evaporates.
- 6) All the flour must be added at once so it cooks evenly. Beat vigorously until the mixture is smooth and comes away from the side of the pan. Do not over-beat.
- 7) Set the mixture aside to cool slightly so the eggs don't cook when they are beaten in.
- 8) The amount of egg required varies with each batch. It depends how big the eggs are and how much egg the flour absorbs. Too much egg will make the choux rise unevenly and spread. Not enough egg and the choux will be stodgy.
- 9) Baked choux pastry products rise due to the egg content and steam. Therefore it is essential that the oven is hot, when placed in the oven. Without this initial burst of steam they will not rise properly or dry out, they will stay flat and be soggy.

**CLIPS SHOWING MAKING OF CHOUX PASTRY:**

Place the water, butter, and salt in a heavy saucepan. Bring to a boil. When the butter is completely melted, remove from the heat and add the flour all at once.



Mix rapidly with a spatula



. . until fully combined.



Place the mixture on the stove on low heat, and dry mixing

for about 5 to 6 minutes. The dough should be soft and shouldn't be sticky.



Transfer to a bowl and spread to cool. Let the dough cool for at least 5 minutes.



Add the eggs one at the time . . .



mixing thoroughly after each one is added . . .



The dough should be smooth, shiny and as thick and as heavy as mayonnaise. Preheat oven 370 F (190 C).



Cover a large cookie sheet with parchment paper. Fill a pastry bag with the dough.



Using a pastry bag filled with the dough or a spoon, make small balls about 1 -inch (2 - 3 cm ) size.



Brush the top with the egg wash.



Bake for about 35 minutes or until well puffed and golden. Shut off the heat , open the oven half way, and let the puffs cool slowly and dry for about 1 hour. The puffs may collapse if they are cooled too fast.

### DETAILS OF SOME OF THE CHOUX PASTRY PRODUCTS:

#### Profiterole:

A **profiterole** is a dish of choux pastry balls filled with whipped cream or pastry cream; or very commonly in the US and France, ice cream. The puffs may be left plain or made to resemble swans or garnished with chocolate sauce, caramel, or a dusting of powdered sugar. In the US, a **profiterole** may also be known as a **cream puff**, though in the UK a cream puff would be made with puff pastry.

VARAITIONS: A **moorkop** is a Dutch pastry like a profiterole. It is usually not glazed with chocolate, but with a chocolate-flavoured glaze made with cocoa powder. Sometimes a puff of whipped cream is added to the top.

**Bossche bol** (Dutch for 'Den Bosch ball'), sometimes called **sjekladebol** ('chocolate ball') in its city of origin, is a pastry from the Dutch city of 's-Hertogenbosch (also called Den Bosch). It is effectively a large profiterole, about 12 cm/5" in diameter (i.e. somewhat larger than a tennis ball), filled with whipped cream and coated entirely or almost entirely with (usually dark) chocolate.

A **reuzenbol** (Dutch for 'giant ball') is a Dutch pastry similar to a giant profiterole, or a larger version of a Bossche bol.

#### Croquembouche:

It has at its origins a fanciful, edible, architectural structure displayed on the medieval tables of the French Royalty and Nobility. It was later popularised by Antonin Carème (1783 - 1833), the most famous French Chef of his generation. He created Turkish Mosques, Persian Pavilions, Gothic Towers and other *pièces montées* from choux buns or profiteroles.

A **croquembouche** or **croquenbouche** (as it is more commonly called in French) is a French cake, a kind of *pièce montée* often served at weddings, baptisms, and first communions. It is a high cone of profiteroles (*choux* filled with pastry cream) sometimes dipped in chocolate bound with caramel, and usually decorated with threads of caramel, sugared almonds, chocolate, flowers, or ribbons. They are also often covered in macarons, a

small pastry consisting of two layers and a flavored cream or ganache. The name comes from the French words *croque en bouche* meaning 'crunch in the mouth'. The profiteroles can also be made with savoury fillings.

### **St. Honoré Cake**

**St. Honoré Cake** is named for the French patron saint of bakers and pastry chefs, Saint Honoré or Honoratus (d. 600 AD), bishop of Amiens. This classic French dessert is a circle of puff pastry at its base with a ring of pâte à choux piped on the outer edge. After the base is baked small cream puffs are dipped in caramelized sugar and attached side by side on top of the circle of the pâte à choux. This base is traditionally filled with crème chiboust and finished with whipped cream

Some other products include:

- Pomme Dauphine (choux paste mixed with duchesse potatoes)
- Gnocchi Parisienne (small poached dumplings masked with Mornay sauce and gratinated)
- Garnish for soups such as consommés
- duchesses for canapés (small eclairs filled with savoury mousses)
- Caroline's (crescent shaped and filled with savoury mousses topped with chaud-froid sauce)