

CREAM PUFF DOUGH RECIPE (PATE A CHOUX)

By Martie Duncan

Makes 22-28

Ingredients:

Dough:

1 cup water
1 stick unsalted butter
1/2 teaspoon sugar
1/8 teaspoon salt
1 cup all- purpose flour
4 eggs

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.
2. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Get out a large measuring cup or short glass (I find a pint mason jar works great) and put the zip top bag into it, open the top of the bag. This will give you some stability as you spoon the dough into the bag.
3. Put the water, butter, salt and sugar in a large saucepan and bring to a boil. Boil until the butter is just melted. Reduce the heat to very low. Add the flour all at one time, mixing with a wooden spoon. Cook over low heat until you start to see a little "film" on the bottom of the pan- only about 1 minute or even less. The dough will come together in a ball. Remove from the heat and allow to cool just a little bit but not too much; the dough has to be warm to accept the eggs. If the dough is too hot, you cook the eggs. This is not good.
4. If you are using a mixer, this is the time to transfer the dough to the bowl of your mixer. I use the same saucepan and put it on top of a dish towel to keep it from slipping around as I beat in the eggs. It is essential to add the eggs one at a time to your dough. I usually put all 4 eggs in a small bowl and just slip them in, one at a time, beating each with a wooden spoon until it is incorporated then I add the next egg and repeat. At first, it will seem as if you've made a mistake but do not stop. In a few seconds, the dough will go from slippery to a bit sticky as the egg is accepted into the dough. Do this 4 times. Take care not to be too aggressive with the wooden spoon because I have actually tossed an egg out onto the floor... that is how slippery the dough is in the beginning.
5. Once you have the eggs fully incorporated, spoon the dough into the pastry bag or zip top bag you have set up. You can use it right away or it will hold beautifully in the fridge until you are ready to use it. I have waited a day or more, in fact, but let the dough sit out at least 20 minutes before you try to pipe it onto the baking sheet or you may blow out the side of the zip top bag. Again, not good.
6. Pipe the dough into heart shaped or little puffs (see photo at the top) For the heart, draw the outside and then fill in the middle. For the puffs, I find that swirls don't cook as pretty as simply applying pressure to the bag until the puff is the size I want, then pull the bag back. It forms a

little tip when you do this so before you put them into the oven, wet your finger with water and push down any little peaks so they don't burn.

7. Bake the puffs for 10-12 minutes at 425 degrees. Open the door and quickly rotate the pan and reduce the heat to 350 degrees for 10-12 more minutes. It is important not to simply switch the pan to an oven set to 350. The puffs will deflate.

8. I've had to trial and error this timing with my oven... and to my taste. I don't want dried out puffs but I also don't want them too wet or eggy. Grab one out, let it cool slightly and check the inside to see if it is what you want. If so, remove them from the oven. If not, give them a minute more.

9. Take a small paring knife or even a toothpick and puncture the top of the puff so the steam can escape. Allow them to cool on a rack before filling.