

Creme Patisserie

Classic French crème pâtissière recipe - rich, silky pastry cream perfect for éclairs, cream puffs, and tarts. Easy homemade technique with step-by-step guide.

4

SERVINGS

Easy

DIFFICULTY

Creme Patisserie

Ingredients

- 13.5 oz milk
- 3 tbsp flour
- 4 tbsp granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 pack vanillin

Instructions

- Heat the milk**
Pour 13.5 oz whole milk into a heavy-bottomed saucepan and heat over medium heat until small bubbles form around the edges and steam rises, about 4-5 minutes.
- Prepare egg mixture**
Whisk 1 egg yolk with 3 tablespoons sugar in a medium bowl until the mixture becomes pale yellow and thick, about 2 minutes.
- Add 4 tablespoons cornstarch to the egg mixture and whisk vigorously until completely smooth with no lumps visible.
- Temper the eggs**
Pour about one-third of the hot milk into the egg mixture while whisking constantly to prevent the eggs from scrambling.
- Add the remaining hot milk gradually while continuing to whisk constantly until fully combined.
- Cook the pastry cream**
Return the mixture to the saucepan and cook over medium heat, whisking constantly, until it thickens to a pudding consistency and bubbles vigorously for 2 full minutes.
- Finish and strain**
Remove from heat and immediately whisk in 1 tablespoon butter and 1 pack vanilla extract until the mixture is smooth and glossy.
- Cool**
Strain the pastry cream through a fine-mesh sieve into a clean bowl, then press plastic wrap directly onto the surface to prevent a skin from forming.
- Refrigerate until completely cool and set, at least 2 hours before using.

Tips

Press plastic wrap directly onto the surface of cooling pastry cream to prevent a skin from forming, which can create lumps when stirred back in.

Temper the egg mixture by gradually adding hot milk while whisking constantly - this prevents the eggs from scrambling when heated.

Cook the pastry cream until it reaches 185°F (85°C) and bubbles for 1-2 minutes to ensure the flour is fully cooked and won't taste starchy.

Strain the finished cream through a fine-mesh sieve to remove any lumps and achieve perfectly smooth texture, even if your whisking wasn't perfect.

Add butter and vanilla extract only after the cream has cooled slightly to prevent the butter from melting completely and the vanilla from evaporating.

Whisk vigorously throughout the entire cooking process to prevent lumps and ensure even heat distribution - a consistent whisking motion is key to success.

Make pastry cream up to 2 days ahead and store refrigerated with plastic wrap pressed directly on surface - it actually improves in flavor overnight.

If your cream is too thick after chilling, whisk in a tablespoon of milk at a time until you reach the desired consistency for piping or spreading.