







BAKE



MAKES

EQUIPMENT

2 baking sheets (approx 38×33 cm; or 2 shallow baking trays of the same size)

Baking paper

Fine-mesh sieve

Medium saucepan

Wooden spoon

Dinner plate

Electric hand whisk

2 large piping bags

Large round nozzle

Skewer or cocktail stick

Wire rack (or the clean metal insert of a grill pan)

Serrated knife

Large bowl

Small star nozzle

Heatproof bowl

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE CHOUX BUNS

90g plain flour

1 tsp caster sugar

1/4 tsp salt

65ml whole milk

55g unsalted butter

2 large eggs, beaten

FOR THE FILLING

300ml double cream

1 tbsp icing sugar

½ tsp vanilla paste

TO DECORATE

200g 54% dark chocolate, broken into pieces



METHOD

Heat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/Gas 6. Line a baking sheet with baking paper.

MAKE THE CHOUX BUNS

- Sift the flour, sugar and salt onto a separate sheet of baking paper.
- Put the milk, 65ml of water and the butter into a medium saucepan and heat gently until the butter melts. Don't let the water boil during this step.
- Once the butter has melted, increase the heat and quickly bring the mixture to the boil. Tip in the flour mixture, then remove the pan from the heat and beat furiously with a wooden spoon. It will look scrambled at first but keep beating until the mixture comes together as a ball.
- Return the pan to a low heat and continue stirring for 3–4 minutes, to dry out the choux pastry slightly. It's ready when it leaves the sides of the pan clean.

- Tip the pastry on to a dinner plate and use the back of the wooden spoon to spread it out. Leave to cool until just warm.
- Scrape the cooled choux pastry into a large bowl and, a little at a time, add the beaten egg, using an electric hand whisk, to beat well between each addition until smooth.
- Spoon the mixture into a large piping bag fitted with a large round nozzle and pipe 12 rounds, each about the size of a ping pong ball, spacing them a least 3cm apart. You should use all your choux. Pat down any peaks with a damp finger.

Stick the edges of the baking paper down with a little dab of choux before you start piping.

Bake the choux buns for 30 minutes until risen, golden brown and crisp.

- Using a skewer or cocktail stick, carefully pierce a hole in base of each choux bun to allow the steam to escape. Return the buns to the baking sheet, placing them pierced-side upwards, and place them back into the oven for 5 minutes to dry out. Remove from the oven and transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
- Once cooled, use a serrated knife to slice horizontally through the centre of each choux bun to create a top and a bottom. Set aside while you make the filling.

MAKE THE FILLING

- Place the double cream, icing sugar and vanilla paste in a large bowl and, with an electric hand mixer, beat for about 5 minutes, to soft peaks.
- Place the whipped cream in a large piping bag fitted with a small star nozzle. Set aside.

TO ASSEMBLE

- Melt the dark chocolate in a heatproof bowl set over a pan of very gently simmering water, stirring until smooth and melted. Allow to cool for a few minutes.
- Carefully dip the tops of the choux buns into the melted chocolate, submerging two thirds of each bun. Hold the buns briefly over the bowl to allow the excess chocolate to drip off, then transfer them, coated side upwards, back on to the wire rack.
- Pipe a little cream filling over the base of each choux bun, starting from the outside and working inwards in a spiral, creating waves in the spiral as you go.
- Top with the chocolate-coated bun lids (chocolate side upwards) and serve immediately.

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