

## FRUIT TART FILLING: PASTRY CREAM



**Makes:** 1 kg (enough for an 8-inch tart or 8-inch cake with some leftover)

**Time:** 45 minutes

### INGREDIENTS

533g (2¼ cups) whole milk

128g (½ cup) sugar

184g (9 each) egg yolks

48g (⅓ cup) cornstarch

108g (8 tbsp, or 1 stick) unsalted butter, softened and cubed

### EQUIPMENT

Whisk

### STORAGE

Cover with plastic wrap pressed up against the surface of the pastry cream to prevent a skin from forming, and refrigerate for up to 3 days.

### METHOD

In a large pot over medium heat, bring the milk and half of the sugar to a boil, slowly stirring to prevent the mixture from burning on the bottom of the pot.

In a bowl, whisk together the other half of the sugar with the egg yolks. (Do this immediately to prevent the yolks from “burning” on contact with the sugar.) Stir in the cornstarch until smooth then slowly whisk in ½ cup of the warm milk and sugar mixture, stirring until evenly combined.

*Tip: This process is called tempering, a cooking technique in which you gradually raise the temperature of a cold or room-temperature ingredient (in this case, eggs) by adding small amounts of a hot liquid, to prevent the cold ingredient from cooking too quickly or too much. If you add all of the hot liquid into the eggs at once, you’re going to end up with lumpy scrambled eggs in your pastry cream.*

While stirring, pour the egg mixture back into the pot of milk. On low to medium heat, while stirring constantly, heat the mixture up until it noticeably thickens. It takes about 3 minutes or so to thicken and a further 2 minutes more, once thickened, to cook out the raw taste from the cornstarch. It will continue

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to thicken as it cools, so remove it from the heat before you evaporate off too much water.

*Tip: Look for the foam on the top of the custard to start disappearing. This is a sign that the custard is almost finished cooking.*

Remove from heat and allow the custard to cool to room temperature, whisking occasionally. Add in the cubed butter and whisk until evenly combined. A good pastry cream is rich and smooth, with a pale yellow color and a glossy, velvety texture.

*Tip: Strain through a fine mesh sieve to help remove any lumps.*

Cover with plastic wrap directly pressed onto the surface and let cool in the fridge.

### VARIATION

#### To Make a Cinnamon Pastry Cream:

Start with Chef Dominique's pastry cream recipe. In a large pot over medium heat, combine the milk, half of the sugar, and 1 cinnamon stick and bring to a boil, slowly stirring. Remove from the heat and cover tightly in plastic wrap, allowing the cinnamon stick to steep in the milk for 15 minutes.

*Tip: This method is known as an infusion, where you infuse the liquid (in this case, milk) with a flavored ingredient (in this case, cinnamon). This will create a smooth and balanced cinnamon flavor to your pastry cream, rather than adding the cinnamon at the end.*

Remove the cinnamon stick from the milk mixture. Continue with the rest of the recipe.