

Puffy Pastry

From Nelson's Kitchen
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From *The French Chef* by Julia Child.

This is the best recipe for Puff Pastry that I ever made. It is not difficult, but you need to read the recipe carefully before starting. The resting times are very important because a successful puff pastry is achieved when the components and the dough are kept cold at all times.

Ingredients:

- 2 3/4 cups unbleached all-purpose flour (13 1/2 oz)
- 3/4 cups cake flour (3 oz)
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 cup flavourless cooking oil (1 3/4 oz)
- 1 cup ice water (8 oz)
- 3 sticks cold unsalted butter (12 oz)

Procedure:

1. Mix the Dough

- Mix the flours with a rubber spatula.
- Remove 1/2 cup of the mixed flours and reserve for later.
- Drizzle the oil over the flour and mix thoroughly with a rubber spatula.
- Dissolve the salt in the ice water.
- Add water all at once.
- Cutting and stirring with the spatula, mix until dough comes together.
- Use fingers to press the dough together.
- Transfer dough to working surface and press it all together into a ball.
- Wrap the dough in waxed paper.
- Slip into a plastic bag.
- Refrigerate for at least 40 minutes.

2. Prepare the butter

- Place the three sticks of butter side by side on counter.
- Beat the butter with a rolling pin until it is about 3/4 inch thick.
- Sprinkle the reserved 1/2 cup of mixed flours on top of the butter.
- Using the heel, not the palm, of your hand, press the butter into the working surface to incorporate the flour into the butter.
- Using the bench scraper form the butter into a 15 x 12 inches rectangle.
- Open a piece of waxed paper into the counter.
- Using bench scraper lift the butter rectangle into the waxed paper.

- Put in the refrigerator for at least 20 minutes.

3. Add butter to dough

- Lightly flour your work surface.
- Open the chilled dough pressing with your hands.
- Roll it to form a 16 x 18 inches rectangle. So that the 16 inch side is towards you.
- Place the butter rectangle to one end of the dough rectangle farther from you so that the butter covers $\frac{2}{3}$ of the dough rectangle. Leave $\frac{1}{2}$ inch around the butter rectangle uncovered. The $\frac{1}{3}$ of the dough rectangle that is not covered by the butter is closer to you and is called the flap.
- Fold the flap over the butter so that half of the butter is covered by it.
- Fold the resulting rectangle in half so that now all the butter is covered by dough.
- Gently press with your fingertips all around to seal the butter within the dough.
- Rotate the dough a quarter turn so that the shorter side is in front of you.

4. Make the four-layer fold

- Press with the rolling pin at intervals equal to the width of your rolling pin starting in the end close to you making small indentations in the dough all the way to the other end.
- Roll the dough to a 16 x 8 inches rectangle.
- If there are breaks in the dough that expose the butter, sprinkle them with a bit of flour.
- Fold both long ends of the rectangle to the center so that the two edges meet at the center.
- Fold again in half so that those edges are no longer visible.
- Press with two fingers in the middle of the folded rectangle so that you remember that you have completed the second fold.
- Wrap the dough in the waxed paper, slip in a plastic bag, and put in the refrigerator for at least 40 minutes.

5. Make turns 3 and 4

- Unwrap the chilled dough and lightly flour it on both sides.
- Make indentations with your rolling pin into the dough. First lengthwise and then crosswise. This will make it easier to roll the chilled dough out.
- Roll the dough to a 16 x 18 inches rectangle.
- Fold this rectangle into three just like you fold a business letter.
- Rotate the dough a quarter turn so the the shorter side of the folded rectangle is in front of you.
- Roll the dough again into a 16 x 18 inches rectangle.
- Fold again like a business letter.
- Make four indentations on top.
- Wrap in the wax paper, slip into a plastic bag and put in the refrigerator.
- This dough has 72 layers of butter and is ready to use as is. It needs to refrigerate for two hours before using. It will last in the refrigerator for up to five days and it can be frozen.

6. Make turns 5 and 6 — for extra puffing

- After the dough refrigerated for at least 40 minutes, repeat turns 3 and 4 to create 648 layers of butter.
- Refrigerate for two hours before using the dough.