

CUISINE

BAYSIDE

Profiteroles with chocolate coating and pastry cream

The curtains are hung, the kitchen rearranged and repainted, and the upstairs bathroom that I tore out in December might actually get done this week.



By Paul Suplee, CEC, PC III
Six weeks? Hey, I'm no builder, as is evidenced by the long durations now trademark between demolition and project completion. I guess one could also notice if they scrutinized the shoddy drywall in parts of our renovated Versailles.

But our abode is comfortable, and long ago I learned that if you squint your eyes, all of the bad stuff just blends together. I call it my Navajo blanket. Known to weave the most immaculate blankets, the Navajo artisan, when finished, would put one thread out of place for no person and no one thing of this earth are of perfection. I like that tradition.

Next on the docket is Paul v. Kid's Bedroom, a botched room debacle from a year ago that didn't work out so well. 'I will sleep when I'm dead' I seem to recall one of our platoon mottos to be.

So, armed with the reality that we would have plenty of physical activity this week, I decided not to shy away from the refined carbs as I am making every effort to at present.

Fresh, homemade waffles are a cinch on our waffle iron. It's a handy tool that also doubles, with replaceable plates, as a Panini grill. But we've had those this week.

For Sunday brunch, I wanted to think outside the box. Of course I considered eggs, bacon, quiche and other sundries, but I also knew that the family has been asking for profiteroles, an easy favorite.

They are delicious, they are easy, and they are a complete crowd pleaser. If you do not know what they are, but have had an éclair at some point in



PAUL SUPLEE/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

your life, you now know what they are.

A puffed pastry, considered laminated dough since steam from cooking eggs, butter and water creates the pockets in the finished product, profiterole dough is egg-rich and easily switchable from sweet to savory. The French name for this dough is Pate a Choux, or "cauliflower paste", since the finished product resembles the lovely vegetable.

At the yacht club years ago, I would make traditional cream puffs (pictured) for desserts and also savory puffs filled with lobster or salmon mousse (sans the chocolate icing of course).

As for the taste, a good analogy was one made by my wife Julie as she bit into an empty shell this morning. They resemble Yorkshire Pudding, the ubiquitous British side to the Christmas Roast. Some eggs, butter and flour go a long way in making this an incred-

ibly versatile product.

A trick I learned a few years ago, a delightful addition to any bread basket at the dinner table, is to take pate a choux, mix in some Gorgonzola cheese crumbles, and scoop into a fryer until golden. The cheese is dry enough that the cheese won't ooze out of your fritter, and any lower moisture content cheese can be used, so think Pecorino or Parmigiano Reggiano as well.

As I finish writing this, fully loaded on carby goodness, I have the motivation to keep moving, to keep the renovations coming, and get this pile of projects done; or at least until the sugar crash.

And washing these profiteroles down with a Coke, I need to ask; who ever said this was a health column?

FRESH PROFITEROLES

- 1 stick butter (1/2 cup)
- 1 c. Water
- 1 c. Flour
- 1 pinch salt

- 1 c. Eggs (4 whole)

*This is a simple ratio from Michael Ruhlman's Ratio, a great book on learning the basics of cooking

1. Heat the oven to 425F
2. melt the butter in the water and bring to a simmer
3. Add the flour at once, and beat with a wooden spoon until it forms a dough
4. Cook this for a few minutes, then flatten and remove from the heat
5. When it has cooled down (4-5 minutes), add the eggs one at a time. The dough and eggs will separate and seem funky, but eventually will meld to create a sticky dough
6. When all of the eggs are incorporated, pipe or scoop the dough onto wax paper or silpat on a baking pan
7. Bake at 425F for 10 minutes, and then finish at 325F until golden brown and mostly dried, about 25 more minutes
8. Let cool and pipe with pastry cream (recipe below). Dip into chocolate glaze (below) and let set

CHOCOLATE COATING

- 1 c. Dark chocolate coins or chips
- 1 tsp. Vegetable oil
- 1. Combine the two in the top of a double boiler. Don't let water get

in your mixture

2. Heat gently until completely melted and remove from heat until ready to coat

PASTRY CREAM

- 6 egg yolks
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cups hot milk
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- salt to taste
- Cinnamon to taste (optional)
- 1 Whisk the yolks and sugar together until creamy
- 2 Add the hot milk to the sugar mixture while whisking until well-combined
- 3 On a medium heat, bring the cream up to a simmer, stirring constantly. There are two critical points here; medium heat and slowly bring it up. It can take as long as 8 minutes, but keep stirring. If you rush it, you will have scrambled eggs
- 4 Adjust flavoring with salt, vanilla and cinnamon.

Paul Suplee CEC, PC-III is the culinary instructor at Worcester Technical High School, and is an ACF recognized Certified Executive Chef.