Cream Puffs and Éclairs

Make-ahead · Serves a crowd · Makes about 24 cream puffs or about 12 éclairs

Ken's note: TBD

Pipe Choux Pastry, bake until deep golden and light, then fill with Crème Pâtissière or diplomat cream. Craquelin is a variation.

Ingredients

- 1 batch Choux Pastry (Desserts)
- 1 batch Crème Pâtissière (Desserts), or diplomat cream
- Powdered sugar, for dusting

White chocolate–pistachio glaze (optional)

- 8 oz white chocolate, chopped
- 2 tsp coconut oil
- ½ cup pistachios, chopped

Craquelin (optional)

- 1 stick (½ cup) unsalted butter, softened
- a pinch of fine salt
- ⅔ cup packed light brown sugar
- 1⅛ cups all-purpose flour

Method

1. Heat the oven to 425°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment. Spoon the dough into a piping bag with a large round tip.
2. **Cream puffs.** Pipe 1½-inch mounds, about 2 inches apart. Smooth any peaks with a damp fingertip. Bake 10 minutes at 425°F, then reduce to 350°F and bake 20–25 minutes more, until puffed, golden, and light.
3. **Éclairs.** Pipe 4-inch strips. Bake 10 minutes at 425°F, then reduce to 375°F and bake about 20 minutes more, until deep golden and firm.
4. Poke a small hole in the bottom or side of each one to vent the steam, and cool completely on a rack. Underbaked shells look fine in the oven and deflate on the counter — when in doubt, give them a few more minutes; they should feel light and hollow. Unfilled shells keep 1 day airtight at room temperature, or about a week frozen; re-crisp at 350°F for 5 minutes (8–10 if frozen) and cool before filling.
5. **To fill.** Pipe pastry cream or diplomat cream into the hole with a small round or Bismarck tip until the shell feels heavy, or split and spoon the cream in. Dust with powdered sugar, dip the tops in a glaze, or drizzle with Chocolate Sauce (Sauces).
6. **White chocolate–pistachio glaze** (for pistachio éclairs). Melt 8 oz chopped white chocolate with 2 tsp coconut oil. Dip the tops of filled éclairs and sprinkle with ½ cup chopped pistachios.
7. **Craquelin** (about 36 two-inch rounds; extras freeze). Beat 1 stick (½ cup) softened unsalted butter, a pinch of fine salt, and ⅔ cup packed light brown sugar until creamy. Mix in 1⅛ cups all-purpose flour on low, then press into a smooth dough. Divide in half and roll each piece between parchment to about 1/16–1/8 inch thick. Freeze until very firm, at least 1 hour.
8. Pipe 1¾-inch cream-puff mounds and top each with a frozen 2-inch craquelin round, matched to the puff or slightly larger. Bake 15 minutes at 400°F; without opening the oven, reduce to 350°F and bake 20–25 minutes more, until deep golden and firm, swapping the pans after about 25 minutes total. Don’t open the door in that first 25 minutes. Turn the oven off, poke a hole in the bottom of each puff, and dry them in the oven with the door propped open for 10 minutes. Cool completely. Fill with diplomat cream — salted caramel diplomat is the version from that recipe. Filled puffs are best within 4 hours.