

## **CRÈME PÂTISSIÈRE/PASTRY CREAM**

- 500 ml / 2 cups +1.5 tablespoons whole milk
  - 100 g / ½ cup sugar
  - 5 large egg yolks
  - 40 g / 5 tablespoons cornstarch
1. In a 2-3 quart saucepan over medium heat bring the milk and half the sugar to a boil.
  2. In a separate bowl whisk the yolks, the other half of the sugar and the cornstarch.
  3. Pour the hot milk over the egg mixture, whisking constantly, then return all to the pan on medium heat. Cook about 5 minutes, whisking constantly. The mixture will thicken and come to a boil.
  4. Scrape the cream into a clean bowl and place plastic wrap directly on the surface to eliminate air and prevent skin formation. Cool in the fridge until ready to use. Pastry cream should generally be used within 2-3 days.

Pastry cream has many uses in the pastry world. Whether as a filling for *éclair*s, fresh fruit *tartes* or *millefeuille* (Napoleon as we know it in the USA), it is a staple of the most basic French *pâtisserie*.

I like to lighten my pastry cream with a bit of whipped cream (it's all about experimenting to see for yourself how much to add), and it marries so beautifully with fresh strawberries or pretty much any fresh fruit you'd like to use.

Add some lemon or orange zest or infuse loose tea like Earl Grey in the milk at the start of the process. Or replace up to ¾ of the milk with fruit puree to freshen and lighten it up even further. So many possibilities! Have fun and experiment – that's what it's all about.