

PÂTE À CHOUX/CHOUX PASTE (NOTE GOUGÈRE VARIATIONS BELOW)

For approximately 40 small puffs

- 125 ml / ½ cup whole milk
 - 125 ml / ½ cup water
 - 3 g / ½ teaspoon salt
 - ¾ teaspoon sugar
 - 100 g / 7 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut in chunks
 - 150 g / 1 cup + 1.5 tablespoons all purpose flour
 - 4 large eggs
1. Heat the oven to 400°F. Line two half-sheet pans with parchment paper.
 2. Place milk, water, salt, sugar and butter in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil over medium heat.
 3. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in all the flour at once with a wooden spoon.
 4. Return pan to the heat and stir the mixture for a minute or two to dry it. Look for a light, dry coating on the pan bottom to indicate it's ready.
 5. Place the mixture in the bowl of a stand mixer and let the steam release for a minute or two. Using the paddle attachment add the eggs one by one, mixing each in thoroughly before adding the next. The mixture will take on a smooth and glossy appearance.
 6. Pipe or scoop the paste onto parchment lined sheet pans, leaving an inch or so between puffs.
 7. Bake for 10 minutes then reduce oven to 375° and continue baking for another 15-20 minutes until golden brown. Don't open the oven for the first 10 minutes or your puffs may fall. Rotate trays about half way through the bake to assure even baking.
 8. Let cool and fill as desired. Puffs freeze well for several weeks. To crisp up before use, heat the frozen puffs in a 350°F oven for 10-12 minutes and cool before filling.

For savory *gougères*: delete the sugar; add ¾ teaspoon dried mustard powder, ¼ teaspoon cayenne (optional) and a few grinds of black pepper to the flour; blend in 3 ounces (¾ cup) grated gruyère cheese to the final paste before piping. Top the puffs with additional grated cheese before baking.