

Valentine Cream Puffs

Preheat the oven to 325. Line two baking sheets with silicon mats and set aside.

For the choux paste:

In a medium saucepan, combine:

½ cup water
½ cup whole milk
1 stick unsalted butter
1 tsp kosher salt
1 tsp sugar

Heat this mixture on medium-high heat until it comes to a simmer. Meanwhile, measure out:

1 ¼ cups bread flour

And set out:

5 large eggs (you might only need 4, but be ready just in case)

When the liquid is simmering, pour in the flour all at once and beat until it comes together as a ball and begins to form a filmy crust on the bottom of the pan. Remove from heat and transfer the dough into the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Beat the dough for a minute or so to let it cool slightly, then begin adding the eggs one at a time, mixing well between each addition and scraping down the bowl if necessary. After each addition, the batter will look slimy and separated but don't worry! It will come back together as a dough. Begin checking the consistency of the dough after three eggs. If it's stiff, add another egg (it should not take more than 5). You're looking for a nice, thick dough that forms a V when it falls off the spoon.

Fit a piping bag with a large star tip and fill it with the dough. Pipe hearts onto the two sheet pans lined with silicon mats. Spray the piped dough lightly with cooking spray (optional) and bake for one hour at 325, rotating the pans halfway through the bake time, until puffed and golden brown. (Keep an eye on them.)

Cool completely, then split puffs in half and fill with whipped cream and cherry pie filling (or whatever else you'd like).