

Regency Cheese Puffs (Gougeres)

These cheese puffs, called gougères, were invented in the 18th century in a store called Le ramequin de Bourgogne, in the French wine region of Burgundy. They became very popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and can also be served in a sweet version, accompanied by various fruit jams on the side.

Ingredients

½ cup milk
½ cup water
1 stick unsalted butter
1 Tbs. sugar
1 tsp. salt
1 cup all-purpose flour
3-4 large eggs
1 cup grated sharp Cheddar cheese
½ cup Gruyere cheese

Utensils

Measuring cup
Measuring spoons
Knife and cutting board
Cookpot
Wooden spoon
Food Processor
Cheese grater
Small cookie scoop
Parchment paper
2 Baking sheets

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F. Line 2 baking sheets with the parchment paper. Grate the cheese. In a cookpot, combine 1/2 cup water with the milk, butter, sugar, and salt and stir over low heat until the sugar, butter, and salt have melted. Raise the heat to medium and bring to a healthy simmer.

Remove the cookpot from the heat and immediately add the flour. Stir with a wooden spoon until the mixture thickens, is smooth, and no flour lumps remain. Return to the heat and cook, stirring, until a film forms on the bottom of the pan. Continue stirring for a minute or two, being careful not to scrape up the film.

Transfer the mixture to a food processor. Mix for a minute to dissipate the heat. Add the eggs one at a time with the processor running. Pay attention to the consistency of the paste. It should be smooth and shiny. You may only need 3 of the eggs. Using a wooden spoon, stir in the grated cheese.

Using a small cookie scoop, scoop generous mounds onto the parchment-lined baking sheets, spacing them an inch apart. Place the baking sheet into the oven, and immediately reduce the heat to 375 degrees F. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until the cheese puffs are golden brown.

You can make the cheese puff dough ahead of time, scoop the dough onto parchment-lined baking sheets and freeze until frozen solid. Then transfer to a Ziploc bag and store in the freezer until you are ready to bake them. Just increase the baking time by about 5 minutes.