

NAPOLEON CAKE

Puff Pastry Dough:

14 Oz. Butter Cold
2 Eggs
5 Oz. Cold Water
6 C. Flour
3 Tbsp. Cognac
1 Tbsp Vinegar
Pinch Salt

Custard Filling:

7 Egg Yolks
6 C. Milk
1 ½ - 2 ¾ C. Sugar
1 Tbsp. Pure Vanilla Extract
1 C. Flour
5-6 Oz. Butter

Make Puff Pastry

1. Mix cold water, 1 tablespoon vinegar & 3 tablespoons vodka in a cup.
2. In a separate cup whisk together eggs and salt. Combine mixtures of two cups and stir to combine.
3. Add flour to the cup of your food processor. Add cold, cubed butter and pulse or process until the crumbs are pea size.
4. Add the egg mixture and continue processing until the dough starts sticking to itself a bit, but is not formed yet.
5. Pour the content of the food processor bowl onto work surface and start gathering and sticking the dough together with your hands, trying to work it as little as possible. Form a ball and kneed it for a couple of seconds until a dough forms.
6. Shape the dough into a log and then cut it into 12 equal pieces. Roll each piece into a ball, place on a plate, cover with plastic and refrigerate for about an hour.

Work on the frosting

1. Combine egg yolks & sugar in a bowl and whisk them together, adding 50 milliliters of milk to make it easier.
2. Add the flour and whisk again, forming very uniform, clump free batter. Add another 50 milliliters of milk to make it easier.
3. Heat the remaining milk in a pot until boiling, all the while stirring to keep the bottom from scorching.
4. Transfer the the egg & flour mixture into a larger pot (about 3 quarts).
5. Tamper the egg yolk mixture by slowly pouring the hot milk in, all the while mixing.

6. Pour the mixture back into the pot and bring it to boil, continuously (!!) stirring and keeping the bottom of the pot from scorching. Once boiling, cook for 2-3 minutes.
7. Add butter, allow to melt and stir to for a smooth custard.
8. Allow the custard to cool by pouring it into a jelly roll baking sheet and covering it with plastic wrap (plastic wrap should touch the custard, to keep the skin from forming). Do not refrigerate, just bring to room temperature.

Bake the cake layers

1. Preheat oven to 400F. Set the rack in the middle.
2. On a back of a jelly roll baking sheet, roll out 1 dough ball, until about 11-12 inches in size, by dusting the surface with flour as needed.
3. Bake for 5-7 minutes, until lightly golden.
4. Repeat with the rest of the dough.
5. Once the cake layers have cooled, place a 10 inch plate on top of each cake layer and cut around, collecting the scraps into a separate bowl and being careful to keep the cake layers from cracking.
6. Crumble the cake scraps.

Assembly

1. Place a dab of frosting on a serving platter.
2. Place first cake layer and press to adhere.
3. Surround the cake layer by a cake ring. The rest of the cake will be built inside the ring.
4. Place about 4 large spoons of frosting and smooth it around. Repeat with the rest of the frosting and cake.
5. Cover the cake and keep at room temperature for 12 hours+12 hours in the fridge; or in the fridge for at least 48 hours before continuing.
6. Run a knife between the cake and the ring. Remove the ring.
7. Take some crumbled scraps into the palm of your hand and press them against the sides of the cake, all around. Sprinkle the rest of the cake crumbs on top of the cake. The cake scraps are not only for decoration, but also to keep a skin from forming on the custard.
8. Serve chilled.