



## Chocolate Covered Strawberry Cream Puffs

**YIELD: 20–24 puffs**

**TIME: 2 hours**

### INGREDIENTS

#### **Cream puffs:**

½ stick (¼ c or 56 g) salted butter, sliced

½ c (115 g) water

½ c (67 g) flour

2–4 eggs

#### **Filling:**

1 ¼ c (312 g) heavy cream

2 tbsp (28 g) whole milk

2 tbsp (28 g) sugar

3 tbsp (32 g) freeze-dried strawberry powder

6 oz dark chocolate for dipping

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### **Cream puffs:**

1. Preheat your oven to 375°F. Prep your baking sheet by laying a piece of parchment paper on top of it.
2. Place the sliced butter and the water in a small pot. Heat on medium, stirring occasionally, until the butter is melted and the water boils.
3. Once the water boils, dump in the flour all at once and stir vigorously with a wooden spoon to combine and form a dough. Continue cooking and stirring over medium heat for 5 minutes.
4. Take the dough off the heat and transfer it to a bowl. Let it cool for 5 minutes or until it's quite warm but not still hot.
5. Mix the eggs in one at a time. Crack an egg into the dough and stir vigorously with a wooden spoon until the egg is fully incorporated into the dough and it looks uniform and has come back together again.
6. Add eggs until the dough looks glossy and drops off the spoon. The trail of dough left behind on the spoon should form a “v” shape. See the photos for reference.
7. Secure your parchment paper to your pan by placing a little bit of batter underneath each corner.
8. Spoon, scoop, or pipe the dough on the baking sheet in about 1-tablespoon sized scoops, leaving about an inch between each puff.
9. Bake for about 30 minutes. The cream puffs are done when they have risen a lot, are evenly golden brown all over, and feel firm when you tap on them. They should not have any give when tapped.
10. Poke each puff a few times with a toothpick, then transfer them to a wire rack to cool.

**Chocolate:**

1. While the cream puffs are cooling, chop the chocolate and melt it gently in the microwave. When the puffs have fully cooled, dip each one in the chocolate, coating about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of each puff. You can set the chocolate on the counter or for 10 minutes in the fridge.

**Filling and assembly:**

1. While the chocolate is setting, make the filling. Stir together the cream and milk, then add the sugar and strawberry powder. Mix in a mixer on low speed with the whisk attachment for 2 minutes, then increase the speed to medium low. Continue mixing until the filling looks light and fluffy and looks like it has the texture of frosting.
2. If you're eating the cream puffs within the hour, fill them now. Place the filling in a frosting bag fitted with a medium-sized tip and stick the tip into the bottom or side of each puff and fill. If you're not eating them immediately, wait to fill them until just before serving, and place the filling in the fridge. It will keep well for up to a day. It may keep beyond that, but mine went so fast I never got the chance to test it!

**NOTES AND TIPS**

You want the butter to melt before the water boils for the best structure in your cream puffs, which is why I have you slice it.

It doesn't really matter if you use a bag with a round tip to pipe your cream puffs, two spoons to scoop the batter onto the parchment, or a very small cookie scoop. I tried all three methods and found the cookie scoop one to be least messy.

Poking the cream puffs with a toothpick allows the steam escape after baking. This prevents the shells from getting soggy.

The filling is a little unorthodox because it has some milk in addition to the cream. This is because strawberry powder rehydrates as soon as it hits liquid, so the milk accounts for that. It keeps the cream pillowy instead of becoming thick and firm.

I didn't buy freeze-dried strawberry powder; I crushed up freeze-dried strawberries myself. You can do this with a rolling pin and a plastic bag or in a food processor. Either way, you'll wind up with a little cloud of red dust when you open the bag or lid. (Sorry! I promise it's worth it!)

I prefer dark chocolate, but you can use any kind you like. A nice-quality chocolate (a good baking bar or one you would eat) tastes a lot better than using chips.

You may have to spoon the chocolate on the last few cream puffs instead of dipping. Both methods worked well for me, and I let the coated shells set on a piece of parchment paper for easy cleanup.

I used a star tip for filling instead of a round one. The star shape worked a little better for poking a hole in the shells.

You could also cut the tops off the cream puffs and spoon or pipe the filling in, but the filling will squish out when you eat them.

It's fun to serve your guests empty cream puff shells and have them fill their own using the frosting bag. Everybody loves it!

The puffs themselves can remain uncovered at room temperature for about a day. If you're baking them ahead of time, freeze them after the chocolate is set, and then let them defrost at room temperature with the lid off for a few minutes before filling and serving.