ST. JOSEPH'S DAY · MARCH 19

Baked zeppole for St. Joseph's Day

Prep 35 min **Cook** 35 min **Cool** 30 min **Total** 1 hr 40 min **Makes** About 12 zeppole **Level** Medium

ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIRED

Cooking is for children and grown-ups together. An adult should supervise at all times and handle the oven, stovetop, knives, and anything hot. The boiling water and butter can splatter and burn. A grown-up does all the stovetop work and handles the hot pastry.

ALLERGY INFORMATION

Contains wheat (gluten), milk, and egg. Chocolate chips often contain soy, so check the label. Always read ingredient labels, since brands vary, and ask about food allergies before you cook or share.

INGREDIENTS

Puffs (choux pastry)

- 1 cup (240 ml) water
- ½ cup (115 g) butter, cut in pieces
- 1 tbsp sugar
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 cup (125 g) all-purpose flour
- 4 eggs, at room temperature

Sweet ricotta cream

- 2 cups (450 g) whole-milk ricotta, drained in a sieve for 30 minutes
- ½ cup (60 g) powdered sugar, plus more for dusting
- 1 tsp vanilla extract and the grated zest of ½ orange
- ¼ cup (45 g) mini chocolate chips (optional)
- 12 amarena or maraschino cherries

METHOD

1. Heat the oven to 400°F (200°C) and line two baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. A grown-up brings the water, butter, sugar, and salt to a boil in a saucepan. Take it off the heat, add the flour all at once, and stir hard until a smooth ball forms. Stir over low heat 1 minute more.
3. Tip the dough into a bowl and cool 5 minutes. Beat in the eggs one at a time until the dough is smooth and glossy and falls from the spoon in a thick ribbon.
4. Spoon the dough into a piping bag with a large star tip and pipe twelve 2½-inch (6 cm) rings or mounds, 2 inches (5 cm) apart.
5. Bake 30 to 35 minutes, until puffed, deep golden, and dry. Keep the oven closed for the first 20 minutes. Poke a small slit in the side of each puff and cool completely on a rack.
6. Stir the ricotta, powdered sugar, vanilla, orange zest, and chocolate chips until creamy.
7. Split each puff, fill it with ricotta cream, top with a cherry, and dust with powdered sugar.

LITTLE HELPERS CAN (WITH A GROWN-UP)

- Crack the eggs into a cup
- Stir the ricotta cream
- Fill the puffs and add the cherries
- Set a little St. Joseph's Table with bread, lemons, and fava beans

GOOD TO KNOW

- Fill zeppole just before serving so they stay crisp. Unfilled puffs keep a day in an airtight tin; crisp them in a hot oven for 5 minutes.
- For Naples-style zeppole, fill them with vanilla pastry cream instead of ricotta.

A BLESSING BEFORE WE EAT

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen. Saint Joseph, pray for us, and help us care for one another as you cared for Jesus and Mary.