

I love it when I get invited to dinner. It means more time for making fun bites for the apéro! I haven't made pâte à choux in ages, and this can be savoury or sweet. This dough is the base for profiteroles, éclairs and of course, savoury gougères. It's not too difficult, just a little elbow grease is needed!

GOUGÈRES WITH PARMESAN, CHIVES AND MUSTARD

Ingredients

- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 cup water
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp kosher salt
- Pinch of nutmeg
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour
- 4 large eggs
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups grated Parmesan cheese, sharp cheddar or Gruyère
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp dijon mustard
- 2 tbsp finely chopped chives

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 400°. Bring butter, salt, nutmeg, and 1 cup water to a boil in a medium saucepan, stirring until butter is melted. Remove from heat, add flour and stir to combine.

Cook mixture over medium heat, stirring vigorously with a wooden spoon until mixture pulls away from sides of pan and forms a ball, about 2 minutes. Continue to cook, stirring vigorously, until a dry film forms on bottom and sides of pan and dough is no longer sticky, about 2 minutes longer. Remove pan from heat and let dough cool slightly, about 2 minutes. Using a hand or stand mixer (this is much easier than doing it with a wood spoon) beat in whole eggs one at a time, incorporating fully between additions. Mix in cheeses, mustard and pepper. The result will be a fairly sticky dough.

Using a small cookie scoop or two teaspoons, place golfball size dollops of dough about 2" apart onto parchment-lined baking sheets. Sprinkle tops with additional cheese and flaky sea salt. Bake gougères rotating halfway through until puffed and golden and dry in the center (they should sound hollow when tapped), 20–25 minutes. Makes about 25-30 gougères.

Note:

You can use any cheese combination you like. Traditionally these are made with gruyère, but I really like them with parmesan and sharp, old cheddar. These can be a bit mild in flavour so the addition of cheese and flakey salt on top really helps make these little bites even better. If you don't bake these right away, you can easily freeze them on the sheets, and once frozen place them all in an airtight container for up to two months. This makes for quick last-minute baking when you need them. Bake them without thawing allowing for a few additional minutes in the baking process.

