

Sacristains
AF DuPage Baking Demonstration
February 25, 2023 11:00 am
Presented by Chef Chris Thielman & Karen Thielman

Servings: 12 large sacristains (as described) or 18 small sacristains

Special Equipment needed: medium-sized bowl, cling film, rolling pin, ruler, 3 quarters (coins), hand-held or stand mixer, pizza cutter, pastry brush, 2 half sheet pans (18 inch by 13 inch size), 2 silicone baking sheets or parchment paper, digital scale

Ingredients:

Sacristain Dough

225 grams cold water

12 grams sea salt

400 grams all-purpose flour

60 grams very soft butter (European-style)

340 grams butter for the butter block (European-style) **refrigerated**

Royal Icing

1 large egg white

200 grams powdered sugar

Few drops of water if needed

Sacristain Decoration

4 ounces sliced almonds (divided among all the pastries)

2 large egg yolks, stirred

4 ounces superfine granulated sugar

Method for sacristain dough:

Using a medium-sized bowl, add cold water and the sea salt, stirring well until the salt is completely dissolved. Add the flour, then add the very soft butter (60 grams).

Mix by hand until well combined, but do not knead the dough. It will look a little rough at this stage.

Shape into a flattened ball. Cover with cling film and place in the fridge for an hour.

Remove the dough from the fridge and roll into a rectangle about 18 inches by 8 inches with the longer edges on the top and bottom.

To prepare the butter block, take the butter (340 grams) from the fridge and place it in between two pieces of plastic cling film or parchment paper. Tap it with a rolling pin to soften, then roll out the butter to just under 9 inches by 8 inches in size (when placed on the dough in the next step, the butter will cover about one-half of the dough).

Place the butter block on the right side of the rolled dough, leaving a very small gap at the edges. Now fold over the other half of dough so that the butter is exactly encased inside the dough. **Note: Make sure the butter is not all the way to the edges, but almost to the edge, or it will ooze out as you roll it.**

Roll out the dough again to about 18 inches by 8 inches. From now on, whenever you roll out the dough, the longer edges will be on the sides. The most important part of this procedure is that the dough and butter are both pliable and not too cold or the butter will shatter and won't spread correctly to form the layers.

To make the fold, take the bottom one-third of the dough and fold it up, leaving one-third of the exposed dough on the top. Next fold the top one-third of the exposed dough over and onto the folded dough. The dough should now resemble a business letter, folded into thirds.

Make sure that you fold the edges so that they meet as evenly as possible. Lightly wrap the dough in cling film and place the dough in the fridge for at least half an hour.

You need to repeat this process 5 more times: rolling out the dough to 18 inches by 8 inches, doing a three-fold, covering the dough in cling film, and resting in the refrigerator for 30 minutes before the next step.

After the final 6th fold, wrap the dough in cling film and rest the dough overnight in the refrigerator for use the next day. It's possible to keep this dough in the fridge for up to 3 days or freeze it for later use.

When you are ready to use the dough, roll it out again to a size of 18 inches by 8 inches. Maintain the rectangle shape as you roll. To determine the correct thickness, stack three quarters to verify that the height of the dough equals the height of the stack of coins.

Method for the Royal Icing:

To prepare the royal icing, place the egg white and powdered sugar in a bowl. Using a handheld electric mixer or a stand mixer, whip until thoroughly mixed, about 2 minutes. Keep covered with a moist paper towel or the icing will dry out and form a crust.

Method to prepare the sacristains for baking:

Line the half sheet pans with the silicone sheets or parchment paper.

Using a pizza cutter, cut a strip of dough 8 inches long by 1 ½ inches wide. The weight should be about 80 grams.

Using a pastry brush, lightly brush egg yolk on top of the dough strip taking care not to egg wash the sides of the dough. Sprinkle some of the sliced almonds on the top and a little superfine granulated sugar.

Loosely twist the dough strip and place it on the lined baking pan.

Brush egg yolk on the top of the twisted dough and sprinkle a little more of the superfine sugar evenly over the top.

Smear a little (about a teaspoon) of the royal icing on the sacristains in 3 or 4 places on the top.

Continue the process of cutting and preparing the dough strips. You should be able to place about 6 twisted dough strips on each sheet pan. Allow room in between each pastry since they will grow to about 3 times their diameter in size.

Bake at 400° for 20 minutes and then turn the oven down to 350° and bake for another 6 minutes. NOTE: oven temperatures may vary, so the exact timing may need to be adjusted for your particular oven settings. The sacristains should be golden brown and there may be some crispiness on the bottom where the sugar has been in contact with the pan.

Let cool on the pan before removing the pastries. Serve when completely cooled.

Chefs Notes:

* The rest time in between each fold is critical for a good lamination. If you feel the dough is too warm, let it rest longer in the fridge because a warm dough will create a butter layer that does not spread correctly.

* The temperature of the butter is critical. Too cold and the butter will not spread well.

* You can use pre-prepared puff pastry dough if you do not want to make your own puff pastry. (Dufour brand recommended)

* The royal icing addition is the classic way that the sacristains are prepared in and around Provence. Some bakers prefer to eliminate the royal icing, using only the superfine sugar for sweetness.