

Pasticciotti Leccesi



DIRECTIONS

- Make the pastry dough by placing all the ingredients listed for it into the bowl of a standing mixer with a dough attachment in place.
- Mix on low until all ingredients are well combined and form a smooth dough ball.
- Remove and wrap with plastic film.
- Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
- Next, make the cream.
- Pour the half and half (or milk) into a small pan and place on low heat until warm.
- Meanwhile, place the eggs, sugar, vanilla and lemon extract into a separate pan. Whisk until well-blended. Add sifted flour and continue to whisk until creamy and smooth.
- Add 1/3 of the warm milk to the egg mixture while stirring constantly until fully mixed. Repeat this step 2 more times so that all the milk is incorporated.
- Place pan back on burner on low heat, stirring the entire time to avoid sticking and formation of lumps.
- Bring to a gentle boil (about 5-7 minutes) and cook two more minutes, until the cream thickens to a pudding consistency.

Continued on p2

INGREDIENTS

- For the pastry dough:
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- 1 lb all purpose, about 3 3/4 cups
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup shortening (or butter, cut into small chunks)
- 3 Oz cold milk
- 1 tsp baking powder
- Pinch of salt
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- For the pastry cream:
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- 1 quart half and half (whole milk can be substituted)
- 4 eggs
- 3/4 c sugar
- 1 1/4 c flour
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 tsp lemon extract
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- Additional ingredients:
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- Sour cherries (I use the famous Italian Amarene Fabbri)
- Egg wash (beaten egg and milk)
- Powdered sugar, as needed



DIRECTIONS (CONT.)



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- Remove pan from stove and pour the cream into a glass bowl. Immediately cover with plastic wrap (sticking to the top of the cream) to avoid the formation of a “dry skin”.
- Preheat oven to 375F.
- If you have pasticciotti forms, grease and flour them evenly.
- If you don't, you can use a cupcake pan also greased and floured.
- Remove dough from fridge and place on a well-floured surface.
- Divide dough in two pieces.
- With a rolling pin, roll first half into an even layer, about 1/4” thick.
- With a round cookie cutter (4” to 5” big, according to your form size), cut 12 circles.
- Line bottom and sides of forms with dough circles.
- Make a couple of pricks with fork on bottom only.
- Fill each cavity with pastry cream.
- Place a couple of sour cherries on top of cream filling.
- Roll remaining dough as the first.
- With a smaller, round cookie cutter (about 3”), cut 12 circles.
- Place each circle on top of each pastry.
- Gently press sides with fingertips to seal.
- Brush tops with egg wash.
- Bake in hot oven for about 20-25 minutes until tops are golden.
- Remove from oven and allow to cool.
- Remove from forms while they are still a little warm or they will not come out.
- Pasticciotti can be served fresh or (even better) cold by placing them in refrigerator overnight.
- Sprinkle with powdered sugar before serving.
- Makes 12.

NONNA'S TIPS

- I prefer using shortening in this recipe because that's what the original recipe calls for and it's what my nonna used.
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- A tip within the tips, Crisco changed its ingredients from their original recipe (which included animal fats) but the Walmart equivalent comes in two varieties: their Shortening for Baking version is what the original Crisco recipe used to be; their All Vegetable for Frying is what the new Crisco is now. I used the first, authentic kind.
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- Amarene Fabbri are as iconic as Nutella in the Italian food industry. Even Costco carries them now but, if you can't find them, use any brand of sour cherries.