

White Cheddar and Chive Gougères

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma Collection Series,
Christmas, by Caroline Miller (Simon & Schuster, 2003)

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

"Here, French gougères, traditionally made with Gruyère cheese, get a makeover with white Cheddar cheese and chives. If you like, these can be baked ahead, cooled to room temperature and then frozen in resealable plastic bags. To reheat, simply place on a wire rack in a 350°F (180°C) oven and heat until warmed through."

Ingredients:

5 eggs

1 cup (8 fl. oz./250 ml) plus 1 tsp. water

6 Tbs. (3/4 stick) (3 oz./90 g) unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

1 tsp. kosher salt

1/4 tsp. sweet Hungarian paprika

1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper

1 cup (5 oz./155 g) unbleached all-purpose flour

1 cup (4 oz./125 g) shredded aged white Cheddar cheese

3 Tbs. chopped chives

1/4 cup (1 oz./30 g) grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

Directions:

Position racks in the upper and lower thirds of an oven and preheat to 425°F (220°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

In a small bowl, whisk together 1 of the eggs with 1 tsp. of the water. Set aside.

In a heavy saucepan over medium heat, combine the remaining 1 cup (8 fl. oz./250 ml) water, the butter, salt, paprika and cayenne. Bring to a simmer and cook until the butter melts. Remove from the heat and quickly add the flour all at once, beating vigorously with a wooden spoon until completely blended. Place the pan over medium-high heat and beat until the mixture forms a mass in the center of the pan and the pan bottom starts to become coated with the cooked mixture, about 1 minute. Remove from heat and let cool 3 to 4 minutes, beating occasionally.

Use the spoon to make a well in the center of the mixture. Add 1 of the eggs and beat with a spoon until completely blended, then add the remaining 3 eggs, one at a time, beating in each until completely blended before adding another. Beat in the cheddar and chives until melted and thoroughly blended.

To form the gougères, spoon the paste into a pastry bag fitted with a plain tip 1/2 inch (12 mm) in diameter. Pipe mounds of the paste about 1 inch (2.5 cm) in diameter and 1/2 inch (12 mm) high onto the prepared baking sheets, spacing the mounds 2 inches (5 cm) apart. (If you don't have a pastry bag, you can use a teaspoon to form the mounds of dough instead.) If you have tails on the tops of your gougères, dip your finger into a bowl of water

and gently press down the tips, redipping your finger in the water as needed.

Brush the gougères with the egg-water mixture and sprinkle the Parmigiano-Reggiano over the tops. Bake the gougères until lightly browned and roughly doubled in size, about 20 minutes, rotating the pans 180 degrees and from top to bottom about halfway through the baking time. Remove from the oven but leave the oven on. Using a small, sharp knife, cut a small slit in the side of each gougère. Return the gougères to the oven for 5 minutes to partially dry out the inside of the puffs. Transfer the gougères to wire racks and let cool. Serve warm or at room temperature. Makes about 3 dozen gougères.