

2007 STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL
Second Place Winner – Sue Schmitzer Hartsville, SC

Strawberry Eclairs with Grand Marnier Pastry Cream

Eclairs (Makes 12 servings)

- 1 1/3 cups water
- 1 (11 oz) package pie crust mix
- 3 large eggs
- 2 egg whites (reserve 2 egg yolks for pastry cream)

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Bring 1 1/3 cups of water to a boil in a 3-quart heavy saucepan over medium-high heat. Stir in pie crust mix, beating vigorously with a wooden spoon 1 minute or until mixture leaves sides of pan. Place dough in bowl of heavy-duty electric stand mixer. Cool dough 5 minutes. Beat dough at medium speed with electric mixer using paddle attachment. Add egg whites, one at a time, beating well after each addition. (If desired, eggs and egg whites may be added, one at a time, and beaten vigorously with a wooden spoon instead of using the mixer.) Spoon dough into a large heavy-duty zip-loc plastic bag. (A large pastry bag may be used instead.) Cut a 1 1/2 inch opening across one corner of the bag. Pipe 4-inch long strips of dough, 2-inches apart, onto an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 425 degrees for 25 minutes. Do not under-bake. Remove from oven and cut a small slit in side of each éclair to allow steam to escape. Cool on wire racks.

Grand Marnier Pastry Cream

- 2 large eggs
- 2 reserved egg yolks
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup cornstarch
- 2 cups half and half
- 2 Tbsp. butter, softened
- 1 Tbsp. freshly squeezed orange juice
- 1 Tbsp. Grand Marnier liquor

Whisk together first 4 ingredients in a 3-quart saucepan. Gradually whisk in the half and half. Cook over medium heat, whisking constantly, until mixture comes to a boil. Cook one minute or until mixture is thickened and bubbly. Remove from heat. Whisk in butter, orange juice and Grand Marnier. Turn into a bowl. Lay sheet of plastic wrap directly on top of pastry cream to prevent skin from forming. Cover and chill 4 hours.

1 Quart Fresh Strawberries, sliced

White Chocolate Glaze

- 1 cup white chocolate morsels
- 1/4 cup whipping cream
- 2 Tbsp. butter, softened

Microwave morsels and whipping cream on High in a 2-cup glass measuring cup 30 seconds to 1 minute or until melted, stirring twice. Whisk in butter until blended. Spoon immediately over filled éclairs.

Chocolate Glaze

Make as directed above for white chocolate glaze, substituting 1-cup semisweet morsels for white chocolate.

To Assemble:

Spit éclairs using a serrated knife, starting on one long side without cutting through to the opposite side. Pull out and discard soft dough inside. Spoon sliced strawberries evenly into éclairs before filling with pastry cream. Carefully spoon about 1/4 cup pastry cream on top of strawberries. Close top of éclair over filling. Top with white chocolate glaze; drizzle with chocolate glaze. Refrigerate until serving.