

**Alain Ducasse's Gougères
(from Food & Wine magazine)**

Ingredients

½ cup water

½ cup milk

1 stick (4 oz) unsalted butter, cut into tablespoons

Large pinch of coarse salt

1 cup (4 ¼ oz) all-purpose flour

4 large eggs

1 cup (3 ½ oz) shredded Gruyère cheese, plus additional for sprinkling

Freshly ground pepper

Freshly grated nutmeg

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper (Silpats work better, if you have them.) In a medium saucepan, combine water, milk, butter, and salt and bring to a boil. Add the flour and stir it in with a wooden spoon until a smooth dough forms. Stir over low heat until it dries out and pulls away from the pan, about 2 minutes.

Scrape the dough into a bowl. Let cool for 1 minute. Beat the eggs into the dough, 1 at a time, beating thoroughly between each one. Add the cheese and a pinch each of pepper and nutmeg.

Transfer the dough to a pastry bag fitted with a ½ inch round tip and pipe tablespoon-size mounds onto the baking sheets, 2 inches apart. Sprinkle with cheese, and bake for 22 minutes or until puffed and golden brown. Serve hot or let cool and refrigerate or freeze. Reheat in a 350 degree oven until piping hot.

Notes:

When making the choux pastry, it is important to be sure that each egg is fully incorporated into the batter before adding the next. Don't worry if the batter separates and looks curdled at first. Keep beating, and it will come together nicely.

Gougères freeze well. After baking, allow them to cool completely and then freeze until firm.