

PAIN AU CHOCOLAT (CHOCOLATE-FILLED CROISSANTS)

Yield: 6 croissants

Golden and crispy on the outside, with rich, melted chocolate swirled into the buttery pastry, these delicious treats are perfect with a coffee for a luxurious breakfast. Classically, croissants are filled with a chocolate baton, but they can be made with grated chocolate instead.

1/2 quantity (about 1 1/2 pounds) croissant dough
12 semisweet chocolate batons or 1/2 cup (3 ounces) finely grated semisweet or bittersweet chocolate
1 large egg
1 tablespoon whole milk or cream
1 tablespoon confectioners' sugar

1. Line the baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone mats.
2. Lightly flour a work surface and roll the dough into a 12" x 8" x 1/4" thick rectangle. Position the rectangle so the long edge is parallel to the edge of your work surface. Use a ruler and paring knife or pizza cutter to make marks along the top and bottom edges of the dough every 4 inches.
3. **To cut the dough:** Line up your ruler with the top and bottom mark and cut along this line. Continue lining up the marks and cutting until the whole sheet has been cut into 3 long rectangles. Next, measure 4 inches from the top on both sides, and cut across, shaping the dough into 6, 4-inch squares.
4. **To shape the dough:** Line up all the squares along your work surface. Place 2 chocolate batons 1 inch apart starting at 1/2-inch from the bottom of each square, keeping them centered on the dough. To shape, roll the dough around the batons; lightly flatten and place seam side down, 2 inches apart on the baking sheets.
5. **To wash with egg and proof:** Lightly beat the egg and milk in a clean bowl. Brush each croissant evenly with the egg wash. Cover the remaining egg wash and refrigerate to use later. Allow the croissants to rise in a cool spot until they are nearly doubled in size and look like they have taken a deep breath, 1 to 2 hours, depending on the warmth of the room. If you squeeze one gently, it should feel soft and marshmallow-like. Don't try to rush the rise by warming the croissants—you don't want the butter to melt.
6. **To bake the croissants:** Preheat the oven to 400°F and place a rack in the center. Chill the croissants in the freezer for 10 minutes or in the refrigerator for 15 minutes. This will firm the butter, creating a flakier texture. Brush the croissants once more with the egg wash. Bake one baking sheet at a time, rotating it halfway through, for 17 to 22 minutes, until the croissants are a deep golden brown. Transfer the croissants to a rack to cool.
7. **To decorate:** With a fine-mesh strainer, dust the top of the croissants with the confectioners' sugar.