

LELA MIGIROV

# Paris, Eclairs & *You*

*An Artist's Guide-Book  
of Haute Pâtisserie Parisienne*

Senior Editors & Producers: Contento  
Cover & Book Design: Liliya Lev Ari  
Paintings and photographs: Lela Migirov

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[Netanel@contento-publishing.com](mailto:Netanel@contento-publishing.com)

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## WHEN CREATIVITY AND PASSION MEET...

*This book was initially supposed to depict the variety of delicious pastries that can be found in Paris. I soon realized that most places regularly change their menu and offer new creations every month. This tradition likely came into being for two reasons: first, the Chef-pâtisseries are usually very talented individuals who constantly search for new flavors and presentations, and second, thousands of locals and tourists visit luxurious cafes and pâtisseries daily, and are attracted to new creations of high quality. I wish you all a pleasant read followed by an even more pleasant culinary adventure.*

*Prof. Lela Migirov*

*August 2015*



# Introduction to creams

**K**nowledge about different **creams** is helpful in cracking the code on what can be found inside all those luscious looking pasties.

**Crème patissiere** is a fundamental cream base for almost all recipes, at the center of *éclair*, *millefeuille* and many fruit tarts. It is made with milk, eggs, sugar, butter, and “crème patissiere powder”, which is a cornstarch-like thickener. *Crème patissiere* can be mixed with different flavors.

**Crème anglaise** is a heavy, egg-yolk-based cream, which often used as a garnish for desserts such crepes and chocolate cakes. When gelatin is added, it is known as **crème anglaise collée**. When starch is used alone as a thickener (without eggs), the result is a *blancmange*. In the United Kingdom, **custard** often refers to a dessert thickened from cornflour (cornstarch) rather than eggs. After the *custard* has thickened, it may be mixed with other ingredients: it is chiboust cream when it is mixed with stiffly beaten egg whites and gelatin, and **crème légère** when it is mixed with whipped cream.

**Crème au beurre** is made by beating butter into *crème patissiere*. To offset its richness, it is frequently used in combination with other creams. For example, the *fraisier* contains both

*crème au beurre* and *crème patissiere* layered on a sponge cake with fresh berries.

**Crème d'amande**, a rich almond cream made with egg and equal parts butter, sugar, and almond powder, is often featured in fruit tarts and many chocolate and nut-based recipes.



**Crème mousseline** is a mix of one-third *crème au beurre* and one-third *crème patissiere*. **Crème glacée** is ice cream.

**Francipane** is one-third *crème patissiere* and two-thirds *crème d'amande*.

**Crème Chantilly** is a simple whipped cream made by beating heavy cream with sugar and sometimes a little vanilla extract (sometimes also called *crème fouettée*).

**Frosting** is a very important part of a cake or cookie. It is classified into six types: **Buttercream:** Butter or margarine is combined with powdered sugar, flavorings, and liquid. Classic buttercream usually involves making a custard, then beating butter into it until a frosting consistency has been reached.



**Cooked Frostings:** Seven-minute frosting is the classic cooked frosting combining egg whites and sugar, along with flavorings. These frostings are delicate and can be absorbed into the cake if not eaten within one day.

**Whipped Cream:** Powdered sugar, flavorings, and whipped cream make whipped cream frostings - what could be simpler? Cakes, cupcakes, and cookies with this type of frosting must be refrigerated.

**Royal Icing:** This icing is used for decorating cakes and cookies. It can be made from scratch, using powdered sugar or meringue powder, egg whites, and liquid.

**Ganaches:** This fancy term is simply chocolate melted with heavy cream. It makes a beautiful shiny glaze on cakes and cookies.



**Glazes:** Glazes are the simplest frostings. Powdered sugar is combined with a liquid to form a thin consistency. Glazes are usually poured or drizzled over the tops of cakes and cookies forming a shiny hard crust when the glaze sets. Melted chocolate can be used as a glaze on its own.

## MY ASSOCIATIONS...

*contemplation   shade   nuance   tint   secret*  
*adventure   gourmand*



# Éclair



The earliest reference that could be found on *éclair* appears in 1850 in Lyon and *la pâte à frire ou à cuire au four* has been known since the Middle Ages. The custard was invented in 1691 by François Massialot and the *fondant* by Gillet in 1824.

In the eighteenth century, *choux* pastry cakes resembled stretched fingers and were rolled in almonds. Antonin Carême (1783-1833) removed the almonds, filled the *choux* pastry with apricot marmalade, custard, chocolate or coffee, and covered the pastry with an icing of melted sugar. Even though the name *éclair* appeared 20 years after the death of Carême he is



credited as being the inventor of the *éclair*. The origins of the term *éclair* are shrouded in mystery. Many historians favor a joke of patissier pastry “this cake is so good that it eats itself in an *éclair*.” Others cite the frosting, so bright that it evokes the light of *éclair*, others speak of its shape.

The reason for this best-seller’s universal appeal is rather elusive, but one can guess that it is because it is relatively easy to eat, not too rich, and very satisfying to those with a

sweet tooth. This oblong pastry is a simple combination of *choux* pastry with *crème patissiere* filling and a glazed top, can be eaten at any time of the day and while on the go. It is not easy to find an *éclair vanilla* with a perfectly balanced flavor of vanilla and *choux* pastry. I found my favorite *éclair* in *L'éclair de Genie*. Their *pâte à choux* shell is soft and fresh,



with no hint of crustiness or staleness. The cream interior is *crème patissiere*, light and luscious on the tongue. The icing is smooth and evenly coated. *Eclairs* of Genie as well as of *Fauchon* have an appealing appearance and a perfect size: it is neither too unwieldy nor too small to satisfy. The proportion of *choux* pastry and vanilla cream in one bite is harmonious and a real delight.

## MY ASSOCIATIONS...

*softness   delight   treasure   amusement  
temptation   marvel   magnificence*





# Petits Choux, Profiteroles

**C**houx pastry owes its uniqueness to the fact that rehydrated (adding the eggs one by one) previously dried dough with a neutral taste, is an ideal scaffold for filling with different creams among which *crème patissiere* is most popular. Choux pastry was invented by Popelini, Queen Catherine de Medici's cook, in the mid-sixteenth century. Popelini devised this uneven paste (which was already choux) with a spoon on a baking sheet. Once cooked, they were filled with fruit jelly. The method of preparing the dough has held the name *pâte à chaud* (hot paste), which became *pâte à choux* (choux pastry) much later. It doesn't resemble cabbage as is often believed. The true modern choux pastry was invented by the great Carème who also created the *profiteroles*. The best delicate *profiteroles* perfectly balanced with luxurious *crème patissiere* filling can be found in *Jacques Genin*. From the moment you come into this café, the friendly service make you feel welcome and the tranquil atmosphere is most relaxing. You can also enjoy this delight in *Popelini* and *Profiterole Cherie*.



## **MY ASSOCIATIONS...**

*style   curiosity   intrigue   solitude   joy*



