

# SHORTCUT PUFF PASTRY

MAKES 2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> POUNDS

Puff pastry is a staple dough, used in so many sweet and savory applications. But most people shy away from making their own because it's perceived as incredibly complicated and time consuming to make. I myself have been forced on occasion to use the store-bought frozen sheets. My pet peeve with the frozen kind is that because the dough has been folded to fit into the package, you get an unsightly seam that makes the dough puff up all wacky and uneven. Here is a homemade recipe that tastes and looks just like the real thing but is made in half the time. I've used it many times in my restaurants in a pinch, and it's a good fallback so you don't have to resort to the boxed stuff.

**2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for shaping and rolling**

**1 tablespoon granulated sugar**

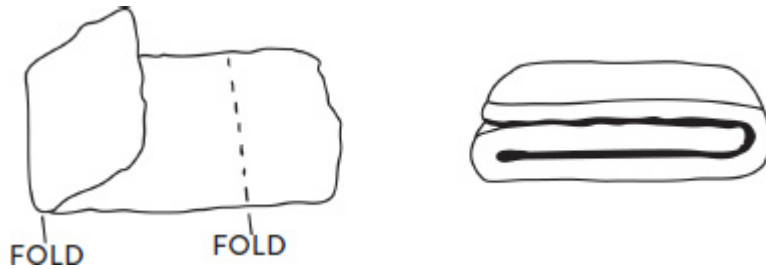
**1 tablespoon kosher salt**

**1 pound (4 sticks) cold unsalted butter, cubed**

**1 cup + 3 to 4 tablespoons ice water**

In a food processor fitted with the steel blade, process the flour, sugar, and salt to combine. Add the butter and process until a crumbly dough forms. (The butter will not be fully incorporated here.) Add the ice water just until the dough comes together into a shaggy mass. Turn the dough out onto a floured surface and pat out into a rectangle about 12 x 6 inches and <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inch thick.

Fold the dough onto itself in thirds as if you were folding a piece of paper to go into an envelope, bringing one end slightly over half, then bringing in the other end.



The dough will not be smooth and together at this point, but that's okay! Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes. Repeat this process of rolling out the dough to a 12 x 6-inch rectangle and making the "envelope fold" three more times. After each rolling out and folding, let the dough rest in the refrigerator for 30 minutes before you roll out and fold the dough again. Finally, roll out the dough into a 12 x 6-inch rectangle (this is now the fourth time you're doing the rolling out) and fold the two ends into the center, then fold the whole piece of dough in half, as though you were closing a book.

Wrap the puff pastry in plastic and refrigerate for at least 1 hour to firm it up before using.

### *chef it up!*

Use this puff pastry for [Palmiers](#) and [St. Honoré Cake](#). The recipes do not call for the whole amount of puff pastry, but in each case you should make the entire batch of puff pastry, cut off what you need (this is a good place for a kitchen scale), and store the unused portion in the freezer.

### **INSIDER TIP • BUTTER**

Using a high-quality butter will bring the flavor of the puff pastry to a whole new level. Choose a butter that is higher in fat than the butter commonly found in American supermarkets. Seek out European butters, if you can. My personal favorites are butters from Ireland.

