

# VANILLA PASTRY CREAM

MAKES ABOUT 6 CUPS

Pastry cream is a must-have recipe for everyone's collection. It's a base filling for pastries like éclairs and cream puffs. With its neutral taste, you can flavor it with anything from chocolate to liquor. In this book, I use it in my [Banana Cream Pie](#), in the cream puffs in [St. Honoré Cake](#), and between the layers in the [Black and White Crêpe Cake](#).

**3/4 cup sugar**

**4 large egg yolks**

**1/4 cup cornstarch**

**4 cups whole milk**

**Pinch of kosher salt**

**2 teaspoons vanilla extract**

**5 tablespoons unsalted butter, cubed**

In a small bowl, whisk together 6 tablespoons of the sugar, the egg yolks, and cornstarch.

In a medium saucepan, combine the milk, salt, and the remaining 6 tablespoons sugar. Bring to a boil. Using a ladle, pour in small amounts of the hot liquid while whisking to temper the egg yolks (see "[Tempering Eggs](#)").

Add the tempered egg yolk mixture back to the hot milk and continue to whisk over medium-low heat until the pastry cream starts to bubble, about 5 minutes. Once it starts to bubble, cook for 1 minute more, whisking constantly. Take it off the heat and stir in the vanilla and butter.

Transfer the pastry cream to a bowl and set the bowl in an ice bath (a larger bowl filled with ice and water). Place a piece of plastic wrap touching the surface of the cream so that it doesn't

form a skin as it cools. After the cream is fully cooled, you can keep it in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

**INSIDER TIP • STABILIZE YOUR BOWL!**

Place a wet paper towel underneath a bowl to keep it from wobbling as you whisk.