

Chocolate Raspberry Soufflé

4 Servings



1/4 cup pistachios, shelled
Butter for greasing ramekins
1/2 cup sugar + more for
ramekins
6 oz bittersweet chocolate,
chopped
1/4 cup raspberry jam
1 large egg yolk
1/4 teaspoon salt + pinch of
salt for egg whites
6 large egg whites
1/4 teaspoon xanthan gum
(optional)

(Plus Whipped cream, powdered sugar, chopped pistachios and/or fresh raspberries to top)

Preheat oven to 375° F. Toast pistachios on a rimmed baking sheet, tossing once, until fragrant and slightly darkened, 5–6 minutes. Let cool slightly, then coarsely chop.

Butter ramekins with a pastry brush. Sprinkle with sugar, tilting to coat completely and tapping out any excess.

Combine chocolate and jam in a double broiler or a medium heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of barely simmering water (do not let bowl touch water); stir constantly until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth, 1–2 minutes.

Remove from heat. Stir in egg yolk and 1/4 tsp. salt.

In the bowl of an electric mixer with a whisk attachment on medium speed, beat egg whites, adding a pinch of salt and xanthan gum while whisking. Whisk until frothy, about 2 minutes. Gradually add 1/2 cup sugar, 1 Tablespoon at a time, and beat until medium peaks form, 6–7 minutes. (Xanthan gum added to the egg whites while whipping will help soufflé to rise even taller, but it is not essential.)

Fold a quarter of the egg whites into chocolate mixture. Fold in remaining egg whites in 2 batches. Divide batter among prepared ramekins, filling completely. Transfer ramekins to oven and bake soufflé until puffed, 18–20 minutes.

Dust soufflés with powdered sugar, dollop with whipped cream, top with chopped pistachio, or scatter fresh raspberries atop. Enjoy immediately.

Deflation is normal if allowed to cool.

Notes of interest:

The word soufflé came from the French word *souffler*, meaning “to blow up” or “to puff up”, because of the manner in which they rise during the baking process to quickly deflate afterwards. A good soufflé will stand five to ten minutes before collapsing, and making a long-standing soufflé is the mark of a good chef.

Soufflés are relatively new to the food scene, compared to some of the other recipes in this book. The earliest record of a soufflé seems to be in 1742. This has been attributed to the fact that prior to the 17th century, many European chefs still believed in the four bodily humors, which they thought could be kept in balance through food. Thus, they generally stuck to simple dishes and rigid guidelines that hindered them from discovering new flavors. Around the turn of the 1600’s, France broke free of those beliefs and began experimenting with food for the sake of flavor, not health. Some call this the Flavor Revolution.

Although some food historians claim that Antoine Beauvilliers invented the soufflé in 1783, that was not the case. Beauvilliers was the owner of one of the very first high-end Parisian restaurants, *Le Grand Taverne de Londres*, and had cooked for King Louis XIV. For more than 15 years, he was touted as “the most famous restaurateur in Paris.” His menus throughout the 1780’s featured several soufflés, but he did not publish those recipes until 1816. He was responsible for bringing the soufflé to popularity, but the earliest known soufflé recipe appeared in 1742 in a French cookbook called *Le Cuisinier Moderne* by Vincent La Chapelle, which predated Beauvilliers by more than 40 years. The recipe was called *Omelette Soufflée*, and contained a combination of sweet and savory ingredients that included candied lemon peel and veal kidney. Early soufflés were baked in a pastry case called a croustade instead of the ramekins used today. The word “ramekin” did not even enter the English language in reference to the baking dish until 1895.

The word soufflé entered into English cookbooks and the English language in Louis Ude’s 1813 book *The French Cook*. The book featured six soufflé recipes, one of which was a chocolate soufflé. In the 1820’s, the popularity of soufflés soared at its peak due to the attention of famous master chef Marie-Antoine Carême, with hundreds of recipes and variants. By 1845, it had lost some of its novelty and became just another recipe. In 1873, Alexandre Dumas mentioned at least eight kinds of soufflés in his *Le Grand Dictionnaire de Cuisine*. In the late 1800’s and early 1900’s, popularity waned, until it saw a great resurgence in the 1960’s in upscale American restaurants.

Early soufflés were usually savory dishes, and it was not until long after their invention that dessert soufflés came into existence. Chocolate soufflés are now one of the most popular interpretations of this dish. Steve and his wife made is recipe together as a special treat.