

Cleo Coyle's Baby Berry Pastries

Or how to use leftover cranberry sauce!

Text and photos (c) 2011 by Alice Alfonsi who writes *The Coffeehouse Mysteries* as Cleo Coyle with her husband, Marc Cerasini

I'm a big fan of baby size pastries and these are downright adorable. The bright red color of the filling combined with my homemade glaze makes them a sweet addition for holiday trays. Leave off the glaze and you have an attractive appetizer. If you don't have cranberry sauce, raspberry jam works equally well. These mini pastries even make a nice holiday treat for waistline watchers. Using reduced fat crescent rolls and reduced fat cream cheese will lower the calories; and the small size makes portion control easier. Pair one or two with a filling cup of coffee or tea for a lighter dessert option than a big slice of cake or pie, and you can eat with joy through New Year's Day. Happy Holidays! ~ Cleo



Makes 16 mini pastries

Ingredients:

For the easy pastry

1 package of Crescent Rolls (8-count, regular or reduced fat)
½ cup whipped cream cheese (regular or reduced fat)
½ cup cranberry sauce or raspberry jam

For the glaze

1 Tablespoon butter
1 Tablespoon milk (or water)
¾ cup confectioners' (powdered) sugar



NOTES FOR RECIPE SUCCESS: Yes, these Pastries appear stupidly simple to make but things can go very wrong in the process. For foolproof success, see my “Cleo notes” at the end of this recipe.

Directions:

Step 1 – PREP PAN: Pre-heat your oven to 375° F. (Pre-heat for 30 full minutes just to be sure the oven is hot enough.) Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. The cranberry sauce will ooze out and stick to the pan. The parchment will prevent sticking and also protect the delicate pastry bottoms from the pan’s direct heat.

Step 2 – UNROLL CRESCENTS: Once your oven is fully pre-heated, begin to work. Keep your dough cold throughout this process and you’ll have less trouble cutting and shaping it. Assemble ingredients first, and then break open the crescent roll tube. Work directly on the lined baking sheet. Crescent rolls come in 2 small sheets. They are perforated, forming 4 triangles per sheet. Separate the 8 triangles in two rows, leaving space between each triangle and row.

Step 3 – SPREAD THE FILLING: Using the back of a small spoon, gently spread about 2 teaspoons worth of whipped cream cheese onto the pastry triangles. On top of that spread a layer of the cranberry sauce (again, about 2 teaspoons per triangle).

Step 4 – SLICE THE TRIANGLES: Carefully cut the 8 large triangles in half lengthwise, creating 16 narrow triangles. Cutting puff pastry can be difficult, but I find that a pizza cutter slides with ease through the sticky dough. Be sure to wipe the blade clean between cuts.



Step 5 – ROLL INTO BABY CRESCENTS: Starting from the largest end of each narrow triangle, roll into crescents. As you roll, very gently stretch the narrow dough lengthwise. Roll the triangles into 16 baby crescents. Carefully lift and re-position the pastries on the lined baking sheet, allowing room for rising. For best results, bake pastries immediately.



Step 6 – BAKE: In your well pre-heated oven (375° F.), bake the pastries for about 10 to 12 minutes. Watch carefully. You want a nice golden brown pastry, but you don't want the bottoms to brown too much or burn. Allow them to cool before glazing (or the glaze will not harden properly).

Step 7 – MAKE THE GLAZE: Over low heat, combine 1 Tablespoon of butter and 1 Tablespoon of milk in a small saucepan. Do not allow these ingredients to boil or you'll have a scorched taste in your glaze. After butter melts completely into the milk, begin to add the $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of powdered sugar. Using a fork, whisk in a little at a time, adding the complete amount. The glaze should drizzle easily and harden fairly quickly once poured. If too loose, add more powdered sugar; if too thick, add a touch more milk. When you're happy with the consistency, use the fork to begin drizzling glaze in a back-and-forth motion across the cooled mini pastries.



NOTE: If the glaze hardens up on you before you're finished, simply return the pan to the heat and re-whisk.

FINAL NOTES FOR RECIPE SUCCESS

***Cleo Note #1:**

AVOID DISASTER – KEEP THE DOUGH COLD. Why? Crescent rolls are “laminated” dough (aka puffed pastry). This means layers of dough have been folded with layers of butter or shortening. Consequently, as the dough warms, the butter melts and the dough becomes difficult to cut or shape.



DO: Assemble your ingredients first, and then unroll the cold, stiff dough and work quickly to form the pastries. If you have trouble cutting or rolling the crescents during the making of this recipe, pop the entire sheet pan of them into the refrigerator for a few minutes, allowing the dough to chill and stiffen before resuming the recipe. Also note: laminated dough should be kept moist, so be sure to wrap any unused dough in plastic before storing in the fridge.



***Cleo Note #2: CRANBERRY**

SAUCE—CHILL, BABY! You can use whole or jellied cranberry sauce.

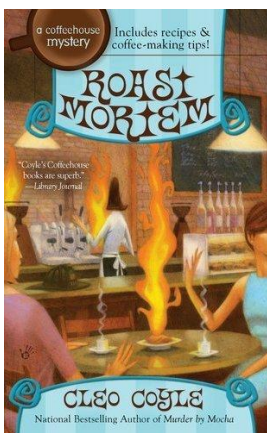
Canned or homemade is fine or swap in raspberry jam. Just make sure whatever you use is cold or room temperature and not warm or the pastry will melt. In my photos, you see homemade cranberry sauce. Here's a quick recipe: Bring **1 cup water** and **1 cup sugar** to a boil in a medium saucepan. Add **one 12-ounce package of whole, fresh cranberries**. Lower heat to a simmer and cook for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat and serve. Store in the refrigerator.

***Cleo Note #3: CREAM CHEESE** – Whipped cream cheese is what I recommend for this recipe because it's much easier to spread. If you want to use regular cream cheese, allow it to soften to room temperature and work it a little with a fork so it spreads with ease on the delicate dough.

***Cleo Note #4: PRE-HEAT FOR REAL** – Puffed pastry must have high heat to rise properly, and far too many oven thermometers are inaccurate. Forget the little “beep-beep” ready-bell on your oven. Pre-heat the oven for a good 30 minutes before baking, just to be sure. Read my past post “Is Your Oven Lying to You” for smart tips on keeping it real as we enter holiday baking season. To read that post, and pick up a few more recipes, [click here](http://www.CoffeehouseMystery.com), and don't forget to...

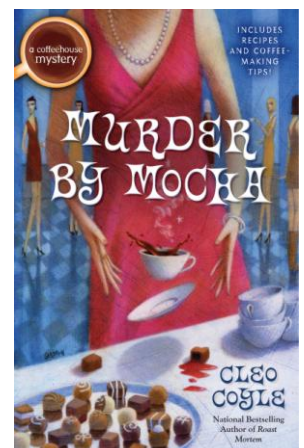
*Eat with Joy! ~ Cleo Coyle,
author of The Coffeehouse Mysteries*

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