

Ham and Gruyere Thumbprints

Each of these savory pastries include a bit of Black Forest ham and Gruyere.

YIELD: MAKES 3 DOZEN

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into large pieces
- 1/2 teaspoon coarse salt
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup finely **shredded** Gruyere cheese, plus 36 cubes (1/2 inch) for centers (8 ounces total)
- 4 large eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1/2 cup finely chopped or ground Black Forest ham (2 ounces)

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat **oven** to 400 degrees. Bring butter, **salt**, and the water to a boil in a large, heavy saucepan over medium heat, stirring occasionally (butter will melt). Add flour; stir vigorously until incorporated. Continue to cook, stirring, until the mixture pulls away from sides of pan and a thin film forms on bottom of pan, 1 to 2 minutes. Remove from heat; let cool 2 minutes.
2. Transfer dough to a large bowl; add eggs 1 at a time, beating with a wooden spoon to incorporate each before adding the next, about 2 minutes. Stir in pepper, ham, and shredded cheese.
3. Spoon dough into a pastry bag fitted with a 1/2-inch star tip. On a **baking** sheet lined with a Silpat **baking mat** or parchment **paper**, pipe 1 1/2 inches wide rosettes, 1 inch apart. Make a deep indentation at the center of each with your thumb (dampen thumb to keep it from sticking to dough). Bake until crisp and golden, 25 to 30 minutes. Transfer thumbprints to a wire rack to cool completely. Press a cheese cube into indentation of each.
4. Place on clean baking sheets; freeze (uncovered) until firm, about 1 hour. Transfer to an airtight container; freeze until ready to use, up to 6 weeks.
5. To serve, preheat oven to 425 degrees. Place thumbprints on ungreased baking sheets; bake until heated through and cheese is melted, 10 to 14 minutes. Serve warm.