



109 E. Woodin Ave
Chelan, WA 98816
509.682.3618
www.culinaryapple.com

Homemade Churros with Dipping Chocolate
Makes about 24 churros

Nothing says romance like cinnamon, sugar, and rich dipping chocolate. Ok, not exactly, but pretty close! Regardless of how you plan to spend this Valentine's Day and the weekend, make warm, crispy churros part of your celebration this season, or anytime!

Churro Ingredients:

6 cups vegetable oil	1/2 teaspoon Kosher salt
1 tablespoon cinnamon	6 tablespoons butter
1 cup sugar, plus 3 tablespoons	1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup water	2 large eggs
	1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions:

(1) Heat the vegetable oil in □ a deep saucepan (4+ qt size) over medium-high heat until it reaches 350°F.

(2) While the oil is heating, use a fork to mix the cinnamon and 1 cup of sugar in a shallow dish/plate. Set aside.

(3) In a medium saucepan (3+ qt) over medium-high heat, combine 1 cup water, 3 T sugar, salt, and butter until the butter has melted and the ingredients are combined, roughly 3-5 minutes.

(4) Add the flour and reduce heat to medium-low, stirring constantly until the dough comes together to form a ball, similar to the consistency of kids' PlayDough®.

(5) Remove the dough from the heat and transfer to a stand mixer. Let the dough cool for 10 minutes. Once the dough has completely cooled, add the eggs one at a time, mixing on medium speed. Add the vanilla and continue to blend until the mixture is smooth.

(6) Transfer the dough into a piping bag with a closed star tip. Carefully pipe lengths of the dough into the hot oil, roughly 8" long; cut the dough with kitchen shears to separate the sticky dough from the pastry tip. Fry the churros for roughly 3-4 minutes. Turn the churros once after a minute or two. The churros are done when the bubbles begin to subside and the churros are golden brown.

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(7) Remove the churros from the oil, and transfer them to a paper towel-lined plate to drain any excess oil. Toss the churros in the cinnamon and sugar mixture, roll and flip until nicely coated.

(8) Repeat this process until all of the dough has been fried. Enjoy at this stage, or dip in the chocolate sauce below.

Chocolate Dipping Sauce Ingredients:

2 cups whole milk
1/4 cup brown sugar
8 oz. 70% dark chocolate, chopped
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Dipping Sauce Directions:

(1) Heat the milk and brown sugar in a double boiler over medium heat, whisking occasionally until the ingredients are steaming.

(2) Gradually add the chocolate and vanilla into the hot milk. Whisk for about 3 minutes, or until the chocolate is melted, and the mixture is smooth and creamy.

(3) Remove the chocolate from the heat and pour into small dipping cups. Serve warm.