

Zeppole (Italian Doughnuts)

Yield: 2 dozen doughnuts

4 ounces (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into 1/2-inch pieces, at room temperature

1/4 cup water

1/4 cup sugar (plus more for topping)

1/4 teaspoon salt

1 cup all-purpose flour

4 eggs

Vegetable oil, for frying

For Chocolate Sauce

3/4 cup heavy cream

1 cup bittersweet (or semi-sweet) chocolate chips

For the doughnuts: In a medium saucepan, combine the butter, water, sugar, and salt over medium heat. Bring to a rolling boil, stirring occasionally. Boil for 10 seconds. Remove the pan from the heat and add the flour. Using a wooden spoon, quickly stir the mixture until all the flour is fully incorporated and forms a thick dough.

Return the pan to the heat and stir continuously for 2 minutes. Scrape the mixture into a stand mixture fitted with a paddle attachment. With the machine running on medium speed, add the eggs, 1 at a time until fully incorporated. Beat the mixture for 4 to 5 minutes until thick and glossy. Refrigerate the dough for 15 minutes.

In a large heavy-bottomed saucepan, pour in enough oil to fill the pan about a third of the way. Heat over medium heat until a deep-frying thermometer inserted in the oil reaches 375 degrees F. (If you don't have a thermometer a cube of bread will brown in a couple of minutes.)

Using a small ice cream scoop or 2 small spoons, carefully drop scoops (about 1 tablespoon) of the dough into the oil. (Do not crowd the pan.) Cook for 3 to 3 1/2 minutes, turning occasionally, until the zeppole are golden and puffed. Drain on paper towels. Repeat until all of the dough has been used.

For the chocolate sauce: Place chocolate chips into a heat-proof bowl. Heat the cream until hot but not boiling. Pour over the chips and let set one minute. Stir until smooth.

When the zeppole is cool enough to handle, roll in sugar and then dip the top halves in the chocolate sauce. Serve immediately.

Adapted from [Giada's New Italian Favorites](#) and [FoodNetwork.com](#)