



Culinary Institute
of America

Soufflé

Day 5



Learning Objectives

- Explain the structure and key components of a soufflé.
- Describe the processes that affect rise, texture, and stability in soufflés.
- Analyze factors that contribute to successful soufflé outcomes.
- Make a soufflé flavoring it with any remaining ingredients in the kitchen.
- Create and assemble an original amuse-bouche based on techniques learned in class.

Soufflé: Overview



- A light, baked French egg dish that puffs up dramatically due to whipped egg whites
- Can be savory (with cheese, vegetables) or sweet (with chocolate, fruit)

Origins of the Soufflé

- Originated in France in the early 18th century as a light, egg-based dish
- Name comes from souffler (“to puff” or “to breathe”), describing its rise
- Early forms appeared as **omelette soufflé**, combining eggs and air
- Noted in early 18th century by French chefs like La Chapelle and Massialot



Warning: Side Note...



Antonin Carême: The Man

- Born into poverty in Paris and began kitchen work at a young age in exchange for a bed
- Trained under a leading Parisian pâtissier
- Gained recognition early for precision, creativity, and pastry mastery
- Became known as the “King of Chefs and the Chef of Kings” and the first celebrity chef
- Died on January 12, 1833, at age 48, from chronic lung disease/ carbon monoxide poisoning from toxic fumes from charcoal fires in poorly ventilated, underground kitchens



Antonin Carême: Culinary Contributions

- Helped popularize *Haute Cuisine* in high-end Parisian restaurants around 1783, later publishing his recipes in 1816
- Perfected the soufflé in the early 19th century with better controlled, air draft ovens (consistent rise)
- Perfected puff pastry, invented the croquembouche, popularized the charlotte russe, and created the mille-feuille
- Served elite clients including Napoleon, Talleyrand, and Tsar Alexander I



Evolution & Global Popularity

- 19th century: improved oven control led to more reliable soufflés
- Became a signature dish of French haute cuisine in fine dining
- Spread to Britain during the Victorian era and across Europe
- Reached the U.S. in the late 1800s; later popularized for home cooks
- Championed in the 20th century by chefs like Julia Child and James Beard



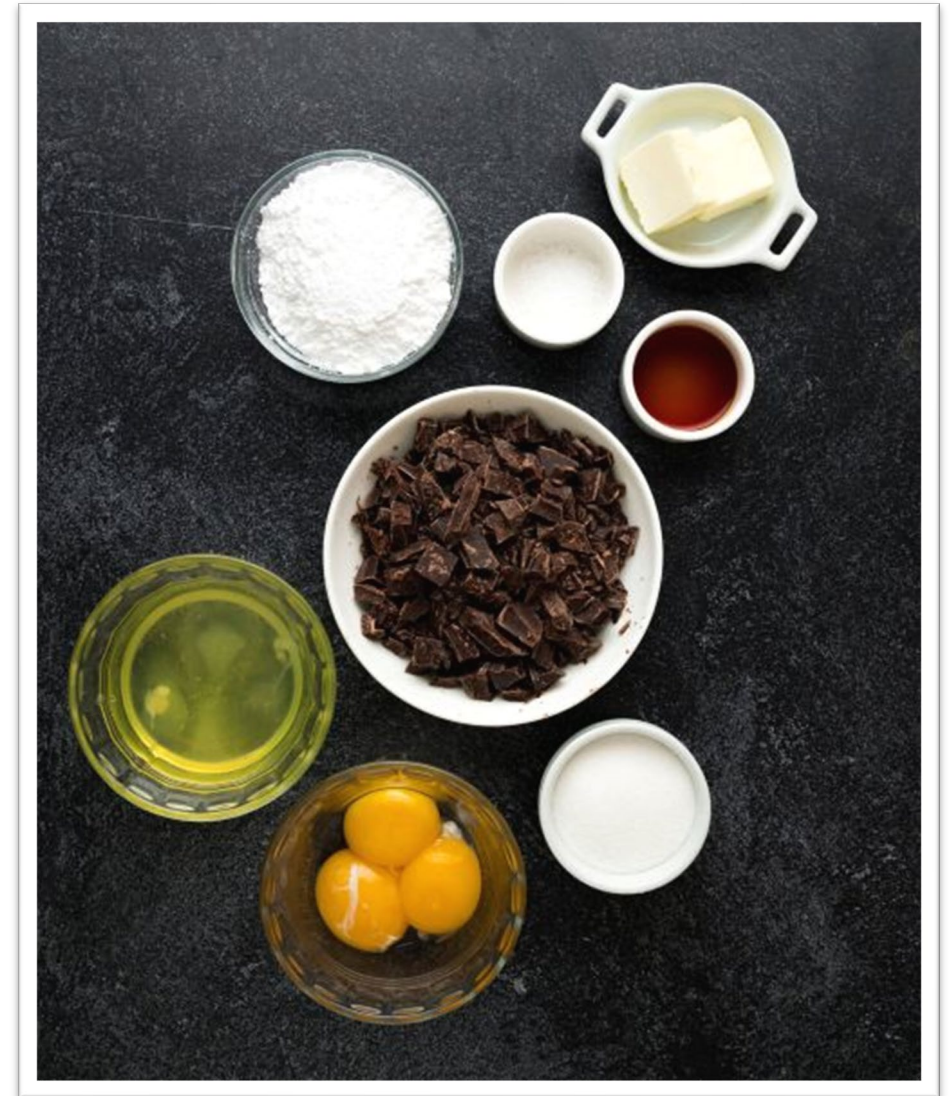
Soufflé

- Made from a flavored base (like a cream sauce or purée) mixed with egg yolks, and folded with stiffly beaten egg whites
- Baked in a ramekin until puffed and golden
- Must be served immediately as they deflate quickly after leaving the oven



Key Components

- **Base:** A thick sauce, like béchamel or pastry cream, or purée that provides flavor
- **Flavoring:** Ingredients like cheese, herbs, or vegetables for savory; chocolate, fruit, or puree for sweet
- **Egg whites:** Whipped to stiff peaks and folded in to create the signature lift
- Serve immediately after baking for the best texture



Keys to Success

1 Ramekin Preparation:

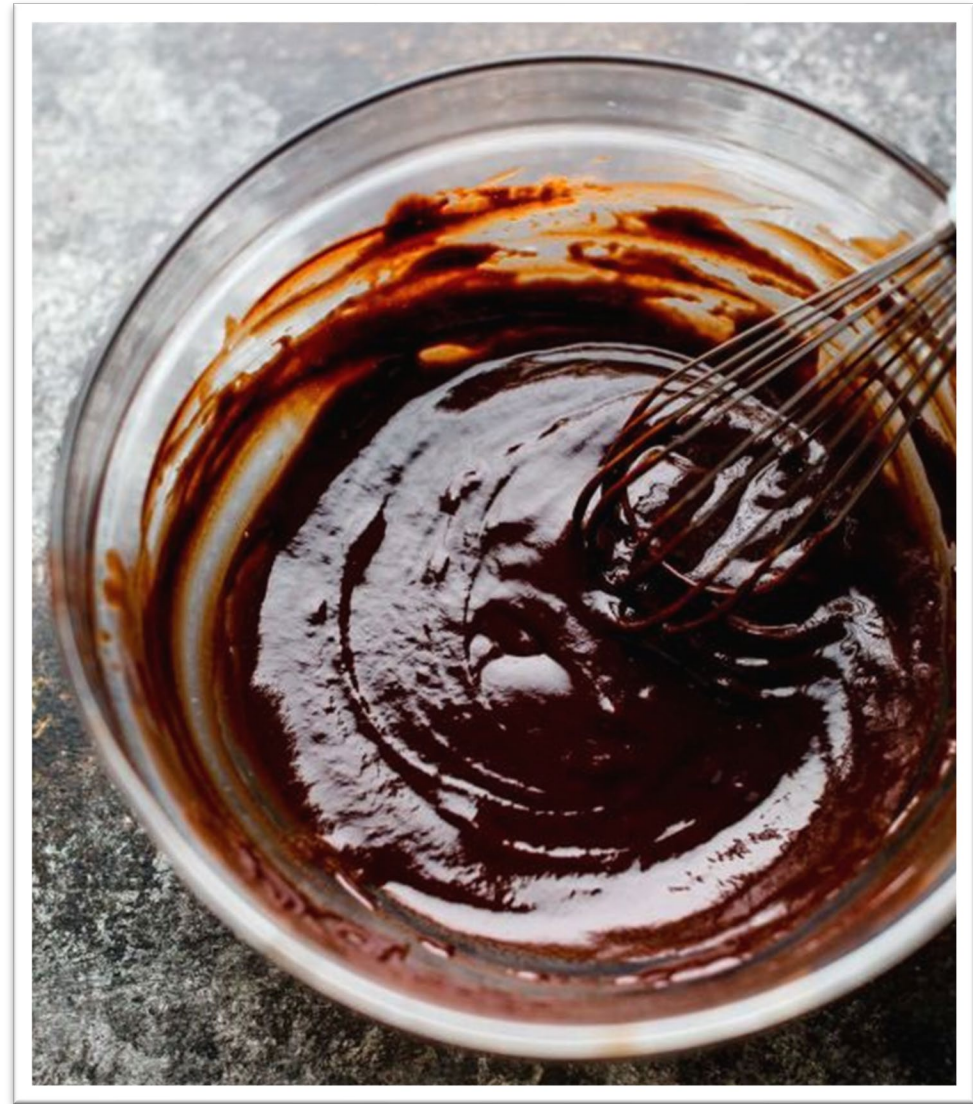
- Thoroughly and evenly brush the inside of the dish with butter and coating with sugar
- Provides a surface that allows the mixture to rise uniformly



Keys to Success

2 Base Consistency:

- The base (usually a béchamel or cream sauce) must be thick enough to support the structure



Keys to Success

3 Egg White Technique:

- Egg whites must be whipped to the proper peak
- Under whipped = poor rise
- Over whipped = dry, clumpy, and prone to collapsing
 - Any fat contamination (egg yolk, fat in the bowl) will inhibit foam stability



Keys to Success

4 Folding and Mixing:

- Gently folding whites into the base is critical
- Over-mixing deflates the trapped air bubbles, resulting in a dense, low-rising soufflé



Keys to Success

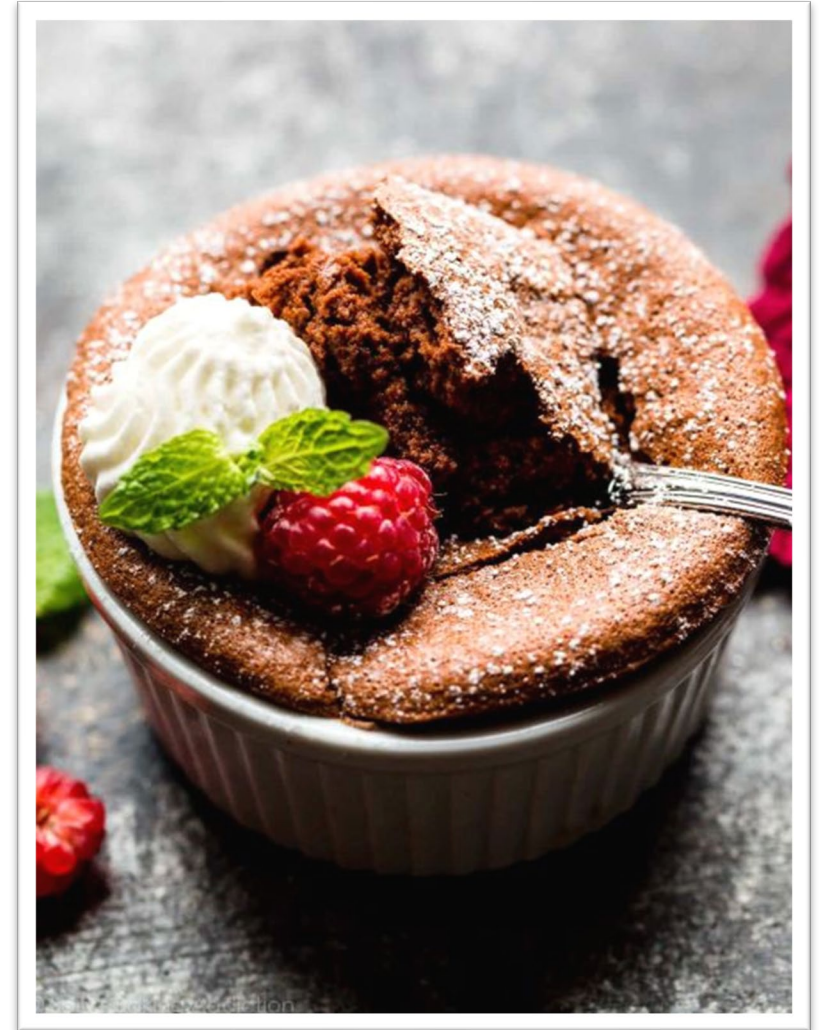
5 Temperature and Heat:

- A hot oven (400°F- 425°F) is essential for oven spring, as water turns to steam and gasses expand
- Frequently opening the oven door causes sudden temperature drops that result in a rapid, flat collapse



What Makes a Great Soufflé?

- It must rise properly and have a beautiful flat crust
- The soufflé should be perfectly cooked, with no runny egg
- Soufflés should have an especially light, puffy texture
- They should double in size as they rise



Making a Comeback?

- Pastry chefs are bringing back the classics - and soufflé is a classic dessert
- Other *classics* comebacks
 - Macarons, Pate a Choux, Pie, American Buttercream Cakes

Soufflé pros:

- Soufflés impress your guests!
- Super yummy!
- Low food cost!



**Soufflés might be
poised for a comeback!**

Chef Demo & Production Assignments

Chef Demo

- Soufflé

Production Assignments

Each Team

- Prepare a soufflé, incorporating available ingredients from the kitchen to develop a cohesive and well-balanced flavor
- Any unfinished petit fours must be completed

Each Student (or Pair)

- Create an amuse-bouche (pre-dessert) using the remaining ingredients and components available in the kitchen



Culinary Institute
of America

Any Questions?