Croissants

1 The butter block: Knead the butter shortly to be able to form a butter block which is square (about 22x16cm/8.5x6.3 inch) and about 1cm (0.4 inch) thick. Books usually give instructions about the exact size of the block, but I found it to be less important, as long as you adapt the size of the dough (see below). I had my working space covered with a sheet of parchment paper, in which I wrapped the prepared block. Place in the fridge and chill it; it should not become rock hard though!

2 Preparing the pre- dough: Dissolve the yeast in milk and combine with sugar, eggs, oil, flour and salt. Knead only very lightly. If too soft, add a bit more flour. Form a rectangle, double in size of the butter block. Place the chilled butter in the center and fold the flaps over the butter without stretching them too much (lock- in). Carefully press together the edges to seal in the butter. The dough package should be folded uniformly to form a nice square.

3 The first three- fold: Roll out with a rolling pin, turn the dough over occasionally to keep the edges even. Don't forget to dust the dough with flour to prevent it from sticking. Continue until the dough is about 1cm (0.4 inch) thick again. Then fold the dough like a business letter into 3rds. Do another three- fold. Cover with foil and chill for about 30 minutes.

4 Do two or three more three- folds, cover and chill for a few hours (or over night) before proceeding and forming the croissants.

5 Cut the dough in half to make handling easier and roll it out until about 3mm (0.1 inch) thick. Cut in pointed triangles, fill with a piece of chocolate or a small teaspoon of Nutella (if desired) and form little crescents by rolling the shortest side tautly up to the tip of the triangle. Place all on a parchment covered tray, paint thinly with egg yolk (more for looks) and let rise for an additional 15 minutes.

Croissants

Recipe source: adapted from Das große Buch der österreichischen Mehlspeisen, Josef Zauner, p.56

Ingredients:

* 350g butter
* 50g icing sugar
* 30g sunflower oil
* 7g salt
* 2 eggs
* 42g fresh yeast (one cube)
* 200ml milk
* 500g flour
* an additional egg yolk to brush the croissants
* if desired: chocolate or Nutella as a filling

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6 Bake in a preheated oven at 180°C (355°F) for 15 to 25 minutes, depending on size, until they are golden brown.

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