Belgian Waffles au Chocolat

Serves 8

2 cups whole milk, warmed to about 90o Fahrenheit
1 envelope dry yeast
3 egg yolks
¾ cup sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
¾ cup melted butter
2 cups flour
1 cup cocoa powder (use good, dark stuff if you can)
1 tsp. salt
3 egg whites
powdered sugar for dusting
sweetened whipped cream and fruit if you like

Dissolve the yeast in about ¼ of the warm milk and let sit about 10 minutes until foamy. In a large mixing bowl, whisk the egg yolks. Add the milk/yeast mixture, the sugar, vanilla, and melted butter. Whisk to combine, then add the rest of the milk.

In a smaller bowl, combine the flour, cocoa powder, and salt. Dump the dry ingredients into the wet ones and mix until you have a smooth batter. Whip the egg whites to stiff peaks and fold into the batter. Cover the bowl and put in a warm place for about an hour, until doubled in bulk. (Or you can put it in the refrigerator overnight and bring it out an hour before you want to use it to warm it up.)

Heat your waffle iron, oil it, and spread just the right amount of batter to make the size of waffle your waffle iron makes. (I'm sorry to be so vague here, but everybody's waffle iron is different - we slogged ours all the way from Bruges and had to put in some 220 power for it!) When your waffle iron tells you your waffle is done, put it lovingly on a plate, dust it with powdered sugar, slather it in whipped cream and add some fruit if you so desire (although just the cream is enough). A little chocolate and/or caramel sauce isn't a bad thing either. Have fun with it.

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