



THE ART OF MAKING MACARONS

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How to make Macarons

No single source can be given as a base for my recipe. I have gathered dozens left and right, tested and tasted and ended with my own proportions. Now I always make them successfully, so this is a good base to start with. I will guide you through the rest.

Macarons: Basic Recipe

These ingredients will make the cookies. This is the base and what's hardest to master. You should try to successfully bake a couple recipes of basic macarons before trying to mix in other flavours.

3 egg whites (from large eggs), separated at least 24 hours in advance and kept in the refrigerator

225 g icing sugar

125 g almond meal

60 g caster sugar

zest of 1 lemon (optional)

Line 2 baking sheets with greaseproof paper. Sift the ground almonds and icing sugar together into a large mixing bowl. You have to sieve the mixture.

In another bowl, whisk the egg whites and sugar to stiff peaks and stir in the lemon zest if using.

Use a large spatula to gently fold the sifted ingredients into the egg whites. Spoon the mixture into a piping bag fitted with a medium-sized nozzle. Pipe neat little mounds on the baking

sheets – about the size of a 10 cent coin (for mini macaroons) or a 50 cent coin (for medium-sized macaroons). Leave to stand for 15-20 minutes, until a skin forms on the surface.

Preheat your oven to 140C. Bake the macarons for 12-15 minutes until they have a firm outer shell. The perfect macaroons is crisp on the outside and slightly chewy in the centre. Leave to cool on the baking tray for a few minutes then carefully transfer them to a wire rack to cool completely. At this stage the macarons can be stored in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

When ready to serve, sandwich pairs of macarons together with crème patissiere, or butter cream or ganache.

BALSAMIC CARAMEL MACARONS

Adding a little bite of red food colouring to the egg whites to achieve a nice pink-red colour.

Filling:

makes 500gr.

280gr white chocolate (grated)

70gr caster sugar

50gr pouring cream

200gr banana

3 tablespoons Balsamic vinegar

40gr soft butter

1 - Heat the sugar in a saucepan, over a medium heat. Without stirring too much, watch over the sugar until it becomes a lovely light-brown caramel colour.

2 – Next add the pouring cream, little by little, gently stirring with a spatula to stop the caramel cooking any further. Watch out for spatters ! The caramel will foam up and can burn.

3 – Once the cream is well incorporated into the caramel, put the banana, vinegar with a spatula and incorporate the butter in small pieces. Beat or whisk until the caramel is smooth and even.

4 – Pour the caramel into the chocolate and stir gently until smooth.

Pour into a suitable container and chill in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours so that the caramel thickens.