



OUR HOMEMADE RASPBERRY MACARON RECIPE

Makes enough for 14 (4cm sized) macarons

INGREDIENTS FOR THE MACARON SHELLS

- 180g icing sugar
- 120g ground almonds
- 3 large egg whites
- 80g caster sugar
- A few drops of pink food colouring

INGREDIENTS FOR THE RASPBERRY FILLING

- 120g salted butter
- 75g icing sugar
- 150g fresh raspberries (to extract 3 tbsp of puree)

METHOD & tips

1. Cut out 2 sheets of parchment paper to fit to your baking trays. Then draw out circles 4cm in diameter onto the paper (using a glass or circular shape of that size). Turn the paper round so that the ink is underneath but you still see the circles.

Top tip: make sure to leave a 3cm gap between each circle to give you the room you need to pipe effectively and not damage the macarons as you go along

2. Put the ground almonds and icing sugar for the shells into a food processor and mix until you have a very fine powder, then sieve the mixture to ensure there are no lumps left.

Top tip: any lumps or slightly larger pieces of icing sugar or ground almonds left in the sieve should not be added as these will create bumps at the top of the shell and stop you from achieving a smooth top to your macaroon

3. Whisk the egg whites to stiff peaks and then add half of the caster sugar and whisk again until glossy. At this point add the remaining caster sugar and a few drops of pink food colouring and whisk again for a few more minutes until you have a thick, shiny meringue mixture.

Top tip: make sure you use egg whites that are at room temperature and that they are a few days old as this allows the whites to give up some of their moisture ensuring you have a crispy shell that doesn't fall apart when the meringue underneath expands in the oven. Also remember that the colour of the macaroon becomes lighter in the cooking process so ensure that they are a slightly darker shade than desired before they go into the oven.

4. Fold in the icing sugar and almond powder a little at a time to make a thick batter.



Top tip: it's important not to over mix or under mix at this stage as the former will lead to flat shells that don't rise or form feet (the desired rough edge on each shell) and the latter will lead to cracks on the top

5. Fit a 1cm piping nozzle to an icing bag and fill with the macaroon mixture. Hold the nozzle over the centre of each circle and pipe the mixture directly down onto the circle, so that it spreads evenly out to the edges. Once a tray has been filled, bang this gently to release all the air bubbles and then leave at room temperature for 20-30 minutes so that a light skin forms on the surface of each shell.

Top tip: by removing the air bubbles and allowing enough time for the skins to dry you are ensuring that the macaroon has every chance of rising well and rising evenly

6. In the meantime, preheat the oven to 150°C/300°F/Gas Mark 2. Then, once the macaroons have rested, place them in the oven for 15-20 minutes. Once ready cool on a wire rack.

Top tip: to check whether the macaroons are ready try peeling one off from the corner. If they come away easily they are done, if they are still quite sticky they need a little longer. The feet should start to rise just before they are ready

7. Make the raspberry filling by whipping up the butter until soft and creamy. Then add in the icing sugar and whisk again for a few minutes and set aside. Take the fresh raspberries and push them through a sieve to get about 3tbsp of juice (use the remainders for another dessert or a snack). Add the juice to the butter and icing sugar mixture and mix once more. Make sure you don't over mix.

8. To assemble your macaroon pair your shells up by selecting similar sizes. Then, place your filling into a piping bag and pipe a small dollop of buttercream into the centre of each shell (remember to only do half the total amount of shells as the other halves will be used as lids). Then add the lids and your macaroons are ready.

Top tip: when piping the filling, make sure you always leave a small rim around the edge of the shell as the filling will spread when you add the shell on top. It is also recommended that you store your macaroon in the fridge for 24 hours so that the filling soaks into the shell and the flavours develop (but ensure that it returns to room temperature before serving).

9. Make sure you take the time to enjoy with a good cup of tea or glass of Champagne!