French Macarons Tips and Techniques

THE COOKERY STUDIO BATH at home

We recommend reading though the tips and techniques below before you get started, as macarons are a technical bake!

1. Smooth the crease in the parchment paper by placing a weight such as a clean baking tray on the parchment paper.

2. Use digital scales to weigh the egg white, water and butter – precision is key in baking!

3. Blitz your almonds and icing sugar in the food processor to make them super fine and give your macarons a super smooth top (optional!)

4. Ideally separate from the egg white from the yolk a few days in advance to help dehydrate the egg white. Store covered in the fridge. Remove egg whites from the fridge a few hours before using.

5. If you get any egg yolk in the white– discard– the fat presence will inhibit a foam forming.

6. Take your chosen colour a good few shades deeper than you would like as the Italian meringue will lighten the coloured almond paste.

7. The yellow undertone of the almonds will affect the end colour result– consider this when colouring your paste.

8. When piping hold bag vertically and close to, but not touching the parchment paper, filling the flower shape on the template to the outer line.

9. Leave the macarons for 15-30 minutes to form a skin before baking and prevent them cracking when baking.

10. Preheat the oven, adjust shelves at the same time. Avoid opening the door during initial cooking time.

11. Bake for 9 minutes initially, they will rise in this time, forming a firm outer shell, and have a foamy base (their feet).

12. Best eaten on the 2nd or 3rd day after making, they will be softer and chewier– see if you can hold out!

13. Storage of the macarons:

- They can be stored at room temperature in an air-tight container for 3 days.
- Store in fridge for up to 5 days in an air tight container, remove from fridge a few hours before eating.
- Freeze in an airtight container for up to one month. Allow to defrost at room temperature for at least two hours before eating.

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Weigh your fresh ingredients:
1. Weigh 2 x 55g eggs white with one portion into a small bowl cleaned with lemon juice
2. Weigh 38ml water in a small saucepan
3. Weigh 80g unsalted butter and 2 tsp milk

Get ready: 1x electric whisk, coarse sieve, medium mixing bowl, wooden spoon, metal serving spoon, spatula, large tumbler (optional), scissors, 2 x clips/ pegs (optional), 2 x large baking tray, lined with parchment paper, one with templates underneath.

For the Bart spices:

Vanilla: Remove the seeds from the 1/2 the pod by slicing lengthways, open out and use a teaspoon to remove the seeds**,** put into a bowl **OR IF SELECTED**

Cardamom: Measure 1/4 tsp into a bowl

Step 1: Sieve the ground almonds into a medium mixing bowl, tipping in any remaining which won't pass through. Sieve in one pack of icing sugar, mix to combine. Tip in 1x 55g egg whites

Step 2: Stir the egg white in to form a paste then add the food colouring, mixing the shades to get your desired tone.

Step 3: Mix through food colouring until it is uniform and even, ensure you scoop the bottom of the bowl where the natural almond paste will congregate. Set aside.

Step 4: To make the sugar syrup, secure to the side of the saucepan. Tip the granulated sugar on top of the water.

Step 5: Turn the hob to a low- medium heat. You want the sugar syrup to eventually reach 118C. Very gently stir the sugar syrup a few times, avoiding splashing up the side of the saucepan.

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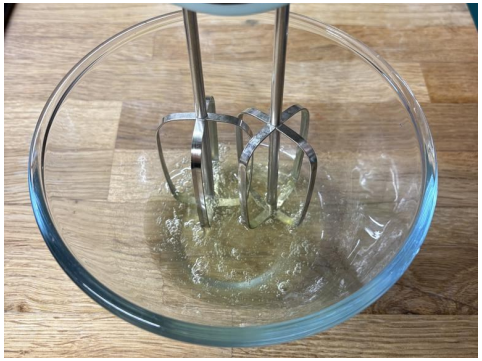

Step 6: When the sugar syrup reaches 90C, whisk the egg whites on a medium speed., until the foam becomes more airy, white and light.

Step 7: Whisk through the soft peak stage until it reaches medium peaks. The foam will be light and airy and will have a curve to it when the beaters are stopped, removed from the bowl and held horizontally.

Step 8: Once at 118C, remove the thermometer, place on a plate. With the beaters a medium speed, slowly and steadily pour all the sugar syrup on the foam, in the centre of the bowl drawing the beaters back and forth to incorporate and cook the egg whites.

Step 9: Scoop the spatula round the bowl, bringing the meringue to the centre. Continue whisking to reduce the temperature until it reaches 50C. This will take a few minutes to achieve. *REMOVE THERMOMETER WHEN WHISKING.*

Step 10: You can also check that the Italian meringue is the correct consistency by scooping up a dollop of the meringue on a spatula and hold vertically. It will be smooth, shiny and glossy, holding onto the spatula.

Step 11: Spoon 1/3 of the Italian meringue into the almond paste. Use a wooden spoon to loosen the paste, ensuring you scoop along the bottom of the bowl.

Step 12: Use a wooden spoon to loosen the paste, ensuring you scoop along the bottom of the bowl. Continue to mix until the mixture is even in colour and consistency. You will knock out most of the volume.

Step 13: Scoop the remaining Italian meringue into the bowl and no w use the serving spoon with a figure of 8 motion to fold through and combine until even in colour and consistency. The mixture will loose some volume.

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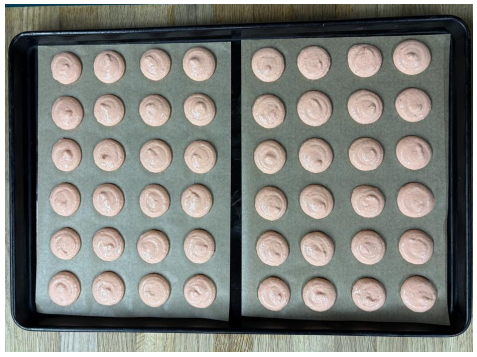
Step 14: To check the consistency is correct, it will move like molten lava when the bowl is tilted. When scooped out of the bowl, it will drop off the spoon in a wide ribbon, leaving a wide 'V' shape. If neither of these happen, fold a few more times.

Step 15: Fold the open end of the piping bag back on it self, ready to put the macaron batter into. You could use a wide brimmed glass to support the bag for the next stage. Spoon the batter into the bag, only half filling.

Step 16: When half full, twist the bag several times and secure with a peg/ clip or a loose knot. Hole the piping bag as above and snip a 1cm hole in the end of the bag. Keep fingers on the end to stop the batter moving out of the bag.

Step 17: Hold the piping bag vertically, with your thumb and index finger at the full end. Aim the bag in the centre of the flower, close to but not touching the paper, remove your finger, apply a little pressure, allowing mixture to flow into a round disc.

Step 18: Avoid peaks by 'tucking' in the mixture, moving the piping bag away from the centre in a swift movement. Avoid piping a 'snail shell' as this results in a large shell. Avoid holding from a height as it is difficult to get precision.



Step 19 Remove the template from underneath the first tray and put under the parchment paper of the second tray, repeat piping on the second tray.

Step 20: Preheat the oven to 175C/ fan 155C, adjusting shelves, one to the highest rack and one on the lowest. Set a time to 9 minutes ready for when the oven is hot. Do not put the macarons in until the oven is at temperature.

Step 21: Bake one tray at a time on the lower shelf for 9 mins. To check they are baked, tap a shell in the middle of the tray, if there's any movement, bake for a further 1-3 minutes. Baking time will depend on the size of the shells

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Step 22: Remove the tray from the oven and put second tray in. Slide the paper off the tray, onto your work top. Once they have cooled remove them by peeling away from the paper. Pair up, base side facing up, matching size and shapes. Repeat with the second tray,

Step 23: Beat the butter with an electric whisk. Sieve in the icing sugar, mix with a wooden spoon. Use the whisk to beat until light, fluffy and a pipable consistency, adding milk if needed. Add the food colouring and the vanilla seeds or cardamom.

Step 24: Fold the opening of the piping bag on itself, spoon the buttercream in. Unfold the piping bag, twist the end and secure with a knot, a peg or clip. Snip a hole around 1/2cm in the end of the bag. Squeeze the knotted end until the buttercream makes its way to the cut hole.

Step 25: Hold the shell and pipe on the fbase, working from the centre, pipe in a continual circle outwards, leaving a couple of mm border.

Step 26: Place the matching shell on top on and give gentle squeeze until the buttercream pushes out and the edge of the shells and buttercream align.

Step 27: Enjoy! Tag us in your creations @thecookerystudiobath