



Macarons are the world's most popular cookie. Macarons are an almond flour based cookie that is filled like a sandwich. The cookie itself is quite sweet, so I prefer to sandwich it with something tart or bitter to offset the sweetness. This basic macaron recipe can be used to make a number of variations. The fillings are as limitless as your imagination.

Macarons with Whipped Filling

Ingredients

1 1/2 cups powdered sugar
1 cup almond flour
1 teaspoon salt
3 egg whites
1/4 cup granulated sugar
1/2 teaspoon extract*

Ingredients - Whipped Filling

1/2 cup 35% cream
2 tablespoons simple syrup
1/2 cup cocoa

Instructions

In a food processor, combine the almond flour and the powdered sugar and pulse until it is an extra fine texture (the almond flour will be the same consistency as the powdered sugar). Sift the mixture through a sieve into a large bowl.

Beat the egg whites and salt in a mixing bowl until frothy. Add the granulated sugar gradually while beating. Continue to beat until stiff peaks form and the mixing handle does not drop the egg when lifted. Add the extract of choice (depending on the flavor of the filling). For this filling, I used almond extract. Beat until combined.

Remove the egg whites from the mixer and using a spatula fold in the almond flour mixture in batches. Continue to fold slowly until the batter falls into ribbons. You should be able to make a figure eight when you hold up the spatula. Transfer the batter into a piping bag.

Line your baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone tray. Pipe the macarons onto the lined baking sheet spacing them at least 1 inch apart. Each macaron should be approximately 1 1/2" in size. Tap or drop the baking sheet onto a flat surface a few times to release any air bubbles. Allow the macarons to rest for 1 hour. When you place your fingers on the top of the macaron, they should feel dry to the touch.

Preheat your oven to 300°F and bake for 17 minutes. The feet at the side of the macaron should rise up during baking. Allow to rest in the baking pan for 5 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to completely cool.

In the meantime, prepare the filling by whipping the cream until it forms stiff peaks. Add the simple syrup. For this recipe, I used a coffee infused simple syrup. Place a few heaping tablespoons of the whipping cream into the cocoa and mix together to form a paste. Transfer the cocoa paste back into the whipping cream and beat until fully incorporated. Transfer the filling to a piping bag fitted with a star tip. Add a dollop of the filling to the macaron shell and top it with a second shell to create a sandwich. Dust the top with cocoa powder. Place in an airtight container in the refrigerator to store. Makes 26 cookies.

Popular Macaron Variations

Pistachio Macarons

Cookie:

Change almond flour to 60/40 almond flour and pistachio flour. You can make pistachio flour by grinding 1/2 cup of pistachios. Add 1/8 teaspoon green food colouring and vanilla extract.

Filling:

1/4 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
1 tbs pistachio paste*
2 egg yolks
2 tablespoons water
1/3 cup granulated sugar

Make a simple syrup by heating the sugar and the water. Beat the egg yolks until pale and slowly pour in the simple syrup. Continue to beat until the eggs become white. Add the butter and pistachio paste (* if you don't have paste, it can be made by pulsing the pistachios in a food processor with water until a paste forms). Add the cream and transfer to a piping bag fitted with a round tip.

Lemon Macarons

Cookie:

Add 1/4 teaspoon of yellow food colouring, the zest of one lemon. Use lemon extract.

Filling:

2 eggs, beaten
1/2 cup superfine sugar
2 1/2 tablespoons butter
Rind and juice of 1 lemon

Put the eggs, sugar and butter into a pot and stir over low heat until all the sugar has dissolved. Add the lemon rind and juice and continue cooking until thickened. Place in a bowl and cover with a plastic wrap directly on the curd. Refrigerate until cool. Add a tablespoon of curd between the cookie shells.

Chocolate Macarons

Cookie:

Add 2 tablespoons of cocoa powder to the almond flour and icing sugar mixture. Use vanilla extract.

Filling:

1/2 cup 35% cream
3 tablespoons hazelnut spread
5 tablespoons chocolate chips, melted

Beat the cream until it forms stiff peaks. Add the hazelnut spread and melted chocolate chips and mix until thoroughly blended. Transfer to a piping bag fitted with a round tip.

Coconut Macarons

Cookie:

Add 1/4 teaspoon of blue food colouring and use coconut extract.

Filling:

1/3 cup 35% cream
1/2 cup white chocolate chips
1/2 cup unsweetened coconut flakes

Heat the cream and pour over the chocolate chips to melt. Add the coconut and spoon into the macaron shells.

Raspberry Macarons

Cookie:

Add 1/4 teaspoon of red food colouring. Use vanilla extract.

Filling:

1/4 cup white chocolate chips
3 tablespoons raspberry jam
1 tablespoon heavy cream
1/4 cup salted butter
Fresh raspberries, cut in half

Heat the cream and pour over the chocolate chips to melt. Whip the butter until doubled in size and add the chocolate mixture along with the jam. Add to a piping bag and pipe a border around the edge of the macaron shell. Place a half fresh raspberry in the center.