

TASTE WITHOUT WASTE

Meringues & A Chocolate Twist

Makes about 35 4cm diameter meringues.

Ingredients

2 egg whites

100g caster sugar

4 tsp cocoa powder (optional)

Method

Preheat your oven to 120C. Line two large baking trays with baking paper.

Place the 2 egg whites (there must be no traces of yolks or shell) in a spotlessly clean bowl. Use a stand or hand-held electric mixer on a high setting to whisk the egg whites into stiff peaks. You should be able to hold the bowl upside down above your head without the mixture falling out or moving. This took about 3 minutes with my old Sunbeam Mixer. Gradually add the caster sugar in a thin stream, still beating on high. Continue to beat until the mixture is glossy and not 'grainy', about another 1-2 minutes.

*If you want chocolate meringues, sift the cocoa powder over the meringue mixture and gently fold in with a plastic spatula using a large scooping action. They won't seem very dark but trust me, they will taste distinctly of chocolate when cooked!

Scoop mixture into a piping bag fitted with a nozzle of your choice and pipe onto the prepared baking sheets, leaving a small gap between each one (they won't grow but it's still wise to leave some room). I used a large star nozzle and piped meringues of a 4cm diameter base. Alternatively, use a teaspoon or spoon (depending on what size you're aiming for) and scoop the mixture onto the trays.

Bake in the oven for 40 minutes for 4cm ones (larger ones may need up to 1.5 hours) or until the bottom and top is well crisped but not browned. Turn the oven off, leave the door open ajar and leave the meringues to cool completely in the oven. This helps them to retain a crisp texture and not turn chewy.

Store in an airtight container in a cool dry place for up to a month.

Source: Adapted from Sam Stern's Get Cooking

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