

Gingerbread Man Macarons with White Chocolate Gingerbread Ganache

Macarons (recipe adapted from 'Secrets of Macarons' by José Maréchal)

Ingredients

200g ground almonds
200g icing sugar
1½ tsp ground ginger
¾ tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp ground all spice
½ tsp freshly grated nutmeg
1 tsp brown food colouring (powder)
200g caster sugar
75g water
2 x 80g egg whites (at room temperature)

This should make about 40 macaron men (so 80 shells).

Method

1. Briefly pulse the ground almonds and icing sugar in a food processor. Sift carefully along with the spices and food colouring.
2. Place the caster sugar and water in a saucepan and bring to boil without stirring. At the same time as this start to gently beat 80g of egg whites to soft peaks using a mixer.
3. When the temperature of the syrup reaches 105°C increase the speed of the mixer. Once the syrup hits 115°C remove the saucepan from the heat and pour in a thin stream into the beaten egg whites. Continue beating the meringue for 10 minutes so that it cools.
4. Combined the dry ingredients you sifted at step 1 with the remaining 80g of egg whites to make a smooth almond paste.
5. Using a flexible spatula, mix about a third of the meringue into the almond paste to loosen it, then combine the remainder of the meringue. Work carefully until you have a gently flowing consistency. Do not go too far as you will get flat macarons without feet if the mix is too runny.
6. Place some baking paper on your baking trays. Fill a piping bag fitted with a narrow plain nozzle (about 3mm) and pipe your gingerbread men shapes, leaving a space between each one.
7. Lightly tap the baking sheet on your work surface and leave the macarons to stand for about half an hour. Pre-heat the oven to 150°C.
8. Bake in the oven for 14 minutes. Allow to cool for 5 minutes before peeling from the baking paper.

White Chocolate and Gingerbread Ganache

Ingredients

125ml whipping cream
25g dark brown muscovado sugar
250g white chocolate (chopped into small pieces)
15g butter (softened)
1½ tsp ground ginger
¾ tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp ground allspice

Method

1. Put cream and sugar in a saucepan and heat until just starting to boil.
2. Pour over the white chocolate. Leave to sit for a minute then mix until well combined.
3. Add the butter and spices and mix until well combined.

Decoration

I used royal icing for the white details and edible writing icing for the other decorations. They would still taste great if you left them plain..

Enjoy!