

TOASTED MARSHMALLOW MACARONS

(from The Bewitching Kitchen)

For the shells:

200g powdered sugar

115 g almond flour

115 g egg whites at room temperature (approx. 4 eggs)

1 / 8 tsp of cream of tartar (optional)

100 g granulated sugar

¼ tsp vanilla paste or extract

drops of yellow gel food color

for the filling:

160g powdered sugar

2 tbsp unsalted butter softened

2 tbsp cream cheese, softened

1 / 4 tsp marshmallow extract

1 / 2 – 1 tbsp room temperature whipping cream as necessary

pinch of salt

3 toasted large marshmallows

Line 3 heavy baking sheets with parchment/baking paper or Silpat mats. Layer the powdered sugar and almond flour in a food processor. Pulse until the mixture looks like fine meal, about 12 pulses. Pass through a sieve and transfer to a small bowl or to a sheet of parchment/baking paper. Set aside.

Place the egg whites and cream of tartar in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. Make sure that the bowl and the whisk are impeccably clean. Starting on medium speed, whip the whites with the cream of tartar until they look like light foam. The whites should not appear liquid. The foam will be light and should not have any structure.

Slowly rain in the granulated sugar in five additions, trying to aim the stream between the whisk and the side of the bowl. Turn the speed up to high. Continue to whip the meringue until it is soft and shiny. It should look like marshmallow creme (marshmallow fluff). Add the vanilla. Whip the egg whites until the mixture begins to dull and the lines of the whisk are visible on the surface of the meringue. Check the peak. It should be firm. Transfer the whites to a medium bowl.

Fold in the almond flour mixture in two increments. Add yellow gel color. Paint the mixture halfway up the side of the bowl, using the flat side of a spatula. Scrape the mixture down to the center of the bowl. Fill a piping bag and pipe shells over Silpat or parchment paper.

Slam each sheet hard four to six times on the counter/worktop. Let the unbaked macarons dry until they look dull but not overly dry. Drying time depends on humidity. In a dry climate, the macarons can dry in 15 to 20 minutes; in a humid climate, it can take 35 to 40 minutes.

While the macarons are drying, heat the oven to 300 F. Bake one sheet at a time on the middle rack. Check in 11 minutes. If the tops slide or move (independently of the 'feet' when you gently twist the top), then bake for 2 to 3 more minutes. Check one or two. If they move when gently touched, put them back in the oven for 1 to 2 more minutes until they don't move when touched. Let the macaroons cool for 10 minutes before removing from the pan. The macarons should release without sticking.

Make the filling: whisk the butter and cream cheese for a couple of minutes, add all other ingredients except the toasted marshmallow and whipping cream. Whisk at low speed first, then increase the speed until smooth. Toast the marshmallows in the air-fryer at 400F for 3 minutes. Let it cool briefly, cut in pieces and add to the buttercream. Whisk well with a hand held blender so that the pieces of marshmallow get incorporated. Adjust consistency with cream if needed.

If you like to decorate the shells, use a stencil and air-brush orange color to make a grid pattern. Assemble the macarons: find two macarons similar in size and add a good amount of filling to the bottom of one of them. Place the other on top and squeeze gently to take the filling all the way to the edge. Store in the fridge for 24 hours for perfect texture.