

The Naked Baker: Macaroons

From Ladurée on Champs-Élysées, to Betty's here in our very own York, these petites pâtisseries pop up everywhere. [Lucie Parker](#) explains the easy steps to Macaroon success

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Credit: Brandon Seager

From Ladurée on Champs-Élysées, to Betty's here in our very own York, these petites pâtisseries pop up everywhere, sticky and clutching tightly with attitude onto their title as the classy crème de la crème of meringues.

They are the perfect summer snack; small, light and bursting with a smorgasbord of attention-seeking colours. They are also notoriously awkward to make, demanding the perfect balance between correct consistency and temperature, reducing those who dare upset this balance to tears with their lumpy end result.

The key? Be swift when adding the sugar syrup to the egg whites and whisk, whisk, whisk. The more you whisk the bigger they become.

The Recipe

125g icing sugar

125g ground almonds

90g egg whites

2 tbsp water

110g caster sugar

Food colouring (optional)

Desiccated coconut (optional)
150ml double cream, whipped

Preheat the oven to 170C and line a large baking tray with baking paper.

Put the icing sugar, ground almonds and 40g egg whites together in a large bowl and mix to a paste.

Put the water and caster sugar in a pan and heat gently to melt the sugar, then turn up the heat and boil until the mixture starts to go syrupy and thickens.

Whisk the remaining egg whites in a small bowl until medium-stiff peaks form, then pour in the sugar syrup, whisking until the mixture becomes stiff and shiny. For coloured macaroons, add a few drops of food colouring. Tip this meringue mixture into the almond paste mixture and stir gently until it becomes stiff and shiny again.

Spoon into the piping bag. Pipe a little mixture under each corner of the baking paper to stop it sliding around.

With the bag held vertically, pipe 4cm flat circles onto the lined tray, about 2cm apart, twisting the bag after each one. The piping will leave a small 'tip' on each circle so, when they're all piped, give the tray 2-3 slams on a flat surface to flatten them. At this stage, sprinkle with coconut if you want.

Leave to stand for 30 minutes to form a skin then bake in the oven for 12-15 minutes with the door slightly ajar until firm. Remove from the oven, lift the paper off the baking tray and leave the macaroons to cool on the paper.

When cool, sandwich the macarons together with whipped cream. They can be kept for a couple of days, if they last that long.



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