

MACARONS WITH GANACHE NOISETTE

(from Bewitching Kitchen, inspired by [this site](#))

for the pâte noisette (it makes more than you'll need):

125 g hazelnuts, peeled
125 g almonds
160 g sugar
5 g water

for the ganache noisette:

100 g milk chocolate
160 g pâte noisette
140 g heavy cream

for the shells:

198 g powdered sugar
113 g almond meal
113 g egg whites at room temperature
a pinch of cream of tartar
100 g granulated sugar
3:1:1 brown, green and yellow food coloring
1/8 teaspoon vanilla paste

Make the pâte noisette. Start by placing water and sugar in a large saucepan. Heat up to 245 F. Then add the hazelnuts and almonds. Gradually, they will be covered with a white film. Cook until the sugar dissolves and caramelizes, stirring constantly. Be patient, it is going to take a little time. Pour the mixture on a sheet of parchment paper and let cool completely. Coarsely chop and add to a blender, the more powerful the better. In a Vitamix blender, in less than 5 minutes you should have a very smooth paste, which is what you want.

Make the ganache. Heat the heavy cream almost to boiling point. Add to the chocolate, cut in pieces. Wait a couple of minutes and stir to completely dissolve the chocolate. Let it cool for half an hour, add the pâte praline made as described. Keep in the fridge for at least a couple of hours to get into spreadable consistency. Reserve to fill macarons.

Make the shells. Place the egg whites and pinch of 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, trying to aim the stream between the whisk and the side of the bowl. Turn the speed up to medium-high. Continue to whip the meringue until it is soft and shiny. It should look like marshmallow creme. Add the gel color and the vanilla. Staying at medium-high speed, 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 meal mixture in three increments. 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. Repeat two or three times, then check to see if the mixture slides slowly down the side of the bowl. Put the mixture in a piping bag fitted with one of the tips listed above. Pipe on the prepared baking sheets.

Slam each sheet hard four to six times on the counter. Then fist bump each end of the sheet's underside twice. 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 12 minutes. If the tops slide, then bake for 2 to 3 more minutes. The macarons should release without sticking. Check one or two. If they stick, put them back in the oven for 1 to 2 more minutes. Let the macaroons cool for 10 minutes before removing from the pan.

Use the air-brush and a stencil to decorate each shell. Pair them according to size and fill.

Filled macarons should stay overnight in the fridge before consumed.
The texture is much better on the following day.