

## *HAPPY SWIRLS TONKA MACARONS*

*(from the Bewitching Kitchen)*

*For the shells:*

200g Icing/powdered sugar (1  $\frac{2}{3}$  cups)  
115 g Ground Almonds/Almond Meal (1 + scant  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup)  
115 g egg whites at room temperature (approx. 4 eggs)  
1/8 tsp of cream of tartar (optional)  
100 g granulated sugar ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup)  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp vanilla paste or extract  
pink, blue, and yellow gel food color

Line 3 heavy baking sheets with parchment/baking paper or Silpat mats. Layer the powdered/icing sugar and ground almonds/almond meal 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 ground almond/almond meal mixture in two increments. Paint the mixture halfway up the side of the bowl, using the flat side of a spatula. When the mixture is starting to get incorporated but still looks a bit rough, divide in three equal amounts in small bowls (eyeballing is fine). Add color to each bowl and proceed to finalize the macaronage with the color mixed in. With such a small portion, they get to the smooth stage quickly, so be careful, the moment you can do a figure 8 as you pour the batter from the spatula, stop folding it.

Put the mixtures in three different small piping bags. Prepare a large piping bag with a larger ground piping tip (WILTON 1A) and place the three smaller bags inside after cutting them open. Pipe shells, I like to count numbers in my head and use the same count for each shell so they end up similar in size.

I pipe inside the circles to about 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches/4.5cm but you can go to 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches (3.8cm) & the macarons will spread & fill the circle while drying.

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 (150 C/130C Fan oven/Gas Mark 2). 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 macarons cool for 10 minutes before removing from the pan. The macarons should release without sticking.

*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.

for the filling: use the tonka bean whipped ganache as described in [this post](#).