



The Scran Line

Basic Baking Recipe Collection

A collection of Nicks basic recipes so that you can make the best cupcakes, cakes, frosting, sauces and more!

A Note from Nick

Welcome! This is where you'll find all of my basic recipes! After having developed recipes for 6 years a lot of my recipes have evolved and most of my basic recipe videos have aged horribly, so here is every basic recipe from me, updated and all in one spot!

I take you through how to make amazing frostings, sauces, cupcakes, cakes, macarons and loads more. This is a collection of all of those recipes for your reference. Once my brand-new website launches in the second half of 2020 all of these recipes will be available there and are subject to change or updates.

Nick M
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Please note: Any and all of my recipes are not available to be used for commercial use by restaurants, bakeries or home baking businesses. They are designed for and to be used by bakers. You're welcome to use them for bake sales and fundraisers. N x

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American Buttercream Frosting

Servings: Makes 1 batch frosting / Enough for 20 cupcakes or 1 batch cake

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: Butter and sugar. Two magic ingredients in the baking world, which, when combined, form a perfectly smooth and pipeable magic substance called frosting that you can pile on top of your cupcakes and cakes, or pipe into your macarons. Don't skimp on the vanilla guys – the more the better!

Prep Time: 35 min

Cook Time: 0 min

Total Time: 35 min

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Ingredients:

Frosting

500g - 2 cups unsalted butter, softened

500g - 4 cups icing (confectioners') sugar

2–4 tsp vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste

2 tbsp full-cream (whole) milk (at room temperature) (optional, but recommended)

Instructions:

Frosting

Before you begin, it's really important to make sure the butter is soft enough. Some people keep their butter out of the fridge, others chill it. Even if you keep it out, it may not be soft enough. You want your butter to be soft enough so that when you stick your finger in it, it glides in, but not without a little bit of resistance. The best way to get it too that softness is to place your butter on a microwave safe plate, microwave for 10 seconds at a time, testing the softness each time. If it needs longer than 10 seconds, turn the butter over and repeat until it's ready.

Add the softened butter to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. You can also use an electric hand mixer for this recipe, but if you do use a hand mixer, just make sure your bowl is large. Mix the butter on low speed to begin with, then switch to the highest speed and mix for 5 minutes until the butter is fluffy and turns pale in colour.

Stop your mixer and scrape down the side of the bowl using a spatula. Add the icing sugar and vanilla extract and mix again on low speed. **LOW SPEED PEOPLE!** The last thing you need is to end up in a sugar dust storm! (I'm speaking from experience...)

Once all the sugar has been incorporated, it's safe to turn your mixer up to high speed. Continue beating on high speed for about 5–6 minutes, or until the butter turns pale in colour and becomes fluffy again. If you want to soften your buttercream and make it a little smoother, add the milk and continue mixing for another couple of minutes on medium speed. At this stage, you can also add any food flavourings or food-gel colourings.

Notes

For chocolate-flavoured buttercream, just add 80 g ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup) sifted unsweetened cocoa powder with the icing sugar.

My cake recipes sometimes call for more than one batch of frosting. Depending on the size of your mixing bowl, you may need to split the frosting into two batches when flavouring and colouring it.

Frosting can be stored in an airtight container for up to two weeks.

To freshen up this frosting simply thaw at room temperature for 1 hour and re-whip using a stand mixer and paddle attachment.

Swiss Meringue Buttercream Frosting

Servings: Makes 1 batch frosting / Enough for 20 cupcakes or 1 batch cake

Difficulty Level: Medium

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: OK, this frosting is in direct response to all the people who message me asking for frosting that isn't too sweet or grainy. If that's what you're after, then this frosting is for you! This frosting looks silky, which makes it perfect for frosting smooth cakes. Just be careful though, because it can be a little softer than American buttercream frosting which is firmer. So, if it's a warm day, I'd use American buttercream frosting instead.

Prep Time: 40 min

Cook Time: 15 min

Total Time: 55 min

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Ingredients:

Frosting

350g - 6 large fresh egg whites

200g - 1 cup granulated sugar

500g - 2 cups unsalted butter, softened

1 tsp vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste

Instructions:

Frosting

Before you begin, it's really important to make sure the butter is soft enough. Some people keep their butter out of the fridge, others chill it. Even if you keep it out, it may not be soft enough. You want your butter to be soft enough so that when you stick your finger in it, it glides in, but not without a little bit of resistance. The best way to get it to that softness is to place your butter on a microwave safe plate, microwave for 10 seconds at a time, testing the softness each time. If it needs longer than 10 seconds, turn the butter over and repeat until it's ready.

Fill a large saucepan one-quarter of the way with water. Let it come to a gentle boil over a medium-high heat.

Separate your egg whites from your yolks in a large, very clean, glass or metal mixing bowl. We only need the egg whites for this recipe, so you can store the yolks in an airtight container in the fridge to use for something else. If you need ideas, there are loads on the internet, but my go-to recipe for using up egg yolks is French pastry cream. Yum!

Add your sugar to the egg whites and use a hand whisk to mix them together.

Place your bowl on top of the pan of boiling water, making sure the bottom of the bowl doesn't touch the water. This is called the double-boiler method and is a very gentle way of cooking something or melting something.

Gently whisk your egg white and sugar mixture for about 3–4 minutes, or until the sugar is completely dissolved and you reach 160C. The best way to check that it's dissolved is by running it through two fingers. If you can't feel the sugar granules, then it's time to take it off the heat. If you can feel the granules, continue whisking for another 2–3 minutes and keep testing until you can no longer any granules.

Transfer the mixture to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment and whisk on high speed for about 4–5 minutes. The mixture will become thick and glossy and will begin to cool.

Gradually add the softened butter, 1 tablespoon at a time, while the mixer is on high speed. At first, your egg whites will deflate and look like the butter is causing them to split, but don't panic! It will come back together. It takes a couple of minutes for the butter and meringue to become best friends.

Once you have added all the butter, add the vanilla extract and mix first on low speed to combine, then on high speed for 5 minutes. You'll know it's done when the frosting has come together, has turned pale in colour (if you're making vanilla) and is nice and fluffy.

If you find your frosting is too aerated, then mix at the lowest speed for about 10 minutes and it will become perfectly smooth again. Alternatively, you can microwave it for 5-10 seconds and use a spatula to gently mix together.

Notes

To make chocolate-flavoured buttercream, add 100g (1 cup) melted and cooled dark chocolate when you add the vanilla extract.

My cake recipes sometimes call for more than one batch of frosting. Depending on the size of your mixing bowl, you may need to split the frosting into two batches when flavouring and colouring it.

Frosting can be stored in an airtight container for up to two weeks.

To freshen up this frosting simply thaw at room temperature for 1 hour and re-whip using a stand mixer and paddle attachment

Vegan Buttercream Frosting

Servings: Makes 1 batch frosting / Enough for 20 cupcakes or 1 batch cake

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: This frosting is for my lovely, very vocal vegan followers! I hear you. Here's my vegan vanilla buttercream frosting, which can be flavoured with chocolate too. It's smooth, delicious and can be used for cakes or cupcakes.

Prep Time: 45 min

Cook Time: 0 min

Total Time: 45 min

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Ingredients:

Frosting

125g – 1/2 cup shortening, at room temperature

300g - 1 1/2 cups dairy-free/vegan margarine, chilled

500g - 3 1/4 cups icing (confectioners') sugar

3 tsp vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste

2 tbsp plant-based milk (I use almond milk) (optional, but recommended)

Instructions:

Frosting

Add your shortening and margarine to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. You can also use a hand mixer for this recipe, but if you do use a hand mixer, just make sure your bowl is large. Mix on low speed to begin with, to allow everything to combine, then increase the speed to high. Mix on high speed for 5 minutes, or until the mixture is fluffy and turns pale in colour.

Stop your mixer and scrape down the side of the bowl using a spatula. Add the icing sugar and vanilla, and mix on low speed.

Once all the dry ingredients are incorporated, it's safe to turn your mixer up to high speed. Beat for about 5–6 minutes, or until the mixture turns pale in colour and becomes fluffy again. If you want to soften your buttercream and make it a little smoother, add the milk and continue mixing for another couple of minutes on medium speed. It's also at this stage that you can add any food flavourings or food-gel colourings.

Notes

For chocolate-flavoured vegan buttercream, simply add 170g (1 ½ cups) melted and cooled vegan chocolate.

My cake recipes often call for more than one batch of frosting. Depending on the size of your mixing bowl, you may need to split the frosting into two batches when flavouring and colouring it.

Frosting can be stored in an airtight container for up to two weeks.

To freshen up this frosting simply thaw at room temperature for 1 hour and re-whip using a stand mixer and paddle attachment

Cream Cheese Frosting

Servings: Makes 1 batch frosting / Enough for 20 cupcakes or 1 batch cake

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: Guys this is, hands down my favorite frosting. The best thing about it is that it's not as sweet as you'd think, because the slight tanginess from the cream cheese helps to break the sweetness. It just tastes amazing, and the addition of powdered milk makes it extra creamy!

Prep Time: 30 min

Cook Time: 0 min

Total Time: 30 min

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Ingredients:

Frosting

250g (1 cup) full-fat cream cheese block (not spreadable), chilled

250g (1 cup) unsalted butter, softened

300g (2 cups) icing (confectioners') sugar

150g (1 ½ cups) powdered milk (skim or full-fat)

2 tsp vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste

Instructions:

Frosting

Place the cream cheese and butter in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Alternatively, you can use a hand mixer. Mix on low speed to begin with, to help break up the cream cheese a little, then increase the speed to high for a couple of minutes to help combine the cream cheese and butter.

After a couple of minutes, stop your mixer and scrape down the side of the bowl with a spatula. Add the icing sugar, powdered milk and vanilla. Mix on low speed until the dry ingredients are fully incorporated, then bring the speed back up to high. Continue beating on high speed until your frosting is fluffy and turns pale in color.

Notes

It's important to always mix this frosting on high speed. The only time you mix it on low speed is after you've added the dry ingredients. Mixing on high speed helps to aerate the frosting, giving it volume and making it easier to pipe.

For chocolate-flavoured frosting, add 40g (4 tbsp) sifted unsweetened cocoa powder with the icing sugar.

Notes

Frosting can be stored in an airtight container for up to two weeks.

To freshen up this frosting simply thaw at room temperature for 1 hour and re-whip using a stand mixer and paddle attachment

Chocolate Ganache Frosting

Servings: Makes 1 batch frosting / Enough for 20 cupcakes or 1 batch cake

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: The thing about chocolate ganache frosting is that if you have no self-control then it becomes very dangerous. Because, even in it's warm, melted state, you'll want to drink it. You can use my chocolate ganache frosting in two ways: un-whipped, or whipped. Whipped is almost like eating a very rich, fluffy mousse, and un-whipped is nice and dense – perfect for filling cakes.

Prep Time: 30 min

Cook Time: 10 min

Total Time: 40 min

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Ingredients:

Frosting

700g - 4 cups good quality dark or milk chocolate chips

100g – 3/4 cup unsalted butter

250 ml - 1 cup thick (double/heavy) cream

Instructions:

Frosting

Combine the chocolate, butter and cream in a large, microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on high, for 30 seconds at a time, mixing between each interval until smooth. Once fully melted, cover with plastic wrap and leave to set at room temperature.

Alternatively, you can use the double-boiler method. Fill a large saucepan one-third of the way with water and bring to the boil. Place the chocolate, butter and cream in a large glass or metal mixing bowl and set it over the pan, making sure the bottom of the bowl doesn't touch the water. Gently stir the mixture until it is completely melted and smooth. Remove from the heat and leave to set at room temperature.

To soften the ganache to spreading or piping consistency, microwave on high for 10 seconds at a time, mixing well between each interval, until it becomes soft enough to spread easily but firm enough to hold its shape. If you soften it too much, don't panic, just let it sit at room temperature again until it firms up enough to use.

To use it as whipped ganache, soften it to the piping consistency using the above method. Add it to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment and start by whipping

on medium speed. Once it has softened a little and looks slightly paler, turn the mixer up to high and whip for 5–6 minutes until it becomes light, fluffy and pale in colour.

Notes

My cake recipes sometimes call for more than one batch of frosting. Depending on the size of your mixing bowl, you may need to split the frosting into two batches when flavouring it.

Frosting can be stored in an airtight container for up to two weeks.

To freshen up this frosting simply thaw at room temperature for 1 hour and re-whip using a stand mixer and paddle attachment

White Chocolate Ganache Frosting

Servings: Makes 1 batch frosting / Enough for 20 cupcakes or 1 batch cake

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: The thing about chocolate ganache frosting is that if you have no self-control then it becomes very dangerous. Because, even in it's warm, melted state, you'll want to drink it. You can use my chocolate ganache frosting in two ways: un-whipped, or whipped. Whipped is almost like eating a very rich, fluffy mousse, and un-whipped is nice and dense – perfect for filling cakes.

Prep Time: 30 min

Cook Time: 10 min

Total Time: 40 min

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Ingredients:

Frosting

800g - 4 1/2 cups good quality chocolate chips

200 ml – 3/4 cup thick (double/heavy) cream

Instructions:

Frosting

Combine the chocolate and cream in a large, microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on high, for 30 seconds at a time, mixing between each interval until smooth. Once fully melted, cover with plastic wrap and leave to set.

Alternatively, you can use the double-boiler method. Fill a large saucepan one-third of the way with water and bring to the boil. Place the chocolate and cream in a large glass or metal mixing bowl and set it over the pan, making sure the bottom of the bowl doesn't touch the water. Gently stir the mixture until it is completely melted and smooth. Remove from the heat and leave to set at room temperature.

To soften the ganache to spreading or piping consistency, microwave on high for 10 seconds at a time, mixing well between each interval, until it becomes soft enough to spread easily but firm enough to hold its shape. If you soften it too much, don't panic, just let it sit at room temperature again until it firms up enough to use.

To use it as whipped ganache, soften it to the piping consistency using the above method. Add it to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment and start by whipping

on medium speed. Once it has softened a little and looks slightly paler, turn the mixer up to high and whip for 5–6 minutes until it becomes light, fluffy and pale in colour.

Notes

My cake recipes sometimes call for more than one batch of frosting. Depending on the size of your mixing bowl, you may need to split the frosting into two batches when flavouring it.

Frosting can be stored in an airtight container for up to two weeks.

To freshen up this frosting simply thaw at room temperature for 1 hour and re-whip using a stand mixer and paddle attachment

Red Velvet Cupcakes

Servings: Makes 20

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: When I was working in a bakery, we would treat red velvet cupcakes like the queens of the kitchen. And there's a reason why. Because these are hands down, the best cupcakes ever. When people ask me my favourite flavoured cupcake, without any doubt, it's these!

Prep Time: 30 min

Cook Time: 45 min

Total Time: 75 min

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Ingredients:

Cupcakes

400g - 2 1/3 cups plain (all-purpose) flour

320g - 1 1/2 cups caster (superfine) sugar

2 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder

2 tsp baking powder

1 tsp bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)

1/2 tsp fine salt

3 eggs

190 ml - 3/4 cup vegetable oil

300 ml - 1 1/4 cups buttermilk

2 tsp vanilla extract

2 tbsp red liquid food dye

Frosting

2 batches Cream cheese frosting

Instructions:

Cupcakes

Preheat a fan-forced oven to 140°C (275°F) or a conventional oven to 160°C (320°F). Line two cupcake tins with white cupcake liners.

Add the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt to a large mixing bowl. Mix on low speed with an electric hand mixer until well combined.

Next, add the eggs, oil, buttermilk, vanilla and red food dye and continue mixing on low

speed until everything is well combined. Scrape down the bowl and mix for a final 20 seconds on low speed.

Scoop the batter into your cupcake liners, filling them halfway. Using an ice-cream scoop to transfer the batter to the cupcake liners makes this a quick and easy process, and ensures each liner contains exactly the same amount of batter and that the cupcakes will bake evenly. Bake for 40 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in a cupcake comes out clean. The cupcakes will look shiny and moist on top when they're ready. If they bounce and don't sink when you touch them, they're done. Take care not to overbake these cupcakes because they can dry out quickly, and red velvet cupcakes should be moist and delicate. Once baked, set them aside on a wire rack to cool completely before frosting.

These cupcakes are perfectly paired with my cream cheese frosting. Fit the end of a piping bag with whichever piping tip you like and frost a swirl on top.

Notes

Cupcakes can be stored in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Vanilla Cupcakes

Servings: Makes 20

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: 'Hey Nick, why don't you cream the butter and sugar together?'

I'm glad you asked! This is literally the most common question I get about this recipe, so let me answer it now... But not before I tell you that these vanilla cupcakes are super moist, slightly denser than regular cupcakes, and they taste amazing. And! The recipe is super versatile; you can pretty much flavour it with any flavour and colour it with any colour that you want (as you're about to discover in this book...).

Now, down to business. Most vanilla cupcake recipes have you cream the butter and sugar together, which is called the 'creaming method'. Instead, I use the reverse-creaming method, which is when the butter goes in with the dry ingredients and is mixed until it resembles fine crumbs. There are a couple of reasons for this: firstly, I used to work in a bakery and, in a bakery, you'll find any way you can to save time. The reverse-creaming method is much quicker than the creaming method. Secondly, I use this method because it yields a much moister cake. The creaming method, although the batter comes out a little fluffier, usually makes a drier mixture. Lastly, I use this method because there is less chance of overmixing the batter than with the creaming method.

Prep Time: 20 min

Cook Time: 45 min

Total Time: 65 min

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Ingredients:

Cupcakes

430g - 3 1/2 cups plain (all-purpose) flour

265g - 1 1/4 cups caster (superfine) sugar

3 tsp baking powder

1/2 tsp fine salt

125g – 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened

2 large eggs

375ml - 1 1/2 cups full-cream (whole) milk

125ml – 1/2 cup vegetable oil

2 tbsp Greek yoghurt (or sour cream)

1 tsp vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste

Frosting

2 batches vanilla flavoured American buttercream frosting or Swiss meringue buttercream frosting.

Instructions:

Cupcakes

Preheat a fan-forced oven to 140°C (275°F) or a conventional oven to 160°C (320°F). Line two cupcake tins with white cupcake liners.

Add the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt to a large mixing bowl and mix with a hand mixer until well combined.

Next, add the softened butter and mix on low speed until the mixture reaches a crumbly, sand-like texture.

Add the eggs, milk, oil, yoghurt and vanilla, and mix on low speed until all the dry ingredients are incorporated. Scrape down the side of the bowl and mix for a final 20 seconds. It's at this point that you can add any flavourings or food-gel colourings to the batter.

Fill each liner three-quarters of the way. Using an ice-cream scoop to transfer the batter to the cupcake liners makes this a quick and easy process, and ensures each liner contains exactly the same amount of batter and that the cupcakes will bake evenly. Bake for 40–50 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the middle of a cupcake comes out clean. Allow the cupcakes to cool completely on a wire rack before frosting.

These cupcakes are perfectly paired with my vanilla or chocolate flavoured buttercream frosting. Fit the end of a piping bag with whichever piping tip you like and frost a swirl on top. Sprinkle with sprinkles!

Notes

Cupcakes can be stored in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Chocolate Cupcakes

Servings: Makes 10

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: no link yet

Post Summary: Looking for an easy chocolate cupcake recipe? Well, I've got one for you! My chocolate cupcakes are perfect for those chocolate lovers who need to satisfy their chocolate cravings, they're easy to make and they taste amazing!

Prep Time: 30 min

Cook Time: 45 min

Total Time: 75 min

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Ingredients:

Cupcakes

175g (1 ¼ cups) plain (all-purpose) flour
225g (1 ¼ cups) caster (superfine) sugar
50g (¼ cup) cocoa powder
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)
½ tsp fine salt
175g (¾ cups) unsalted butter, softened
2 large eggs, at room temperature
175 ml (¾ cups) full-cream (whole) milk

Frosting

1 batch chocolate-flavoured American buttercream frosting or Swiss meringue buttercream frosting.

Instructions:

Cupcakes

Preheat a fan-forced oven to 140°C (275°F) or a conventional oven to 160°C (320°F). Line a cupcake tin with brown cupcake liners.

Add the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt to a large mixing bowl. Mix on low speed with a hand mixer until combined.

Next, add the softened butter and continue mixing on low speed until the mixture reaches a crumbly, sand-like texture.

Add the eggs and milk and mix again on low speed until all the dry ingredients are

incorporated. Scrape down the side of the bowl and mix for a final 20 seconds.

Fill each liner just below three-quarters of the way. Using an ice-cream scoop to transfer the batter to the cupcake liners makes this a quick and easy process, and ensures each liner contains exactly the same amount of batter and that the cupcakes will bake evenly. Bake for 40–50 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the centre of a cupcake comes out clean. Allow the cupcakes to cool completely on a wire rack before frosting.

These cupcakes are perfectly paired with my vanilla or chocolate flavoured buttercream frosting. Fit the end of a piping bag with whichever piping tip you like and frost a swirl on top. Sprinkle with sprinkles!

Notes

Cupcakes can be stored in an airtight container for up to three days.

Vegan Chocolate Cupcakes

Servings: Makes 12

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: I'm not even ashamed to say it, but these chocolate cupcakes are better than my regular chocolate cupcakes. They're so moist and decadent. My mouth is watering thinking about them!

Recipe Summary (simplified description): Very easy to make, vegan (plant based) chocolate cupcakes which are very moist and decadent with vegan buttercream frosting.

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Category: nicks favourite recipes, kids' recipes, easy recipes, basic recipes, chocolate recipes, cupcakes, birthday recipes, vegan recipes

Courses: American, Dessert

Cuisines: American

Keywords: nick makrides, the scran line, baking, home-made, sweet, pastry, dessert, home baking, cupcakes, chocolate cupcakes, chocolate recipes, vegan, plant based, egg free, vegan cupcakes

Prep Time: 30 min

Cook Time: 45 min

Total Time: 75 min

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Ingredients:

Cupcakes

320g - 1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour

360g - 1 1/2 cups) caster sugar

80g - 1/2 cup cocoa powder

1 1/2 tsp bicarb soda

1/2 tsp baking powder

1 1/4 tsp salt

500ml canned coconut milk

350ml canola oil

1 tbsp apple cider vinegar

Frosting

1 batch chocolate-flavoured vegan buttercream frosting

Instructions:

Cupcakes

Preheat a fan-forced oven to 140C (280F) or 160C (320F) for a conventional oven. Line a cupcake tin with brown cupcake liners. Set aside.

Add the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, bicarb soda, baking powder and salt to a large mixing bowl and mix on low speed using an electric hand mixer to combine.

Next, add coconut milk, canola oil and apple cider vinegar to the dry ingredients. Mix on low speed until no dry ingredients are showing. Scrape down the bowl and mix for a final 20 seconds.

Fill each liner $3\frac{1}{4}$ of the way. Using an ice cream scoop to transfer the batter into the cupcake liners makes this a quick and easy process and ensures everything is filled the same amount and bakes at the same. Bake for 40-50 min or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. I bake my cupcakes on a slow, low temperature. This ensures they don't colour and crack on top. Allow the cupcakes to cool completely on a wire cooling rack before frosting.

These cupcakes are perfectly paired with my vanilla or chocolate flavoured vegan buttercream frosting. Fit the end of a piping bag with whichever piping tip you like and frost a swirl on top. Sprinkle with vegan chocolate sprinkles!

Notes

Cupcakes can be stored in an airtight container for up to three days.

Vegan Vanilla Cupcakes

Servings: Makes 20

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: It's really hard to find an easy to make but really really good vegan vanilla cupcake recipe. Lucky for you, I've got it! These vegan vanilla cupcakes are moist, fluffy and really tasty!

Recipe Summary (simplified description): moist and easy to make vegan (plant based/egg free) vanilla cupcakes with vegan buttercream.

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Category: kids' recipes, easy recipes, basic recipes, vanilla recipes, cupcakes, vegan recipes, birthday recipes

Courses: American, Dessert

Cuisines: American

Keywords: nick makrides, the scran line, baking, home-made, sweet, pastry, dessert, home baking, cupcakes, vanilla cupcakes, vanilla recipes, vegan, plant based, egg free, vegan cupcakes, vanilla bean paste

Prep Time: 30 min

Cook Time: 45 min

Total Time: 75 min

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Ingredients:

Cupcakes

250ml - 1 cup non-dairy milk
1 tsp apple cider vinegar
425g - 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
210g - 1 cup granulated sugar
1 1/2 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp bicarb soda
1/4 tsp salt
175ml - 1/2 cup vegetable oil
1 tsp vanilla extract

1/2 cup rainbow sprinkles

Frosting

1 batch chocolate-flavoured vegan buttercream frosting

Instructions:

Cupcakes

Preheat a fan-forced oven to 140C (280F) or 160C (320F) for a conventional oven. Line a cupcake tin with white cupcake liners.

Add the milk and vinegar into a mixing bowl and whisk to combine. Allow to sit for 5 minutes. The milk will curdle. That's completely normal. It will make the cupcakes moist and no you won't taste the vinegar at all!

Add the flour, sugar, baking powder and bicarb soda into a large mixing bowl. Use an electric hand mixer to mix on low speed until well combined.

Next, add the milk mixture, oil and vanilla extract to the dry ingredients. Mix on low speed until well combined. Scrape down the bowl and mix for a final 20 seconds.

Add the sprinkles to the batter and gently fold through using a spatula. Depending on the brand of sprinkles you used, the colours may bleed. You'll need to work quickly to stop the batter from turning grey.

Fill each liner ½ way. Using an ice cream scoop to transfer the batter into the cupcake liners makes this a quick and easy process and ensures everything is filled the same amount and bakes at the same. Bake for 40-50 min or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. I bake my cupcakes on a slow, low temperature. This ensures they don't colour and crack on top. Allow the cupcakes to cool completely on a wire cooling rack before frosting.

These cupcakes are perfectly paired with my vanilla or chocolate flavoured vegan buttercream frosting. Fit the end of a piping bag with whichever piping tip you like and frost a swirl on top. Sprinkle with sprinkles!

Notes

Cupcakes can be stored in an airtight container for up three days.

Red Velvet Cake

Servings: Makes 1 batch cake batter / Serves 20

Difficulty Level: Medium

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: This gorgeous Red Velvet Cake is just so moist, and it's perfectly paired with my cream cheese frosting. I get asked all the time what my favourite cupcake or cake flavour is. This is it!

Prep Time: 75 min

Cook Time: 60 min

Total Time: 135 min

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Ingredients:

Cake

400g - 2 1/2 cups plain (all-purpose) flour

320g - 1 1/2 cups caster (superfine) sugar

2 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder

2 tsp baking powder

1 tsp bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)

1/2 tsp fine salt

3 eggs

190 ml – 3/4 cup vegetable oil

300 ml 1 1/2 cups buttermilk

2 tsp vanilla extract

2 tbsp red liquid food dye

Frosting

3 batches Cream Cheese Frosting

Instructions:

Cake

Please note: To make the 6 layered cake you see pictured; you'll need to double the cake recipe only. All other measurements are enough to fill, crumb coat and finish decorating the cake.

Preheat a fan-forced oven to 140°C (275°F) or a conventional oven to 160°C (320°F). Spray three 20 cm (8 inch) cake tins with oil spray and line the bottoms with baking paper. Set aside.

Add the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt to a large mixing bowl. Mix on low speed with a hand mixer until combined.

Next, add the eggs, oil, buttermilk, vanilla and red food dye and continue mixing on low speed until everything is well combined. Scrape down the bowl and mix for a final 20 seconds on low speed.

Divide the cake mixture between the three tins. I find that using an ice-cream scoop makes it easy to distribute the batter evenly, ensuring that all three cakes will bake at the same rate.

Bake for 50-60 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the middle of the cake comes out clean. If the toothpick is coated with wet batter, continue baking for 10 minutes at a time until fully baked.

Allow the cakes to cool to room temperature in the tins, then chill them in the fridge overnight. Chilling your cakes overnight makes them easier to trim and decorate, so I always bake my cakes the day before I decorate them.

To trim your chilled cakes, use a cake leveller or large serrated knife to carefully trim the crust off the top of each cake. Then trim each cake in half. You'll end up with 6 layers.

To crumb coat your cake, add a dab of frosting onto a 10" cake board or flat serving plate. Use a small offset spatula to spread the frosting around before adding the first cake layer. Gently press down the centre of the cake layer to make sure it's stuck to the frosting underneath.

Add frosting to a piping bag and frost a ring around the top of the cake. Fill the centre with more frosting. Use your small offset spatula to smoothen out the frosting before you add the next layer of cake. Repeat with the remaining layers.

Add more frosting around the sides and top of the cake. Use the small spatula to smoothen out the top and sides of the cake, taking care to fill in any gaps in between each layer of cake.

Use a cake scraper (otherwise known as a bench scraper) to smoothen out the frosting on the sides and top. Get it as neat as you can. This should just be a neat, thin layer of frosting which is aimed at trapping any cake crumbs so that random bits of cake crumbs don't show up on the final layer of frosting. Chill for 2 hours or overnight.

Your cake is now crumb coated and ready to be decorated any way you like!

Notes

Different cake size Conversions

Cake x.5 (1 layer, 8" cake OR 2 Layer, 6" Cake)

200g - 1 1/4 cups plain (all-purpose) flour

160g – 3/4 cup caster (superfine) sugar
1 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder
1 tsp baking powder
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)
½ tsp fine salt
2 eggs
95 ml - 1/3 cup vegetable oil
150 ml – 3/4 cup buttermilk
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 tbsp red liquid food dye
1 batch cream cheese frosting

Cake x1 (2 layer, 8” cake OR 6 layer, 6” Cake)

400g - 2 1/2 cups plain (all-purpose) flour
320g - 1 1/2 cups) caster (superfine) sugar
2 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder
2 tsp baking powder
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)
1/2 tsp fine salt
3 eggs
190 ml – 3/4 cup vegetable oil
300 ml - 1 1/2 cups buttermilk
2 tsp vanilla extract
2 tbsp red liquid food dye
1 batch cream cheese frosting

Cake x1.5 (3 layer, 7” Cake)

600g - 3 1/2 cups plain (all-purpose) flour
480g - 2 1/4 cups caster (superfine) sugar
3 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder
3 tsp baking powder
1 1/2 tsp bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)
1 tsp fine salt
5 eggs
285ml - 1 cup vegetable oil
450ml - 2 1/4 cups buttermilk
2 tsp vanilla extract
3 tbsp red liquid food dye
2 1/4 batches cream cheese frosting

Cake x2 (6 layer, 8” cake)

800g - 5 cups plain (all-purpose) flour
640g - 3 cups caster (superfine) sugar
4 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder
4 tsp baking powder
2 tsp bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)
1 ½ tsp fine salt

6 eggs

380 ml - 1 1/2 cups vegetable oil

600 ml - 2 1/2 cups buttermilk

4 tsp vanilla extract

4 tbsp red liquid food dye

3 batches cream cheese frosting

Vanilla Cake

Servings: Makes 1 batch cake batter / Serves 20

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: My vanilla cake recipe is just delicious! It's moist and slightly dense, which is what you want in a cake. Fluffy cakes aren't meant to be decorated like the ones you'll see in this book. The best part about this recipe is that it's so moist that you don't need to add any simple syrup (sugar syrup) to keep it from drying out. Same deal with my cupcakes. And you can add any flavourings or colours you like to this recipe: berries, liqueurs, food gel colouring – the options are endless!

Prep Time: 75 min

Cook Time: 60 min

Total Time: 135 min

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Ingredients:

Cake

430g - 3 1/2 cups plain (all-purpose) flour
265g - 1 1/4 cups caster (superfine) sugar
3 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp fine salt
125g – 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
2 large eggs
375ml - 1 1/2 cups full-cream (whole) milk
125ml – 1/2 cup vegetable oil
2 tbsp Greek yoghurt (or sour cream)
1 tsp vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste

Frosting

3 batches vanilla-flavoured, American or Swiss meringue buttercream frosting.

Instructions:

Cake

Please note: To make the 6 layered cake you see pictured; you'll need to double the cake recipe only. All other measurements are enough to fill, crumb coat and finish decorating the cake.

Preheat a fan-forced oven to 140°C (275°F) or a conventional oven to 160°C (320°F). Spray three 20 cm (8 inch) cake tins with oil spray and line the bottoms with baking paper. Set

aside.

Add the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt to a large mixing bowl and mix with a hand mixer until well combined.

Next, add the softened butter and mix on low speed until the mixture reaches a crumbly, sand-like texture.

Add the eggs, milk, oil, Greek yoghurt and vanilla, and mix on low speed until all the dry ingredients are incorporated. Scrape down the side of the bowl and mix for another 20 seconds. It's at this point that you can add any additional flavourings or food-gel colourings to the batter.

Divide the cake mixture between the three tins. I find that using an ice-cream scoop makes it easy to distribute the batter evenly, ensuring that all three cakes will bake at the same rate.

Bake for 50–60 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the middle of the cake comes out clean. If the toothpick is coated with wet batter, continue baking for 10 minutes at a time until fully baked.

Allow the cakes to cool to room temperature in the tins, then chill them in the fridge overnight. Chilling your cakes overnight makes them easier to trim and decorate, so I always bake my cakes the day before I decorate them.

To trim your chilled cakes, use a cake leveller or large serrated knife to carefully trim the crust off the top of each cake. Then trim each cake in half. You'll end up with 6 layers.

To crumb coat your cake, add a dab of frosting onto a 10" cake board or flat serving plate. Use a small offset spatula to spread the frosting around before adding the first cake layer. Gently press down the centre of the cake layer to make sure it's stuck to the frosting underneath.

Add frosting to a piping bag and frost a ring around the top of the cake. Fill the centre with more frosting. Use your small offset spatula to smoothen out the frosting before you add the next layer of cake. Repeat with the remaining layers.

Add more frosting around the sides and top of the cake. Use the small spatula to smoothen out the top and sides of the cake, taking care to fill in any gaps in between each layer of cake.

Use a cake scraper (otherwise known as a bench scraper) to smoothen out the frosting on the sides and top. Get it as neat as you can. This should just be a neat, thin layer of frosting which is aimed at trapping any cake crumbs so that random bits of cake crumbs don't show up on the final layer of frosting. Chill for 2 hours or overnight.

Your cake is now crumb coated and ready to be decorated any way you like!

Notes

Different cake size Conversions

Cake x.5 (1 layer, 8" cake OR 2 Layer, 6" Cake)

215g - 1 1/4 cups plain (all-purpose) flour
132g – 3/4 cup caster (superfine) sugar
1 1/2 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp fine salt
60g – 1/4 cup unsalted butter, softened
1 large egg
187ml – 3/4 cups full-cream (whole) milk
65ml – 1/4 cup vegetable oil
1 tbsp Greek yoghurt (or sour cream)
1/2 tsp vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste

Cake x1 (2 layer, 8" cake OR 6 layer, 6" Cake)

430g - 3 1/2 cups plain (all-purpose) flour
265g - 1 1/4 cups caster (superfine) sugar
3 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp fine salt
125g – 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
2 large eggs
375ml - 1 1/2 cups full-cream (whole) milk
125ml – 1/2 cup vegetable oil
2 tbsp Greek yoghurt (or sour cream)
1 tsp vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste

Cake x1.5 (3 layer, 7" Cake)

645g - 3 3/4 cups plain (all-purpose) flour
400g - 1 3/4 cups caster (superfine) sugar
4 1/2 tsp baking powder
3/4 tsp fine salt
190g – 3/4 cup unsalted butter, softened
3 large eggs
560ml - 2 1/4 cups full-cream (whole) milk
190ml – 3/4 cup vegetable oil
3 tbsp Greek yoghurt (or sour cream)
1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste

Cake x2 (6 layer, 8" cake)

860g - 5 cups plain (all-purpose) flour
530g - 2 1/2 cups caster (superfine) sugar
6 tsp baking powder
1 tsp fine salt
250g - 1 cup unsalted butter, softened
4 large eggs

750ml - 3 cups full-cream (whole) milk
250ml - 1 cup vegetable oil
4 tbsp Greek yoghurt (or sour cream)
2 tsp vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste

Chocolate Cake

Servings: Makes 1 batch cake batter / Serves 20

Difficulty Level: Medium

Video Link: No Link yet

Post Summary: Looking for a one bowl chocolate cake recipe? Here it is! Moist, fudgy and easy to stack and serve. My chocolate cake recipe is the most decadent chocolate cake you'll ever have. And it's so simply to make! Just a note, this recipe doesn't use oil because it has a higher amount of butter than my vanilla cake recipe. If you're looking for a butter free chocolate cake recipe, check out my vegan chocolate recipe! It's just as amazing. I'd go as far as saying it's even better!

Prep Time: 90 min

Cook Time: 90 min

Total Time: 180 min

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Ingredients:

Cake

350g - 2 cups) plain (all-purpose) flour
450g (2 1/4 cups) caster (superfine) sugar
100g (1/2 cup) cocoa powder
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)
1 tsp fine salt
350g (1 1/2 cups) unsalted butter, softened
4 large eggs, at room temperature
350 ml (1 1/2 cups) full-cream (whole) milk

Frosting

3 batches chocolate-flavoured American or Swiss meringue buttercream frosting.

Instructions:

Cake

Please note: To make the 6 layered cake you see pictured; you'll need to double the cake recipe only. All other measurements are enough to fill, crumb coat and finish decorating the cake.

Preheat a fan-forced oven to 140°C (275°F) or a conventional oven to 160°C (320°F). Spray three 20 cm (8 inch) cake tins with oil spray and line the bottoms with baking paper. Set aside.

Add the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt to a large mixing bowl and mix with a hand mixer until well combined.

Next, add the softened butter and mix on low speed until the batter reaches a crumbly, sand-like texture.

Add the eggs and milk and mix again on low speed until all the dry ingredients are incorporated. Scrape down the side of the bowl and mix for another 20 seconds. It's at this point that you can add any additional flavourings or food-gel colourings to the batter.

Divide the cake mixture between the three tins. I find that using an ice-cream scoop makes it easy to distribute the batter evenly, ensuring that all three cakes will bake at the same rate.

Bake for 50–60 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the middle of the cake comes out clean. If the toothpick is coated with wet batter, continue baking, for 10 minutes at a time until fully baked.

Allow the cakes to cool to room temperature in the tins, then chill them in the fridge overnight. Chilling your cakes overnight makes them easier to trim and decorate, so I always bake my cakes the day before I decorate them.

To trim your chilled cakes, use a cake leveller or large serrated knife to carefully trim the crust off the top of each cake. Then trim each cake in half. You'll end up with 6 layers.

To crumb coat your cake, add a dab of frosting onto a 10" cake board or flat serving plate. Use a small offset spatula to spread the frosting around before adding the first cake layer. Gently press down the centre of the cake layer to make sure it's stuck to the frosting underneath.

Add frosting to a piping bag and frost a ring around the top of the cake. Fill the centre with more frosting. Use your small offset spatula to smoothen out the frosting before you add the next layer of cake. Repeat with the remaining layers.

Add more frosting around the sides and top of the cake. Use the small spatula to smoothen out the top and sides of the cake, taking care to fill in any gaps in between each layer of cake.

Use a cake scraper (otherwise known as a bench scraper) to smoothen out the frosting on the sides and top. Get it as neat as you can. This should just be a neat, thin layer of frosting which is aimed at trapping any cake crumbs so that random bits of cake crumbs don't show up on the final layer of frosting. Chill for 2 hours or overnight.

Your cake is now crumb coated and ready to be decorated any way you like!

Notes

Cake Conversions

Cake x.5 (1 layer, 8" cake OR 2 Layer, 6" Cake)

175g - 1 1/3 cups plain (all-purpose) flour
225g - 1 1/4 cups caster (superfine) sugar
50g - 1/4 cup cocoa powder
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)
½ tsp fine salt
175g - 3/4 cups) unsalted butter, softened
2 large eggs, at room temperature
175 ml - 3/4 cups full-cream (whole) milk
1 batch buttercream frosting

Cake x1 (2 layer, 8" cake OR 6 layer, 6" Cake)

350g - 2 cups plain (all-purpose) flour
450g - 2 1/4 cups caster (superfine) sugar
100g - 1/2 cup cocoa powder
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)
1 tsp fine salt
350g - 1 1/2 cups) unsalted butter, softened
4 large eggs, at room temperature
350 ml - 1 ½ cups full-cream (whole) milk
1 batch buttercream frosting

Cake x1.5 (3 layer, 7" Cake)

525g - 3 cups plain (all-purpose) flour
675g - 3 1/3 cups caster (superfine) sugar
150g - 3/4 cup cocoa powder
1 1/2 tsp bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)
1 1/2 tsp fine salt
525g - 2 1/4 cups unsalted butter, softened
6 large eggs, at room temperature
525 ml - 2 1/4 cups full-cream (whole) milk
1 1/2 batches buttercream frosting

Cake x2 (6 layer, 8" cake)

700g - 4 cups plain (all-purpose) flour
900g - 4 1/2 cups caster (superfine) sugar
200g - 1 cup cocoa powder
2 tsp bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)
2 tsp fine salt
700g - 3 cups unsalted butter, softened
8 large eggs, at room temperature
700 ml - 2 3/4 cups full-cream (whole) milk
3 batches buttercream frosting

French Macarons (French Method)

Servings: Makes 20 cookies

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: Here it is guys. After popular demand, I finally have a French macaron recipe using the French method for you. And boy are these good. If there's one thing I don't tolerate, it's bad macaron recipes. They need to work for everyone. Now, the other good thing about this recipe is that it make less macarons than the Italian method macaron recipe I have and this one is much, much easier to make too.

Prep Time: 20 min

Cook Time: 80 min

Total Time: 100 min

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Ingredients:

Macarons

100g egg whites (approx. 3 egg whites) room temperature

150g - 1 1/2 cups almond meal

105g – 1/2 cup granulated sugar

155g - 1 cup powdered sugar

1 tsp vanilla

1/4 tsp salt

1/4 tsp cream of tartar

1 tsp white vinegar

Frosting

1 batch buttercream frosting or ganache

Instructions:

Macarons

Preheat oven to 300°F

Line two baking trays with silicone baking mats or baking paper (not greaseproof paper). If you're using baking paper, you can dab the baking trays with a little of the macaron batter once you've made it. This will help the baking paper stick so that it doesn't fly around in the oven and ruin your macarons. You'll also need to clean the bowl you'll be using to make the meringue. I find the best way to do that is to add 2 tsp of white vinegar. Use a paper towel to wipe the bowl with the vinegar until the bowl is dry. This will help ensure your egg whites whip up properly.

Sift powdered sugar and almond meal into a large bowl. Set aside.

Add the vinegar to the bowl you'll be mixing the eggs in and wipe down using a paper towel until dry.

Add egg whites to your clean bowl and use a whisk attachment if using a stand mixer or the beaters if using an electric hand mixer and whip to soft peaks. Add the salt and cream of tartar.

Begin adding the sugar one tablespoon at a time, while the mixer is on medium high speed. Once all the sugar has been added, add the vanilla extract and continue whisking until the meringue becomes thick and glossy. All up, you'll whisk for about 5 minutes. If you want to make different colours or add any liquid flavouring, extracts or essences you can add them in with the vanilla.

Grab a spatula full of the meringue and fold it into the almond-sugar mixture until well combined. This allows the mixture to thin out a little before you add the rest of the meringue. Different people mix macaron batter in different ways; some count the amount of times they mix, but I think it's better to know what consistency to look out for. I like to go around the bowl with my spatula and then through the middle. You want to continue mixing that way until you reach the 'ribbon stage'. The ribbon stage is when the batter falls off the spatula in a ribbon and disappears into the rest of the batter after about 10 seconds. That's when you know the batter is ready to pipe. If you over mix the batter, it will thin out too much and you'll have to start again. As you get closer and closer to a batter thin enough to fall off in that ribbon stage, you want to keep testing the batter. If you find it's not quite thin enough, then mix only 2 or 3 times and test again. It's really really important not to overmix your batter!

Line 2 baking trays with baking paper or silicone baking mats. Pipe macarons on each sheet, each one about 3cm in diameter.

Gently tap the tray on your work bench. Allow the macarons to dry for 40 minutes before baking for 10 minutes. Allow to cool completely before taking off the sheets.

To finish your macarons, you can fill them with any number of fillings: lemon curd, chocolate ganache, buttercream or different frostings; the filling options are endless. For a vanilla macaron, I'd recommend Chocolate ganache frosting.

Notes

Prepare before you start:

Trays (lined with baking paper not grease proof paper)

Eggs - separate egg whites from the yolks and allow them to sit in the fridge for a couple hours.

Sift almond and sugar together (if you don't have a food processor)

Storage: store in an airtight container for up to 3 days (refrigerated or unrefrigerated).

Ageing your eggs: egg whites will liquefy if you sit them in the fridge for several days, preferably a week. During that time, the egg whites lose their elasticity, the albumen breaks down and they will be much easier to whisk to soft peaks without turning "grainy".

French Macarons (Italian Method)

Servings: Makes 30 cookies

Difficulty Level: Medium

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: Out of all of my recipes, this is the one I get the most amount of positive feedback on. So, if you've been defeated by the little French cookie, this recipe will make it feel less intimidating for you. After you've mastered it you'll feel like you've just completed a marathon and won first place, and Beyoncé is waiting at the finish line to put that first-place medal around your neck before singing you her entire new unreleased album. That's how good you'll feel.

With macarons, there are two ways to make the meringue part. The French meringue method, where you simply add the sugar to the egg whites, or the Italian meringue method, where you make a hot sugar syrup and add it to the egg whites. I prefer the Italian method. I find it yields much more consistent results.

Now guys, I've done my best to offer both grams and cup measurements for all the recipes on this site but all my macaron recipes are given in weight measurements only. The reason is because there are a lot of things that can go wrong with macarons. In order to get great, consistent results every time, you have to measure everything out very precisely. For that reason, cup measurements just don't work for this macaron recipe. Alternatively though my French method macaron recipe is much more forgiving and I'm able to give that one in both grams and cup measurements.

You can learn more about weighing out your ingredients in the Baking tips and tricks section. One thing I would recommend is that you measure everything out *before* you start the recipe, because everything moves quickly when making macarons that you won't have time to stop and measure things once you've started. After a couple of goes it'll feel as easy as making cupcakes. It's really not that difficult – promise!

Prep Time:

Cook Time:

Total Time:

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Ingredients:

Macarons

150g almond flour

150g icing (confectioners') sugar

55g egg whites (for the almond mixture)
150g granulated sugar
37g water (yes, grams!)
55g egg whites (for the meringue)
1 tsp vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste

Frosting

Any frosting of your choice! I can't say no to a chocolate ganache filled macaron!

Instructions:

Macarons

Line two baking trays with silicone baking mats or baking paper (not greaseproof paper). If you're using baking paper, you can dab the baking trays with a little of the macaron batter once you've made it. This will help the baking paper stick so that it doesn't fly around in the oven and ruin your macarons. You'll also need to clean the bowl you'll be using to make the meringue. I find the best way to do that is to add 2 tsp of white vinegar. Use a paper towel to wipe the bowl with the vinegar until the bowl is dry. This will help ensure your egg whites whip up properly.

Combine the almond flour and icing sugar in a food processor and pulse 4–5 times, or until well combined. (Take care not to pulse too many times, otherwise you'll risk releasing the oils in the almonds.) Pulsing these ingredients does two things: it helps to get rid of any lumps in the sugar and it helps grind the almond flour to a finer consistency. Alternatively, you can sift the two ingredients together. This must be done at least three times.

Transfer the almond mixture to a large, clean glass or metal mixing bowl. Add 55g egg whites and use a spatula to mix everything together until the mixture forms a paste. Cover with plastic wrap and set aside.

To make the sugar syrup, combine the granulated sugar and water in a small saucepan. Give it a very gentle stir with a teaspoon to make sure they're well combined. After this point, don't mix the syrup again. Bring to a boil over a medium high heat. As the syrup bubbles away, it will splatter small bubbles of sugared water on the side of the pan. Use a pastry brush dabbed in a little bit of water to brush those bubbles back into the syrup. This will help prevent the syrup from crystallising.

For this recipe, you'll need a sugar thermometer to help you measure the temperature of the syrup. When the syrup reaches 115°C (239°F), add the remaining egg whites to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment and whisk them on medium speed to help break them apart and get them frothy.

When the syrup reaches 118°C (244°F), turn your mixer speed up to medium high and carefully pour the hot syrup into the egg whites in a slow and steady stream. Please be careful when doing this part, number one because the syrup is hot, but also if you add your syrup too quickly, you'll cook the egg whites and they'll turn into a runny soup. Once you've poured all the sugar syrup into the egg whites, continue whisking on high speed for about 3 minutes before adding the vanilla extract. It's at this point that you can also add any food-

gel colouring or food flavourings to the meringue.

Continue whisking on high speed for another 4–5 minutes. Once the meringue has become thick and glossy and has cooled down almost to room temperature, stop the mixer and gently scrape down the bowl, then whisk on high speed for another couple of minutes.

The next part is the mixing stage, otherwise known as ‘macaronage’, and is super important. It’s where most people go wrong – including me, until I took a trip to Paris and was physically shown how to do it by a French pastry chef!

Grab a spatula full of the meringue and fold it into the almond-sugar mixture until well combined. This allows the mixture to thin out a little before you add the rest of the meringue. Different people mix macaron batter in different ways; some count the amount of times they mix, but I think it’s better to know what consistency to look out for. I like to go around the bowl with my spatula and then through the middle. You want to continue mixing that way until you reach the ‘ribbon stage’. The ribbon stage is when the batter falls off the spatula in a ribbon and disappears into the rest of the batter after about 10 seconds. That’s when you know the batter is ready to pipe. If you over mix the batter, it will thin out too much and you’ll have to start again. As you get closer and closer to a batter thin enough to fall off in that ribbon stage, you want to keep testing the batter. If you find it’s not quite thin enough, then mix only 2 or 3 times and test again. It’s really really important not to overmix your batter!

Spoon the batter into a piping bag fitted with a medium round tip. Pipe rounds of batter, about 3 cm (1 ¼ in) in diameter, on the trays, being sure to space them 2 cm (¾ in) apart. Gently tap the tray three times on your work surface. This will help remove any air bubbles that might be lurking in your batter. It’s at this stage that you can add any small sprinkles or freeze-dried berries on top.

The next thing you want to do is let your macarons dry out in the open air for about 30 minutes to 1 hour (the drying time depends on the weather or how much humidity is in the air). Drying your macarons helps them to form a skin. The skin is super important because it means that when you bake your macarons and the steam escapes from the shells, it will escape from the bottom, not the top, forming the iconic ‘feet’ on your macarons. So, when you can gently touch the top of your uncooked macarons and they’re not sticky to the touch, you know they’re ready to bake. Ten minutes before the end of the drying time, preheat a fan-forced oven to 140°C (275°F) or a conventional oven to 160°C (320°F).

Place each tray of macarons, one at a time, in the centre of the oven and bake for 12 minutes. If you feel your oven is causing the macarons to brown on one side (usually the side closest to the fan), turn the tray around about halfway through. Once they’re baked, let them cool completely before you try to remove them from the tray.

To finish your macarons, you can fill them with any number of fillings: lemon curd, chocolate ganache, buttercream or different frostings; the filling options are endless. For a vanilla macaron, I’d recommend Chocolate ganache frosting.

Notes

Prepare before you start:

Trays (lined with baking paper not grease proof paper)

Eggs - separate egg whites from the yolks and allow them to sit in the fridge for a couple hours. These must be measured accurately.

Sift almond and sugar together (if you don't have a food processor)

Storage: store in an airtight container for up to 3 days (refrigerated or unrefrigerated).

Ageing your eggs: egg whites will liquefy if you sit them in the fridge for several days, preferably a week. During that time, the egg whites lose their elasticity, the albumen breaks down and they will be much easier to whisk to soft peaks without turning "grainy".

Halving the recipe: this recipe can be halved.

Chocolate Sauce

Servings: Makes 2 ½ cups of sauce

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: You will literally never find a better or easier chocolate sauce than this one. I'm not even afraid to say that, 'cos it's true. Not only that, but this recipe is super versatile too. You can use it in the centre of cupcakes, drizzle it over cakes or even drizzle it on ice cream while you sit on the couch watching your fave movie with your dog looking at you with puppy-dog eyes 'cos he wants some, but dogs can't have chocolate. They just can't. I know it doesn't make sense, but it's a cruel world.

Wow, that got dark... Here's my chocolate sauce recipe!

Prep Time: 10 min

Cook Time: 20 min

Total Time: 30 min

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Ingredients:

Chocolate Sauce

400g - 2 cups good-quality dark chocolate chips

50g - 1/4 cup unsalted butter

50g - 1/2 cup packed brown sugar

250ml - 1 cup thickened/whipping cream

Instructions:

Chocolate Sauce

Add all the ingredients to a large, microwave-safe bowl and microwave on high, for 20 seconds at a time, mixing well between each interval until smooth.

To thin out your sauce for things like drizzling on cupcake and cakes, simply microwave for 10 seconds at a time, stirring between each interval until it's thin enough to drizzle.

Notes

Sauce can be stored in an airtight container for up to 1 month.

Salted Caramel Sauce

Servings: Makes 375 ml (1 ½ cups)

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No link

Post Summary: If you've never tried salted caramel, you're missing out. The first time I heard about it I thought, that's gross. Caramel is supposed to be sweet. But the saltiness in this recipe helps break through the sweetness and makes it even tastier. It's really easy to make, but if you're a mini baker, you'll definitely need to get an adult to help you out.

Home-made salted caramel flavoured sauce, perfect for using on top of ice creams, flavouring frosting or filling cakes and cupcakes.

Prep Time: 30 min

Cook Time: 45 min

Total Time: 75 min

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Ingredients:

Salted Caramel Sauce

330g - 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
2 tbsp glucose syrup (or corn syrup)
250ml - 1 cup thick (double/heavy) cream, warmed
50g - 1/4 cup unsalted butter
1 tsp sea salt flakes
125 ml - 1/2 cup water

Instructions:

Salted Caramel Sauce

To make the caramel, place the sugar, glucose syrup and water in a large saucepan set over a medium–low heat. Bring to the boil and cook for 10–12 minutes until it becomes a deep gold colour, but not dark brown. **DO NOT STIR** at any point, otherwise you risk crystallising your syrup. When the caramel begins to colour, it will darken quickly so keep a close eye on it. Also keep in mind that it will continue cooking once it's off the heat, so work quickly.

Remove the syrup from the heat once it reaches the correct colour. Slowly add the warmed cream. Use a wooden spoon to slowly mix the cream into the hot syrup. It will bubble and splatter. Be very careful. Next, add the butter and salt and whisk to combine. Allow to cool completely before using.

This sauce can be stored in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks in the fridge.

Notes

Sauce can be stored in an airtight container for up to 1 month.

Before you measure your glucose syrup, spray your measuring spoon with some oil to make it easy for the syrup to slide off the spoon.

Lemon Curd

Servings: Makes 1 cup

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No link

Post Summary: Simple guys, this sauce or filling is great for cakes and cupcakes or just putting on top of a fresh scone! The possibilities are endless!

Prep Time: 10 min

Cook Time: 25 min

Total Time: 35 min

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Ingredients:

Lemon Curd

4 large egg yolks

80ml - 1/3 cup fresh lemon juice (about 3 lemons)

1 tbsp lemon zest

134g - 2/3 cup granulated sugar

1/4 tsp salt

86g - 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened to room temp

Instructions:

Lemon Curd

Wisk the egg yolks in a mixing bowl, then add lemon juice, lemon zest and sugar until well combined.

Add mixture to a large pot on a medium heat and stir with a wooden spoon until it thickens. Test by running your finger along the back of the wooden spoon, and if the mixture doesn't come back together then it's ready. Add the butter and salt and stir until melted and well combined.

Run the mixture through a sift into a mixing bowl, then transfer to a jar. Lemon curd can be stored for up to 2 weeks in the fridge, or it can be frozen and defrosted the day before you need it.

Notes

Sauce can be stored in an airtight container for up to two weeks.

Pastry Cream

Servings: Makes 2 cups

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: Looking for something delicious to make with left over egg yolks? Look no further! This pastry cream recipe is absolutely delicious, super easy to make and can be used in lots of different ways! You can freeze it and make ice cream, use it to fill cake, cupcakes, macarons, eclairs and pastry puffs!

Prep Time: 10 min

Cook Time: 30 min

Total Time: 40 min

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Ingredients:

Pastry cream

250ml - 1 cup of milk

3 large egg yolks

2 tbsp sugar

1tbsp all-purpose flour

1tbsp corn-starch

185g - 3/4 cup butter

1 tsp vanilla bean paste or extract

Pinch of salt

Instructions:

Pastry cream

In a large mixing bowl, mix the yolks, vanilla bean paste and the sugar and whisk until well combined and the mixture lightens in color. Add the corn flour and plain flour and stir until mixture is smooth Add 1/3 of the hot milk and stir well. Then slowly add the rest of the milk while stirring

Microwave for 1 minute at a time, stirring each time until mixture thickens and becomes smooth. You should be able to run your finger along the back of a spoon and it will be thick enough to not come back together.

Add the cold butter cubes and stir until well combined.

Transfer custard to a bowl, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 3-4 hours or overnight to allow it to completely set.

Notes

Cupcakes can be stored in an airtight container for up to three days.

Alternatively, this pastry cream can be made in a medium saucepan on the stove on medium high heat.

Modelling Chocolate

Servings: Makes 3 cups

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: Want to learn how professional pastry chefs make those amazing edible sculptures? They're using modelling chocolate! It's really easy to make and is a delicious alternative to fondant! In my recipe I share the ratios for making modelling chocolate using both dark chocolates, perfect for darker sculptures or white modelling chocolate, perfect for colouring.

Edible clay substance made of chocolate perfect for making cake decorations and edible sculptures.

Prep Time: 30 min

Cook Time: 45 min

Total Time: 75 min

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Ingredients:

Dark Modelling Chocolate (great for black modelling chocolate)

450g dark chocolate chips

112g corn syrup

White Modelling Chocolate (off white colour)

450g white chocolate chips

225g corn syrup

Candy Melts Modelling Chocolate (great for colouring)

450g candy melts (I use Wilton brand)

100g corn syrup

Instructions:

Modelling Chocolate

The method for making any of the above modelling chocolate is the same. Begin by adding your candy melts or chocolate into a microwave safe bowl. Microwave for 20 seconds at a time, stirring each time until smooth.

Add the corn syrup into a small microwave safe bowl and microwave for 5-10 seconds. You want to get it to body temperature.

Add the corn syrup to the melted chocolate and use a spatula to gently fold the two ingredients together. As soon as they're combined and the chocolate looks like it's about to split, pour the mixture onto a large piece of plastic wrap. Wrap it up and allow it to set at room temperature until it's soft and pliable.

Unwrap the modelling chocolate and knead on your workbench until it's nice and smooth like a dough. At this stage it's usable. If you're using white modelling chocolate, you can colour it using food gel colouring. Do not use liquid food dye. Simply knead the colouring into the modelling chocolate until it's evenly coloured.

To store your modelling chocolate, wrap tightly in plastic wrap and flatten out with your hands. Store flat in the cupboard.

Crumbly Modelling Chocolate

To re-soften your modelling chocolate simply warm up for 10-15 seconds in the microwave, unwrap and knead. If your modelling chocolate looks really crumbly and won't come back together as a smooth dough there's a simple trick to reviving it. Simply wet your hands with water (yes water) and knead the dough. It will get messy and slimy at first, but it works like magic and after a while it comes back together.

Notes

Modelling chocolate can be made up to 1 week in advance.

Marshmallow Fondant

Servings: Makes enough to cover a medium sized cake

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: Marshmallow is so much better to use than regular fondant for so many reasons. First of all, anything home-made is better! Plus, this tastes so much better and it doesn't tear as easy when you're placing it on cakes!

Prep Time:

Cook Time: 45 min

Total Time:

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Ingredients:

Fondant

140g - 2 2/3 cups mini marshmallows

225g - 2 cups, powdered sugar, sifted plus more for kneading

1 ½ tsp cold water

Vegetable shortening, for kneading

Food gel colouring

Instructions:

Fondant

Add the marshmallows and water into a large microwave safe bowl. Microwave for 30 seconds at a time, mixing with a spatula or wooden spoon each time until smooth and completely melted.

Add ¾ of the powdered sugar and stir to combine. Once the mixture becomes too stiff to mix by hand, sprinkle your workbench with more powdered sugar and knead it by hand until smooth. All up it'll take about 10 minutes. Once the mixture is not sticky and holds its shape you can colour it any colour using food gel colouring (**not** liquid or powder colouring).

To store, wrap tightly in plastic wrap and then place in an airtight container at room temperature until ready to use. If the fondant softens too much it's because the warmth from your hands has caused that to happen. To stiffen up again, place in the fridge. This fondant is best used when it's freshly made.

Notes

Fondant can be made up to 1 week in advance.

Whipped Cream (Chantilly Cream)

Servings: Makes 2 cups

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: Ever wondered how to make your own fresh whipped vanilla cream? Here's the recipe! So much better than canned whipped cream, richer and more delicious! Plus it only takes a couple minutes so now you don't have an excuse for using store bought. Whipped cream can be used in eclairs, on top of ice cream, cakes, cupcakes, scones, pancakes, the possibilities are endless!

Prep Time: 10 min

Cook Time: -

Total Time: 10 min

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Ingredients:

Whipped cream

450ml thickened/whipping cream (at least 35% fat content)

2 tbsp caster sugar (optional)

1 tbsp good quality vanilla bean paste or extract

Instructions:

Whipped cream

This is so easy! Simply add the cream, sugar (optional) and vanilla into a large mixing bowl. I recommend glass or metal and use an electric hand mixer to whip on medium speed. Continue whipping for a couple minutes until the cream is frothy, then put the speed up to high and whip until you reach soft peaks. Soft peaks is great for things like pancakes or eclairs. Continue whipping to stiff peaks (cream can hold its shape) if you want something that's suited to frosting cakes and cupcakes.

Notes

Whipped cream is best used the day it's made. You can store it in the fridge for a couple hours and then re-whip to bring back to stiff peaks. Take care not to overwhip otherwise you'll end up with butter.

Sugar Cookies

Servings: Makes 20 cookies

Difficulty Level: Easy

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: It's really hard to find a good sugar cookie recipe that both tastes delicious but also just has that magical snap when you take a bite. My sugar cookie is both of those things and they're perfect for decorating with royal icing.

Prep Time: 10 min

Cook Time: 10 min

Total Time: 20 min

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Ingredients:

Cookies

120g - 1 cup unsalted butter, softened

230g - 1 1/4 cups caster sugar

1 large egg

1 tsp vanilla extract

380g - 2 cups all-purpose flour

1/2 tsp salt

2 tbs milk

Instructions:

Cookies

Add cream, butter and sugar to a large bowl. Use an electric hand mixer to whip until light and fluffy. Add egg and mix until well combined.

Sift in the flour and salt and use a spatula to mix together until a dough forms. Split the dough into two portion and wrap in plastic. Chill for 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 180C° (356F°).

Place a large piece of baking paper on your workbench. Add one half of the dough to it. Place another large piece of baking paper on top and use a rolling pin to roll out to 1/2 cm (.2 inches). Cut out cookies using desired cookie cutter shape. Place on a baking tray lined with baking paper about 5cm (2 inches) apart.

Bake the cookies for 10 minutes or until edges are lightly golden. Allow to cool before serving or decorating.

These cookies can be kept in an airtight container for up to 7 days. Decorated or not decorated.

Notes

Cookies can be stored in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

Royal Icing Recipe

Servings: Enough for sugar cookies 30 cookies

Difficulty Level: Medium

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: Looking for an amazing royal icing recipe? My royal icing recipe uses raw egg whites, but they're pasteurized which means the egg is gently cooked so that they don't have any nasties in them that can make you sick. Royal icing is so easy to make and is awesome for decorating sugar cookies or making royal icing decorations and sprinkles to stick on your cake!

Prep Time: 10 min

Cook Time: 0 min

Total Time: 10 min

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Ingredients:

Royal Icing

100g egg whites (pasteurized) (aprox. 3 eggs)
1/2 tsp of cream of tartar
465g - 3 cups sifted icing (confectioners') sugar, sifted
2 tbsp water to adjust consistency
1 tsp vanilla extract or flavouring of your choice

Instructions:

Royal Icing

Place egg whites, cream of tartar, vanilla extract and icing sugar in large mixing bowl of a stand mixer. Using the whisk attachment, mix on low speed until mixture comes together. Continue mixing until mixture is smooth and uniform. You may need to scrape down the bowl to make sure everything gets mixed in properly.

You can add colour to your royal icing by using food gel, and you can flavour it by using a very small amount of liquid food flavourings.

There are several stages of royal icing consistency and each one serves a different purpose.

1. Stiff consistency

This consistency is what you get when you make this recipe. It's great for piping stiff royal icing shapes like roses or shell borders. If you need to stiffen your royal icing just add more icing (confectioners') sugar and mix until smooth.

2. 15 second Consistency

This is the consistency you would use for things like outlining your cookies before you 'flood' (fill) them with a thinner royal icing.

15-second icing consistency holds its own shape, but will soften slightly, so any peaks that may show when piping will eventually smooth out on their own.

It's called the 15 second consistency because if you run a knife through it, it will come back together and smooth out after about 15 seconds.

To thin it out to this consistency add 1 tbsp of water, test, and then add more if required.

3. Piping consistency

This one is thick enough to hold its shape so that you can write letters and messages with it on your cookies

4. Flooding consistency

This is the thinnest one, achieved by adding water and mixing to thin out, and is most commonly used for 'flooding' or 'filling' your cookies. It comes out super smooth. If it runs out over the barrier you've created with the 15 second consistency, then its too runny. Add more icing sugar!

Notes

Royal icing can be stored in the fridge, in an airtight container for up to 2 days. Cover the surface with plastic just to make sure it doesn't crust.

Flaky Pie Crust

Servings: Makes 1

Difficulty Level: Medium

Video Link: No Link

Post Summary: There's nothing like a home-made pie. You can't have pie without crust, and although there are many ways to make a pie crust, this buttery pie crust is a great all-rounder for both savoury pies like quiches or meat pies and sweet pies like chocolate silk pies and apple pies.

Prep Time: 20 min

Cook Time: 45 min

Total Time: 65 min

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Ingredients:

Pastry

380g - 2 1/4 cups flour

2 tbsp sugar

1 tsp salt

225g - 1 cup unsalted butter, chilled

3-4 tbsp iced water

1 tbsp vinegar

Egg wash

1 large egg

1 tbsp milk

Instructions:

Pie Crust

Before we begin making our pie crust there are a couple things we need to prepare. Add your cold butter onto a large piece of baking paper and place another piece of parchment paper on top. Use a large wooden rolling pin to flatten it by banging it at first, until it's soft enough to roll out. You'll want to get it about 1cm flat. Place back in the fridge for 10 min.

Add the iced water and vinegar in a small mixing bowl and combine using a spoon. Set aside in the freezer.

Making pie crust by hand

Add flour, sugar and salt into a medium sized bowl and mix together using a whisk.

Unwrap your cold butter and use your hands to break it up into the flour mixture. I'd recommend running your hands under some cold water to help prevent your hands from softening or warming up the butter too much.

Continue rubbing the butter into the flour to break it up into smaller lentil sized pieces. The key here is to work quickly and not overwork the dough. This will overwork the gluten causing it to shrink when you bake it.

Add the iced water mixture into the flour mixture and use a fork to mix it together. If you can squeeze some of the dough mixture together in your hand and it comes together it's ready to go in the fridge.

Making pie crust using a food processor

Add the flour, sugar and salt into the bowl of a food processor and pulse to combine. Then add the cold butter and pulse until the butter is the size of lentils. Add the iced water and pulse to help combine everything.

Chilling your dough

Place a large piece of plastic wrap on your work bench and wrap the dough up. Squeeze the dough together into a disk and place in the fridge for one hour, or ideally, overnight. The mixture will look crumbly and may crack as you try to bunch it all up but letting it rest in the fridge allows the flour to soak up the water you added and will make it come together.

Rolling out your dough

Preheat your oven to 170C (325F). For this recipe you can either use a 9-inch deep glass pie plate or a 9-inch deep tart tin with removable bottom. If you're using a tart tin with removable bottom, you'll need to place it on a baking tray when baking.

Once your dough has rested take it out of the fridge and unwrap it. Allow it to rest at room temperature for 10 minutes. Sprinkle a little flour on your work bench and your rolling pin and roll the dough out. Continue flipping the dough over and around as you roll it to ensure it's all once even thickness. You want to roll it to about a 1/4-inch thickness.

Sprinkle your rolling pin with a little flour and carefully drape the pastry dough over it to help you transfer it over your pie or tart tin.

Carefully lift the edges and allow them to naturally fall into the edge and bottom of your tin. Do not stretch the dough to the bottom. It will cause your pie crust to shrink as it bakes. Cut off or fold the excess pie dough at the top leaving just a little bit of excess to go above the height of your pie tin. Use a fork to prick holes in the bottom of your pie crust. This will prevent it from bubbling up as it bakes for a final 20 min or until golden brown.

Blind baking your pie

In order to prevent your pie crust from bubbling up and causing an uneven bottom while baking you need to blind bake your pie crust first. This involves adding weights in the pie crust and baking it for a little bit before baking it without.

Place some baking paper on the inside of your pie crust. Add another layer of foil wrap on the inside and place it tightly around the inside of the baking paper. Fill it with baking beads or dried beans like red beans or chickpeas. Bake on 170C for 15 minutes.

Take the pie crust out of the oven and carefully lift the pie crust. Let your beads or beans cool completely before storing them in a container or zip lock back to use again. Brush the bottom and sides of the pie crust with egg wash. Egg wash can be made by whisking an egg and milk together. This will help seal up your pie crust to prevent liquids from leaking through the pie crust after having pricked it with the fork. Bake for a further 10 minutes or 5 minutes if filling and further baking with filling in the pie crust. Once baked, allow to cool to room temp.

Notes

Pie crust can be made up to two days in advance and stored in the fridge until ready to use.