**French Macarons**

**Author Notes:** My favorite culinary instructor, Kathryn Gordon, happens to be a macaron master. She wrote a book with Anne E. McBride called "Les Petits Macarons: Col ([…more](https://food52.com/recipes/17191-classic-french-macaron-with-vanilla-buttercream-filling#show more content)) - [**Dana'sBakery**](https://food52.com/users/59426-dana-sbakery)

***Makes 40 sandwiched 1-inch Macarons (80 halves)***.

1. **1 1/4**cup Almond Flour (Blanched)
2. pinches Salt
3. **3/4**cups Confectioners' Sugar (packed)
4. **1** tablespoon Powdered Egg Whites
5. **3/4**cups Granulated Sugar
6. **1/2**teaspoon Cream of Tartar
7. **1/2**cup Aged Egg Whites (from 4 eggs, aged covered in the fridge for 1-2 days) - Room Temperature
8. **4 drops** Gel food color (optional)
9. Preheat the oven to 300ºF. Pulse almond flour, salt and confectioners’ sugar in the bowl of a food processor 4 times for 4 seconds each time. Sift dry ingredients over a piece of parchment paper. Make sure the holes of your sifter are not too large or it will result in lumpy macaron tops!
10. Whip the powdered egg whites in an electric mixer bowl powdered egg white, granulated sugar, cream of tartar and aged egg whites, on medium-high speed until glossy stiff peaks form (about 8-11 minutes). Note: A good test to check if your meringue is ready, is to hold the bowl upside-down. If your meringue doesn’t slide or move, you are ready to go. You can also tell your meringue is ready when the whisk leaves deep tracks in the bowl when rotating.
11. Fold the dry ingredients into the meringue until you reach the unique macaronnage stage (and add food coloring, if using it, when the dry ingredients appear to be just incorporated). It is important to fold the different components just enough, but not too much or the macarons will crack. To make sure that you have reached the right point, once the ingredients appear combined, lift some of the mixture about 1 inch above the bowl with the spatula. If it retains a three dimensional shape, fold it again. When folded just enough, the mixture should fall right back into the bowl, with no stiffness, in one continuous drip.
12. Pipe the macarons 1 ½ inches apart on a silicon baking sheet lined (double) sheet pan. Slam the baking sheet down to remove excess air (slam 6 times, from 6 inches above the table). Let macarons sit at room temp for 1 hour (until the skin forms), and then put in the oven. Bake for 10-12 minutes (time will vary depending on size), until the macarons just come off the baking sheet when you lift them (the centers will have risen, and will not have any dark indentations). If the macarons darken too quickly, put a wooden spoon in the door of the oven to prop it slightly open. Overcooked is better than undercooked -- undercooking leads to sunken tops. If you have trouble removing the macarons from the baking sheet, try placing a few drops of water under the silicon mat. If that still doesn’t work, place the macarons in the freezer for fifteen minutes. They should pop right off. Cool completely before removing and filling.

**Vanilla Buttercream Filling**

1. **1** Vanilla Bean
2. **1**cup Granulated Sugar
3. **3** Egg Whites
4. **1**pinch Cream of Tartar
5. **1/4**teaspoon Fine Sea Salt
6. **2** Sticks, cold unsalted butter, cubed
7. **1**tablespoon Vanilla Extract

**DIRECTIONS:**

1. Split vanilla pod lengthwise, and using back of paring knife, scrape the beans into granulated sugar (making a vanilla sugar).
2. Whip the egg whites and cream of tartar to soft peaks. Bring the vanilla pod, vanilla sugar and 1/4 cup (57 grams) water to a boil in a small saucepan, and cook syrup to 238°F (115°C). Carefully remove the vanilla pod then gradually pour the syrup down the side of the bowl, cool on medium speed about 8 minutes.
3. Add in the salt, butter and whip on high speed until fluffy and emulsified, about 10 minutes. Add vanilla extract. Note: for the macarons in the photo, I folded in finely minced strawberries for color and flavor.
4. Now your buttercream is ready to go! Fill a piping bag (or a zippered plastic bag with one corner snipped off) and pipe your filling onto half of the finished macaron halves, then top with the other halves to make sandwiches