

SWISS MERINGUE BUTTERCREAM (AND VARIATIONS)

A Recipe by **FoodNouveau**

INGREDIENTS

Makes 3 cups [750 ml]

3	egg whites
1 cup [250 ml]	powdered sugar, sifted
1 cup [250 ml]	unsalted butter, room temperature
1 tsp [5 ml]	pure vanilla extract

METHOD

In a heatproof bowl, whisk the egg whites and powdered sugar together. Set the bowl over a pot of barely simmering water, making sure the bottom of the bowl doesn't touch the water, and keep on whisking the egg whites and powdered sugar continuously until the mixture is opaque and glossy, about 6 minutes. Remove from the heat, and continue whisking until the mixture has cooled to room temperature, about 6 minutes more.

Add the butter, a tablespoon at a time, and whisk at high speed between each addition to incorporate well before adding more. If the mixture looks curdled, don't panic! Keep on whisking, and it will come back together. Beat until the buttercream is thick and fluffy.

Add the vanilla extract to the buttercream, whisking just until incorporated.

STORAGE

If you plan to use the frosting the same day, cover the mixing bowl with plastic wrap and keep at room temperature. Store the buttercream in an airtight container in the refrigerator until ready to use. If you refrigerate the buttercream, return to room temperature 30 minutes to an hour so it spreads more easily.

VARIATIONS

Colorful Vanilla Swiss Meringue Buttercream

Add gel food coloring a drop at a time, mixing it in thoroughly between each addition to get an accurate overview of the shade before adding more, if needed.

Chocolate Swiss Meringue Buttercream

Omit vanilla extract. Fold in 4 oz [115 g] melted and cooled semisweet chocolate to the whipped frosting, mixing gently until the chocolate is evenly blended into the buttercream.

Maple Swiss Meringue Buttercream

Use granulated maple sugar in place of powdered sugar. Taste and add 1 tsp [5 ml] maple extract if you want a stronger maple kick.

Lemon Swiss Meringue Buttercream

Omit vanilla extract. Mix in the finely grated zest and juice of a half lemon (about 1 tsp [5 ml] zest and 2 tbsp [30 ml] juice).

Salted Caramel Swiss Meringue Buttercream

Omit vanilla extract. Fold in ½ cup [125 ml] homemade or store-bought butterscotch sauce or salted caramel.

Coffee Swiss Meringue Buttercream

Omit vanilla extract. Whisk in 2 tsp [10 ml] pure coffee extract. Alternatively, dissolve 1 tbsp [15 ml] instant espresso powder into 2 tbsp [45 ml] hot water. Let cool. Fold into the buttercream.

Raspberry or Strawberry Swiss Meringue Buttercream

Fold ½ cup [125 ml] seedless raspberry or strawberry preserves to the buttercream. Add red food coloring if you want a deeper pink or red frosting.

Boozy Swiss Meringue Buttercream

Omit vanilla extract. Add 1 to 2 tbsp [15 to 30 ml] liqueur of your choice: Bourbon, Kahlua, Frangelico, Chambord, Bailey's, Disaronno, and Limoncello are just a few ideas that'll make for a delightful grown-up version of Swiss Meringue Buttercream.

Mocha Swiss Meringue Buttercream

Use Chocolate Swiss Meringue as a base. Whisk in 2 tsp [10 ml] pure coffee extract. Alternatively, dissolve 1 tbsp [15 ml] instant espresso powder into 2 tbsp [30 ml] hot water. Let cool. Fold into the buttercream.