

## **Peppermint Meringue Drops** *from Urban Sacred Garden*



Meringues are certainly outside my comfort zone, but I think these turned out pretty stellar for my first try. Anytime a recipe relies on the consistency of an egg white I get a little nervous. But thanks to my trusty, new Kitchenaid Mixer this recipe was a walk in the park...or at least the initial mixing was. The meringues I have pictured aren't yet dipped in chocolate, but I highly recommend it to complete the recipe. The peppermint and bittersweet chocolate complement each other beautifully.

Yield: About 40 Meringues

### **INGREDIENTS:**

4 Egg Whites at room temperature

1/4 Tsp Cream of Tartar

1 Cup Superfine Baker's Sugar\*

1/4 Tsp Peppermint Extract

1 1/2 Tsp Cornstarch

Red Gel (not liquid) Food Coloring

1 Cup Bittersweet Chocolate Pieces, melted

\*If needed you can pulse regular granulated sugar in a food processor.

### **DIRECTIONS**

1. Preheat oven to 200 degrees. Line a clean baking sheet with parchment paper. Through this entire process ensure no oil is on any surfaces or in any mixing bowls. Oil will ruin your meringues.
2. In a warm bowl (heat with hot water and then dry before adding ingredients) of an electric mixer fitted with a wire whisk, whip *room temperature* Egg Whites and Cream of Tartar (Cream of Tartar acts as a stabilizer and keeps your meringues from flaking). Beat on low speed until Egg Whites are frothy, about 3 minutes.
3. Increase mixer to medium speed. Gradually add Superfine Sugar 1 tablespoon at a time. Once all sugar is added stop mixer momentarily and quickly scrape down the sides of the bowl to ensure all ingredients are incorporated.
4. Turn mixture on high speed and continue beating for about 10 minutes until mixture is stiff and glossy and all sugar has dissolved. Sprinkle Peppermint Extract and Cornstarch on top of meringue mixture and whip for 30 seconds to incorporate.
5. Fit a pastry bag with a 1/2 inch star tip. Using a small paintbrush (which is reserved for food use only) paint 3 stripes along the inside of the pastry bag with Red Gel food coloring. Fill the bag with meringue, shaking bag down firmly to push out all air and secure top by twisting shut. (This turned a little messy for me because my pastry bag was too small.) Note: A few days after I made these meringues I picked up the December 2011 edition of Bon Appétit magazine with peppermint meringues on the cover which included a wonderful detailed instruction on piping a perfect meringue, if only I'd had that handy in advance of my meringue making.
6. Hold bag perpendicular to the parchment paper covered baking sheet and start piping 1/2 inch balls. Lift the bag straight up quickly to form little peaks. Fit as many meringues as possible on the baking sheet, they won't

spread much and can be fairly close.

7. Bake meringues in a preheated oven for 1 1/2 hours or just until bone dry but not colored (bake in the upper 1/2 of the oven). Meringues may still feel slightly tacky to the touch, but do not let them brown, they will feel dry as they sit and cool.

8. Remove from oven and allow to cool for 1-2 hours until light and crisp. Melt Bittersweet Chocolate in the microwave or on the stove top in a double boiler. Dip bottoms of meringues in the chocolate and sit back on the parchment paper to firm up. Chocolate will dry in about an hour and will easily release from the parchment once dry. Meringues will keep for a few days. Enjoy!