

Mint Buttercream Icing

Adapted from Martha Stewart's Cupcakes book

Makes about 3 ½ cups

Ingredients:

2 large eggs, separated

½ cup sugar

2/3 cup milk

1/3 teaspoon vanilla extract

2/3 cup chopped fresh mint leaves

1 lb (4 sticks) unsalted butter, room temp

¼ tsp peppermint extract (make sure it is

peppermint and not mint extract)

Instructions:

1. In an electric mixer, fitted with a whisk, mix egg yolks and ¼ cup of the sugar on high speed for 2 to 3 minutes, until pale and thick.
2. Prepare an ice water bath by filling your sink with a few inches of water and adding lots of ice to it.
3. Bring milk, vanilla and mint leaves just to a boil in a medium saucepan. Remove from the heat.
4. Whisk about 1/3 of milk mixture into yolk mixture to temper the yolks. Then pour yolk mixture into pan with the rest of the milk mixture and whisk to combine.
5. Attach a candy thermometer to side of pan and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until mixture reaches 185 degrees. Remove from heat.
6. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve into a heatproof bowl. Discard the solids.
7. Set bowl in ice bath and stir until cool.
8. In another bowl of an electric mixture, fitted with a paddle, cream butter on medium-high speed until pale and fluffy.
9. Beat in chilled yolk mixture.
10. Heat egg whites and remaining ¼ cup sugar in a clean, bowl of an electric mixer, set over a pan of simmering water. Whisk constantly until mixture is warm to touch and sugar has completely dissolved.
11. Place bowl in mixer, fitted with clean whisk. Start on low speed and gradually increase to medium-high speed. Whisk until stiff (but not dry) peaks form and mixture is completely cool. This should take about 10 minutes.
12. Add egg white mixture to butter mixture. Switch to paddle attachment and beat on medium-high speed until smooth.
13. Beat in peppermint extract.
14. Keep icing at room temperature if using the same day. If using later, place in an airtight container and refrigerate up to 3 days. Before using, allow icing to return to room temperature and beat with paddle attachment on low speed until smooth, about 5 minutes.