

How I found *the best* Macaron *recipe*

*recipe
included*



natália
MENDONÇA

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Macaron
recipe

Natália Mendonça

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All information contained in this ebook comes from my own experience of several years in Pastry and macaron production. Although I believe that this ebook has all the information needed for you to test the macaron recipe it discloses, your particular situation and / or condition may not perfectly fit the methods and techniques taught herein. Thus, you should use and adjust this information according to your situation and needs. At no point in this ebook there is any intention of disrespecting, humiliating or belittling you or any other person, office or institution. If you do believe that any part of this ebook is in any way improper or inappropriate and should be deleted or adjusted, please contact me directly at contato@natmendonca.com.br.

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Natália Mendonça

How I found *the best*
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João Pessoa
Transforma com a gente
2018

The background is a solid light green color. It is decorated with various white line-art icons of kitchen items. At the top, there is a blender, a bowl, a pitcher, a jar, and a rolling pin. At the bottom, there is a grater, a cutting board, a colander, a cake, a sifter, a stand mixer, a bowl, and a rolling pin.

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1. Introduction

Hi :)

I'm Natália, but you can call me Nat. That's how my friends and followers usually call me.

I was born in João Pessoa, Paraíba State, Brazil.

As a child, I always loved to play with food. It was my favourite thing to do. My mother used to encourage this a lot: she would always engage me in the kitchen, whether it was in a cookie recipe or making some brazilian brigadeiros. I used to have a lot of fun, but I could never guess that one day I would actually do this for a living.

By the time I was 15 or 16 years old I started to test chocolate truffle recipes and, eventually, offered them to some of my friends. They suggested that I should sell those sweets.



And this was how it all began. First to my classroom, then to my whole grade along with teachers and coordinators. I used to get compliments from everybody and that made me feel really good.

"But the best thing from this experience - and something that really got me moving - was the fact that I could make my own money ..."

I didn't have to ask my parents for some money when I wanted to do certain things. Savouring my financial independence was a key factor - I could not only buy things that I wanted back then, but also help my parents with paying some bills. We were facing some difficult times.

My story with macarons

A couple of years later, a French chef who was friends with my father showed me a little box full of pretty unusual cookies and offered me one. It consisted of two cookies sandwiched with a filling. I found it rather strange, unlike anything I have ever seen or tasted before.

He introduced me to it, saying that the little cookie was a macaron. I found its name even stranger and asked him what it was and how it was made, being the curious girl I've always been. He then told me that it was a French sweet treat, and that it was quite hard to bake. I admit I was intrigued by that statement...

... .. I had this sentence echoing in my head: **"It is quite hard to bake, it is quite hard to bake"**... I was challenged by that.

After that, I did some research on the internet and went through something that might have happened to you: finding all sort of contradictory information about macarons. Some recipes would call for aged egg whites, while others indicated the opposite. Some called for cooked meringues, while others told you to go with the raw one. I got really confused. I didn't know what recipe to trust, since they all contradicted each other. And now what? From where should I start?

I then decided to randomly choose a recipe and start my tests. And let me tell you a secret: it was not before 17 or 18 attempts that I got to make my first macarons. Looking back then, they didn't come out perfectly. In fact, they were quite ugly. But I got it right. For the first time, I got it right. They finally had their feet and were crunchy outside and soft inside!

I felt so, so good for having finally made it! I started to get macaron orders and that really helped me professionally. Since there were hardly anyone making them in my city, I was able to offer something special to my clients. And even though I was new in the field, people would come and order my product.

In addition to that, the macaron allowed me to save money and reinvest it in courses and new equipment. It is a very profitable sweet (compared to brigadeiros, brownies and cakes, for example) and although I had some losses, the price I charged for a macaron was higher because it is indeed a highly esteemed treat.

But you know what? Both professional and financial factors were not determinant.

For me, what really mattered was achieving this personal reward. I felt a lot more confident when I found out I was capable. And also for knowing that I could use this method (of multiple attempts) to get anything, to overcome any challenge in my life. That was great.

I haven't stopped ever since and have constantly sought for improvements in the recipe. Because I struggled so much before finally succeeding, I have created this strong bond with macarons. Currently, it is what I most love to do and to talk about.



What have I been up to?

I no longer work with macaron orders. Instead, I help people succeeding in and improving their macarons. I tutor in-class courses in Brazil and in other countries, invited by some international schools.



Recife, Brazil, 2018



São Paulo, Brazil, 2017

I also have an online course in which I managed to organize my method from the beginning to the end, using a step by step that have helped my students succeed in making macarons using their own oven and conditions.

And this is my greatest reward: watching a student succeed after my guiding and have the very same feeling I had when I first got it right. This is when I realize my work has a purpose. This is when it all fits.



Dubai, 2017

Feedback from students Instagram

Thanks for your awesome advices 🥰



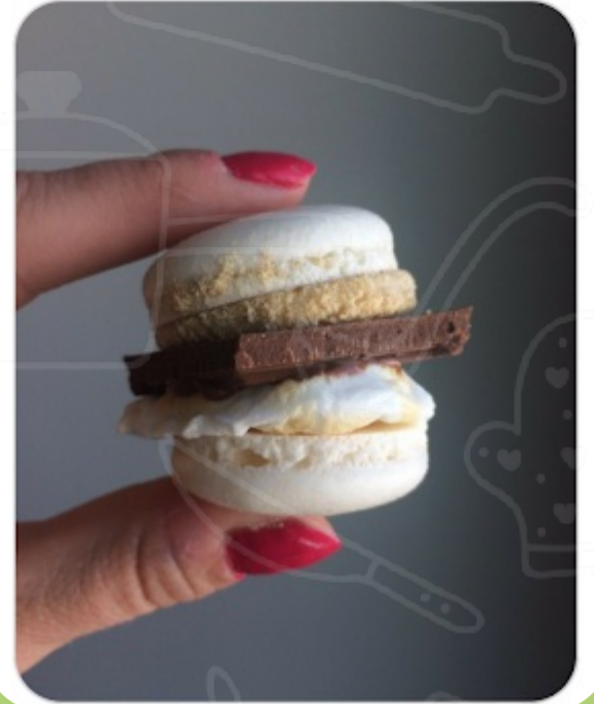
📷 Responder

I did my best macarons ever after your online class

Thank you SO MUCH for your guidance! I was dancing in my kitchen last night because of how amazing these turned out 📷 Can't wait to keep improving 🥰



I can't thank you enough for your amazing recipe and tutorial! Made the macaron shells into Smore's today 🥰. You rock!



Updated Material

The news is that I've come up with a new material, adding doubts and questions that I got from students since I started selling my first macaron video lesson. Having thousands of students across the globe testing the recipe I use and my own method enabled me to find many other solutions for climate, ingredients and oven differences, and so on. I now have a much more detailed video lesson.



2. Why did I write this ebook?

This ebook is not only about getting a good macaron recipe. Here you´ll find the recipe I use – a foolproof recipe, tested and approved. It is definitely the best recipe I have ever found. You will also be given some tips on how to get your macarons right.

When I first started using Instagram, I meant to have a personal profile and share pictures of my private life. Being such a macaron fanatic, I ended up posting an ever-increasing number of macaron photos. Eventually, followers would ask me for the recipe: “Natália, would you share your recipe?”.

"You're going to have a **foolproof recipe**, tested and approved...

Here you´ll find **tips** on how **to get your macarons right.**"

The funny thing was that I could feel people were actually scared of getting no for an answer, probably because I used to get them myself. I then started to email people with the recipe. As a result, my Instagram was booming and I would spend quite a lot of time sending emails.

In order to save my working time, another solution I found after that was to post the recipe on Instagram. It was lovely to see people's reactions: they wouldn't believe I had openly posted my recipe... But, truly, it was a time-saving strategy.

I also came up with the hashtag #macaronat so I could keep track of the people who were trying my recipe and succeeding.





I went on posting photos after that and it became gradually difficult to spot the recipe on my profile. People were struggling to find it.

I made it available on my website but there I didn't have enough space or interaction with my followers. Finally, after many requests, I created this ebook for people who wish to start exploring the world of macarons.

3. What is a macaron and why would you make it?

Macarons are classic French treats, as popular in France as a traditional brigadeiro is in Brazil. It has been confectioned for hundreds of years and it's made from a combination of meringue (egg whites beaten with sugar) and almond flour.

The recipe only calls for four ingredients: egg whites, refined sugar, confectioner's sugar and almond flour. A few items, but many details to keep an eye on.



What makes a macaron?

There are two distinctive features in a macaron:

-- Each macaron shell has **two different textures** – a crunchy outside and a soft interior.



- It must rise evenly in the oven, forming its **'feet'**. If your macaron lacks this feature, then it shouldn't be called a macaron.



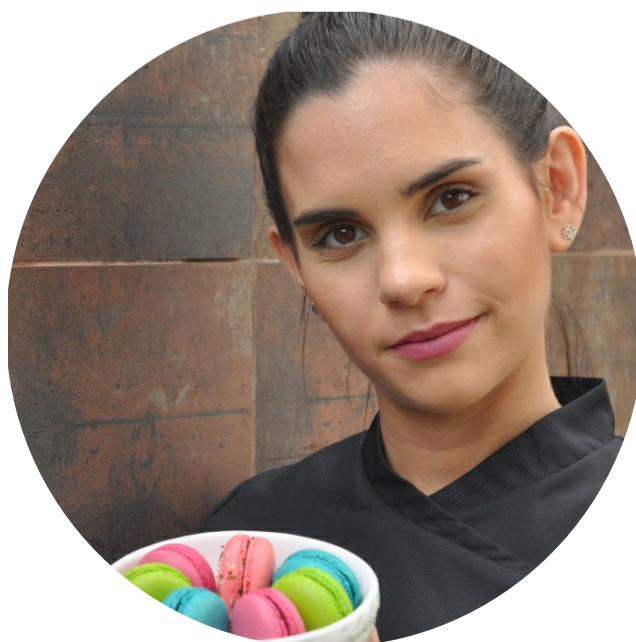
Why is it so hard to make macarons?

From my experience, it is ultimately due to the lack of material available online. When they do exist, they are generally random, confusing and sometimes even contradictory. There's always something missing...

Regarding the recipe, there is something you should know which is very important: macarons are very delicate sweets. They require a certain temperature in the oven, accurate baking time and an exact batter consistency. If you don't have a guideline, you will really need to test it 17, 18 times, like I did, until you get it right.

Why making macarons is worth it?

- 1) Because it is considered a very challenging recipe, only a few people try making it. It is then a very promising field. When you start it, you will most likely be among only a few others, or even the first person to make macarons in your area.
- 2) Being such a fancy treat, people don't usually bargain when paying for macarons. It is extremely profitable. By investing a little money you can start your own production and sell it for a good price..
- 3) Pastry chefs who make macarons are highly esteemed in the pastry world. The macaron recipe gives you the status of being capable of doing something that very few people do, which brings admiration and recognition. If you can make good macarons, the sky is the limit.





4. The best macaron recipe I have ever used

The recipe I'm sharing with you is the best I have ever found. I have tested a number of recipes, with all types of meringues and since I found this one, I can't possibly change it for any other recipe. It is indeed quite balanced, less sweet and made from an Italian meringue, a much more stable meringue that makes it easier for you to achieve good results.

The recipe is undoubtedly a turning point in macaron making. If you don't have balanced proportions of ingredients, you will never get it right. It really is about having a method and following a step by step to get your macarons done.

I like to establish patterns in order to have a very precise method, so you can reproduce it at home the same way I make it in my kitchen.

I always tell my students that making macarons demand willingness to constantly improve. Your first macaron will be largely different from the ones you'll be making two, five or tens years later. I've learnt this from my experience.

Something really important is to handle frustration if you fail your first attempt. You need to overcome it, be resilient and understand that one is not born ready. You got to take one step at a time. You will need this to achieve the perfect macaron.

"... Something really important is to handle frustration if you fail your first attempt. You need to overcome it, **be resilient.**"

"Reading this ebook will not bring you the prettiest macarons on earth. You've got to **put it into practice**, follow each step of the method, practice and improve.

Macarons are not only theory.

Theory does help a lot, but you have to **practice, practice, practice...** And be constantly open to new strategies, seeking better results."

Continuous improvement

These images show the progress I had on my macarons since 2009, when I started, until 2016. I love to show this progress so you can see how the skill comes from practicing and improving the recipe.

What really helps me is to look at my macaron and think about what I can improve the next time I bake it. Can I make the feet more even? Can I make the top smoother? Is there a better temperature I should try working with? This helps me a lot.

" What really helps me is to **look at my macaron** and think about what **I can improve** the next time I bake it "



2009



2010



2012



2014



2015



2016



2018



2017



This is something the macaron has taught me and that I'm always making use of to improve. The habit of questioning is also something I apply for anything else in life.

How can I be a better person? What can I improve in the way I deal with people or my work? The way I lead my life, my point of view, my attitudes? It is essential that you achieve this continuous improvement in all aspects of life, not only in macaron making.

So, here we go! It's recipe time!

Macaron batter

Ingredients:

55g of egg whites [1]
150g of almond flour
150g of confectioner's sugar
150g of refined sugar
35g of water
55g of egg whites [2]

Method:

1. Sift the almond flour and confectioner's sugar together in a bowl. Add the first part of the egg whites and food colouring in the desired color. Mix until you have a paste.
2. For the Italian Meringue: lace the sugar and water in a pan and cook until 117 degrees Celsius (use your thermometer). Just a little before your syrup is done, turn on the stand mixer and start whipping the second part of the egg whites on the highest speed. Gently stream the boiling syrup into the whites, with the mixer still on the highest speed. Leave it to whip until the mixture cools.

3. Turn off the mixer and tip half of the meringue into the almond flour, sugar and whites mixture. Fold it with a spatula, with very gentle and circular movements.
4. Once fully combined, add in the remaining meringue. This step is called the macaronage and it's extremely important in the process. Be even gentler and make circular movements from the bottom to the top. If you overmix the batter, it will be too runny. If you undermix it, your macarons will look like rough cookies. The batter is ready when it becomes glossy and falls off the spatula in a ribbon. To test the readiness, lift the batter with a spatula until the edge of your bowl and watch how it falls off.
5. As soon as you get it done, transfer it to the piping bag fitted with a round tip. Place the silpat onto the tray and pipe the mixture into approximately 3 cm diameter circles. Once you fill the tray, lift it and gently hit the counter to flatten the macarons out and get rid of any peaks.
6. Bake them in a pre-heated oven at 120 degrees Celsius, for 18 minutes. This is an average temperature for your first test.



7 Tips for perfect macarons

I know you're pretty excited to start your tests, but there are still a few tips that I'm sure will be handy.

I recommend that **you read it thoroughly before baking.**

:)

5. Seven Tips for perfect macarons

1 Organization and concentration

before starting your recipe. Something that really helps me is to think: "I'm going to make a macaron recipe. From this time on, I'll be entering a laboratory and I'll be watching and observing. I'm going to fully dedicate my attention to the recipe and really try to understand what is going on."

"I'm going to make a macaron recipe.
From this time on, I'll be entering a
laboratory and I'll be watching and
observing. I'm going to fully dedicate my
attention to the recipe and really try to
understand what is going on."

When making your macaron recipe, keep your phone away and tell people that you will be doing something that demands a lot of concentration.

Also, respect the macaron time. Its time differs from ours. The recipe has a process, a certain time, and if you don't respect it, it can all go wrong.

2 The meringue

The meringue is the base of your recipe. A good, quality meringue is largely responsible for the success of your macaron. Before starting, make sure your stand-mixer bowl is spotless. It should be completely dry and free of any traces of grease.

My suggestion is to wipe both the bowl and the wire whisk with alcohol, assuring there is not a single trace of water or grease.



3 Food Colouring

Something I am frequently questioned about is what kind of food colouring to use in the macaron recipe. You should always go with the powdered or gel versions of it. Never use liquid colouring because this added humidity will affect the recipe's structure. If you want to get strong colours such as black, red or navy blue, go with the powdered one. And why is that? You will need a large amount of colouring to get to these hues and if you use the gel version, you might lose the structure of the recipe as well.



In a nutshell: You can use gel food colouring for all shades of colours, but for strong hues, you should opt for the powdered ones

4 Macaronage

As you can see in the recipe, the macaronage consists of combining the Italian meringue with the almond flour and confectioner's sugar mixture. This is one of the most important moments in macaron making because if you can't get the exact consistency, your macaron will not form its feet – which is essential for its beauty and presentation. In the macaronage process, undermixing will give you rough cookies, with peaks on their tops, while overmixing will produce an overly runny batter. They will stick to one another and this might lead to various issues, including lopsided shells, shrinkage after being removed from the oven and dark spots on their top.



To check your batter readiness, lift the spatula up to the edge of your bowl and watch how it falls off. It should have a constant, nonstop flow, but at the same time it shouldn't fall off too fast.

Readiness really is rather subjective, since each batter will develop its own way. So my tip is to test the recipe multiple times and, by doing this, you will train your eye to be able to identify each of these features more quickly.



Macaronage:
one of the most
important moments
of the recipe

5 Oven

Macarons demand an accurate baking time. In fact, every pastry chef when faced with a new oven, or anyone who starts making macarons, need to find the perfect temperature to bake in a certain oven. You may, for instance, know that your macaron can be baked at between 100°C and 140°C, but you will need to find the perfect temperature for your own oven.

My suggestion is that you pipe only six shells and put it in the oven. Leave the rest of your batter aside. Once you see how the recipe first develops, remove it from the oven and pipe other six shells onto the tray, baking them at a different temperature. This way you can have a number of tests from a single recipe instead of wasting an entire batch for only one test.

6 Fillings

If the weather you're in is too humid, opt for fatty fillings such as chocolate ganache or buttercream. Runny fillings, like jam, tend to soften the macaron shell.

Something else to take into consideration when making a filling is the amount of sugar used in the recipe. The shell is already quite sweet and the amount of sugar called in the macaron recipe is structural, not to taste. Hence, you can't alter its structure by reducing the amount of sugar in it. The solution is to balance the sweetness with the filling. That being said, always prefer citrus fillings or bittersweet chocolate for an excellent balance of taste.

The following recipe is a filling that I love and that will surely be a crowd-pleaser in your macaron flavours:

Cheesecake Filling

Ingredients:

200g of white chocolate, melted

150g of cream cheese

Pinch of salt (very little)

Lemon zest

Method:

1. Combine the first four ingredients with a whisk and use it :)
2. Freeze for up to two months.

* You can use it plain or with some fruit jam.
Lay a bed of the filling on the macaron shell and add a bit of jam on top of it, in the center, then sandwich it.



7 Bake, bake, bake

And my last tip to you is: **put this ebook into practice!!!** I hope you not only gather the tips you find on the internet, but actually test them and see if they work for you. Once you get your recipe right, email me a picture of your results. It will be a great pleasure to celebrate this achievement with you. If you share your achievement on Instagram please include hashtag #macaronat so I can see your post and like your macaron.

I wish you beautiful macarons!!!





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