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Macarons: Authentic French Cookie Recipes From The Macaron Cafe



Synopsis

PRAISE FOR AUTHOR CECILE CANNONE'S MACARONS: "Feather-light, at once crunchy and chewy, and distinguished by rich buttercream filling." • The New York Times "Rival those in Paris." • Zagat "Addictive." • Time Out New York "Cuter than a cupcake and more delicious, the adorable macaron is trÃ©s en vogue. Now you can make these crowd-pleasing cookies at home! Packed with helpful and inspiring color photos, this book offers everything you need to bake stunning macarons, including: "Step-by-step instructions for baking perfect shells "Simple tricks for making smooth, melt-in-your-mouth fillings "Decorating tips for dazzling, artistic cookies "Delectable flavors from chocolate and espresso to lemon and pistachio

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Customer Reviews

I have two Macaron books, this one and the one by Hisako Ogita. I like to make bullet points: * Hisako's book looked slightly complicated. I've been baking for 25 years but never did a macaron. I knew they were harder than my usual cupcake so for some reason Hisako's book made me not try it right away. This book is VERY small, but in a good way. First, you can read the whole thing in 10 minutes to learn how to make a macaron. Second, it's easy to understand what she is telling you to do. Third, her pictures of her bakery look nice. * She tells you how to make a basic French or Italian macaron shell. No frills. Good for a beginner macaronist like me. Essential. However, since it has no frills, I'm glad I have Hisako's book because Hisako actually tells you how to flavor a shell. Even with no extra flavor, the basic shell is crazy tasty though! Let me repeat, good for a beginner first

time macarooner!* What I don't like: 1. she calls for 2.5" circles. I made templates. Puzzled when I couldn't get the large number of macaron shells on a half sheet like she said, I pressed on. I believe this is a typo in the book. My macarons were HUGE. I like big cookies so it wasn't a big deal, but frankly, I think 1.5" is too small, 2" is just right, and 2.5" is too big. My husband found a true to scale picture of her macarons from her cafe and they are 2" in size...(three fingers thick). Hisako's are 2.5 cm large, so did she get her units wrong since she is French? I don't know. Her oven timing and temperatures were perfect for my extra large 2.5 " macarons though. 2. I added too much egg white powder since I live in Houston Tx. Perhaps, adding how much you should put in based on relative humidity would be helpful? That sounded nerdy. I think I will accept the blame for this oops :P 3. Other reviewers are right: she does not tell you how to decorate the macarons as nicely as she does. Nuts :(4. I made my macarons pink with a dark chocolate ganache. It was VERY tasty. However, my ganache did not solidify in 30 minutes like she says it would. I had to pop it in the fridge. She also never mentions to double boil it. I prefer double boiling (putting it in a glass bowl over a pot of semi-boiling water) because it doesn't burn the milk or chocolate. That's just me. I was surprised she didn't mention that trick. It does taste extremely good though :) 5. Over and over she says use a Pastry 8 tip. I have the Ateco complete large round tip set and the Wiltons like 60+ tip pack. I don't have a number 8! Anyways, for a 2.5 " circle, I had to use my biggest tip. I don't know if others had that problem. 6. NEW ADDITION TO REVIEW: Just made macarons again with 2" circles. Oven baking time was way too high this time. I think 9 minutes works better but I can't say for sure because I kept lowering my time with each batch. I made the chocolate orange ganache. I believe the recipe is OFF. I put in the recommended 1 tsp of orange extract and 1 orange peel zested and my macarons now have a bitter initial taste to them that I hate. I'm quite unhappy with today's batch :(I'm guessing it's best to use 1/4 a teaspoon of extract to be safe. 2" macarons are better :) I'm adding a picture to my review of my first attempt at macarons. Check it out. Hope this was helpful. I'm very glad I bought the book, even with the "flaws". Who knows if it was her book or me... It's still a wonderful beginner macaroner book. ANOTHER NEW ADDITION TO REVIEW (7/17/2011)* Hey guys, I found a book that tops this one for a basic recipe. With Macarons I could never get the cookie perfect. I suggest trying Mad About Macarons! for your after-beginner book. It still took me 5 tries to get the cookie perfect but I just did it today. The book is by Jill Colonna. I mix recipes from the Macarons book with this book, for fillings and stuff. But for the cookie part, I use this new book. The ingredient ratios are different, you need a few more tools, but it tells you how to get perfect macaron circles and I no longer get cracks or oil stains or burnt shells! I'll write a sep review for that book so please see that. THANKS!

Over the last month I have perfected the french meringue macarons. I think the ratio that is used for the french meringue is incorrect and needs to be more like 1.2/2.35 grams almonds/sugar for every gram egg white. I also use a hand mixer or whisk as it is much easier to see the meringue and ensure you do not over beat the mixture. I would also recommend that you invest in a copper bowl. I have the Mauviel Copper 10-Inch Bowl with Ring which I bought on when it was on special. Also I recommend a lower heat for the french macaron say 290F for 16 minutes. Although I feel there are issues with the meringue recipe I certainly enjoyed experimenting with the different buttercreams and ganache that are in the book. That being said there are some issues with these recipes. For example with the ganache I recommend that you don't heat the chocolate but rather the cream and pour it over the room temperature chocolate. Also go easy on any of the essence or oils! Put in a drop or two, then mix, then taste and then a few more if needed. The book itself has some wonderful ideas and beautiful clear pictures. The different buttercreams and ganache are yummy, but the macaron shell recipes need some fine tuning.

I have made macarons several times with various recipes and just have absolutely no idea how so many other reviewers have successfully made macarons with this book. Despite my misgivings upon initially reading through them, I decided to go ahead and try the recipes exactly as written. I'm a glutton for punishment and just love wasting endless hours in the kitchen and tossing loads of money out the window for almond flour. The size of the cookies is huge if piped at 2 1/2 inches and the measurements are definitely off for the recipe. All the numbers are just plain wrong. However, if you do decide to pipe them that large for whatever reason, just know you will have to increase the baking time immensely. Also, the #8 tip is totally non-existent and, if it were, would not be the correct tip as it is much too small. Something in the range of #11, around 1/8 inch, is actually what you're looking for. It seems other people are a lot more forgiving than me because, despite the inaccuracies some have given the book a pretty decent rating. Personally if I'm spending my money on something that's sole purpose is to give me directions, especially in regard to something like macarons which must be exactly, perfectly done, I at least expect accurate measurements. If I have to totally re-write the thing then what is the purpose of buying the book in the first place? I feel very badly for those who have never made a macaron and used this book. The book itself is cheap enough but, money aside, these cookies are difficult enough to pull off without having to bumble through poorly written recipes. For macarons, you really need to start with a good recipe so you can focus on your technique. This book makes that impossible and just sets one up for failure. I can

imagine a few becoming completely discouraged after trying these recipes, blaming it on their own technique and thinking they would never be able to make a good macaron. Not true!! Please believe me...if you are having problems with making macarons using this book, it is not you! Find another recipe and keep trying! Once you get it, you will be on a roll!! I'm hoping this review will save some the ego blow, time and trouble. I mean, I love a challenge and consider myself to be a fairly expert level baker....but baking should be fun after all, not so frustrating that you want to blow up the oven at the end of the day!! If it's just a matter of the conversions being done wrong than that is very sloppy publishing and I would be livid about my recipe being so horribly misrepresented if I was the author. I would give it one star but, as the creams are good, tacked another one on. The book is cute, there are a few good tips (although not really explained as thoroughly as I think they should be) and the creams are nice. However, I would sincerely recommend another book, or even to just find a good recipe on the internet. There are many very good ones. I'm sure the Macaron Café makes wonderful cookies but they don't make a good book.

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