

Pecan Meringue Cookies or “Forgotten Cookies”

Makes 34 - 48 cookies

These childhood treats are called “forgotten cookies” because you can prepare them the day before and leave them in the oven overnight to finish baking.

Chef’s Secret:

With proper preparation, egg whites can increase 6 to 8 times their volume. Always start with perfectly clean bowls and whisks, as any oil will deflate your meringue. Use fresh eggs and easily separate the whites when they are cold. Leave the whites out of the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes to bring them to room temperature.

Ingredients:

4 large egg whites at room temperature

¼ tsp. cream of tartar

1 cup sugar (preferably superfine)

1/3 cup coarsely chopped pecans

½ tsp. vanilla extract

6 ounces chocolate chips or disks (preferably 60% cacao or darker)

1 tsp. shortening

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line 2 large baking sheets with parchment paper or silpat.
2. Using an electric mixer, beat egg whites on high until soft peaks form.
3. Reduce mixer speed to medium. Add 2 Tbs. sugar plus ¼ tsp. cream of tartar. Continue adding 2 Tablespoons at a time, beating constantly until well combined.
4. After the final addition of sugar, increase mixer speed to high. Beat for 2 minutes or until mixture is stiff and glossy and the sugar has dissolved.
5. Using a rubber spatula, carefully fold in the vanilla and almonds. Drop the meringue batter by the spoonful onto the cookie sheets. Allow 1 – 2 inches between each cookie for spreading.
6. Place sheets in the oven, close the door and turn the oven off. Leave in the oven for at least 2 hours or over night.
7. Store finished cookies at room temperature in an airtight container.

For chocolate coating:

1. Place the chocolate and shortening in a heatproof container and melt it over a simmering pot of water. When the chocolate is mostly melted, remove the chocolate from the heat. Continue stirring to finish melting.
2. Line two cookie sheets with fresh parchment paper or silpat. One at a time, dip the bottoms of the finished meringues into the melted chocolate. Let the excess chocolate drain off and place the chocolate-dipped meringues on the prepared cookie sheets. Refrigerate for 1 hour or until the chocolate is set.

Recipe courtesy of Christina Dimacali of Clean Your Plate Personal Chef Service, Philadelphia