

Swiss Meringue Buttercream

Ingredients:

½ cup egg whites, separated from whole eggs

1 ¼ cups granulated sugar

3 sticks unsalted Challenge butter or other brand, room temperature and sliced into 1Tbsp. sections

2 tsp. vanilla extract

Instructions:

1. Place sugar and egg whites in a heatproof bowl (or stand mixer bowl). Fit the bowl over a pan of simmering water and whisk constantly. Scrape the sides of the bowl with a spatula to ensure all sugar crystals are incorporated into the mixture. Stir by hand until the sugar dissolves and the mixture reaches 160 degrees F on a candy thermometer. Immediately remove the bowl from the heated water.
2. Using a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat the mixture on high speed until **STIFF PEAKS** form, approx. 8-10 minutes.
3. Change to the paddle attachment and begin mixing at low speed. Add room temp. butter one piece at a time, beating until smooth after each addition. Once all butter is incorporated, increase the mixer speed to medium-high and mix until icing is creamy textured (3-5 minutes). Note it may change texture a few times (ranging from runny to curdled) but just keep mixing and it will come back together.
4. Add vanilla last and mix until just incorporated.
5. If you are using immediately, reduce speed to low and mix for a couple of minutes to reduce air bubbles in the mixture.

Note: If the butter is not the correct temperature the texture will not be smooth and velvety—refer to Meringue Troubleshooting Tips on next page.

Storage: Refrigerate for up to 1 week or freeze for up to 2 months, and always store in an airtight container. Defrost in the refrigerator overnight and bring to room temperature before re-beating.

Always re-beat before using to ensure smooth, velvety texture and less air bubbles.

Swiss Meringue Troubleshooting Tips:

- ✓ **Things that usually cause your egg whites not to whip to a STIFF PEAK:**
 - **Yolk bits in the egg whites** – Even small bits will impact whipped peak. Crack eggs in a separate bowl, then transfer them to the bowl for mixing with sugar for heating.
 - **Pasteurized Egg Whites** – Beware these will not beat to a stiff meringue unless you add a bit of cream of tartar or lemon juice to the mix and will likely need to whip for longer.
 - **Grease on Tools** – All kitchen bowls and tools must be grease free, clean and dry. Always freshly wash them, and rinse with vinegar or lemon juice in the water bath to ensure grease is removed.

- ✓ **Always remember if the buttercream does not come together smoothly it is most likely the meringue was not whipped until stiff or the butter was not the correct temperature.**
 - **Runny texture** - Place the buttercream in the refrigerator to cool it some and mix again until it blends properly.
 - **Curdled texture** – Warm the buttercream over a larger bowl of warm water and then mix again until it blends properly. You may also remove a small portion and warm it in the microwave until thinned, let cool slightly, then add to curdled mixture and remix thoroughly until smooth.
 - **Grainy texture** – At least a portion of the granulated sugar was not dissolved properly.

- ✓ **Room temperature is an ambiguous term**—if you can easily press a fingertip into a 1” pat of butter and leave an indent half-way down, but encounter some resistance, the butter is the correct temperature.