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PINK MERINGUE DROPS

Makes 16 dozen drops

This recipe can be easily halved for fewer drops.

- 4 large egg whites, room temperature
 - 1 cup sugar
 - Pinch of cream of tartar
 - 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
 - Pink food coloring
 - 6 ounces semisweet or bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped
 - 2 teaspoons canola oil or pure vegetable shortening
1. Preheat oven to 200° with two racks centered. Line four baking sheets with parchment paper. Fill a medium saucepan one-quarter full with water. Set the saucepan over medium heat, and bring water to a simmer.
 2. In the heatproof bowl of an electric mixer, combine egg whites, sugar, and cream of tartar, and place over the saucepan of simmering water. Whisk constantly until sugar is dissolved and whites are warm to the touch, 3 to 3 1/2 minutes. Test by rubbing between your fingers.
 3. Transfer bowl to electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment; whip, starting on low speed and gradually increasing to high, until soft peaks form, about 5 minutes. Add vanilla and just a few drops of food coloring; beat to combine, and continue beating until stiff peaks form.
 4. Fill a piping bag fitted with a 1/2-inch tip with the meringue. Pipe 3/4- to 1-inch drops onto prepared baking sheet; after each drop is piped by squeezing the bag, release from squeezing, and pull straight up with the bag to create the very fine curled tip on each drop. Bake until drops are hard to the touch but not browned, about 1 1/2 hours. Repeat to use all meringue. Meringue drops may be made a day ahead and kept in an airtight container at room temperature.
 5. Melt chocolate in a heat-proof bowl, or the top of a double boiler, set over a pan of simmering water, stirring occasionally. Stir in the oil or shortening until well combined. Dip the bottom of each cooled meringue drop into the melted chocolate; stick two together if desired. Turn upside down on a cooling rack, and let chocolate harden—this can take up to 50 minutes at room temperature—or just freeze on parchment paper for 5 minutes. Serve.

Photograph by: Gentl & Hyers