

Cleo Coyle's Little Chocolate Clouds

Recipe text and photos (c) 2010 by Alice Alfonsi
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"I had a dream there were clouds in my coffee..." One of songwriter Carly Simon's many inspired lines—and my inspiration for my Little Chocolate Clouds. These simple chocolate meringues are easy to whip up and bake. They are bursting with chocolate flavor yet still light and with the added bonus of protein.

Serve these as an after-dinner treat or eat them as a satisfying coffee break snack. You can even float one in a hot cup of joe or espresso. It will melt right into the liquid, giving you an instant mocha drink. The only tricky technique to

making this simple recipe is beating the egg whites, but I've included some tips for getting optimum results. May you eat them with joy! —Cleo

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Servings: Makes about 36 meringues

Ingredients:

4 egg whites (*room temperature*)
¼ teaspoon cream of tartar (*to stabilize egg whites*)
1 teaspoon vanilla
¼ teaspoon salt
1 cup sugar
3 Tablespoons unsweetened cocoa
Optional decorations: chocolate sprinkles,
chocolate chips, chopped nuts



Method:

Step 1 – Before You Begin: First preheat the oven to 300° Fahrenheit. Some notes to help you get the best results here: Start with a mixing bowl that is glass, metal, or ceramic. The bowl must be free of grease for your egg whites to whip up properly. (Grease clings to plastic bowls, which is why you should not use plastic.) Also, for best results, your egg whites should be room temperature. I simply set my cold eggs in a bowl of warm tap water for 2 to 3 minutes before cracking.

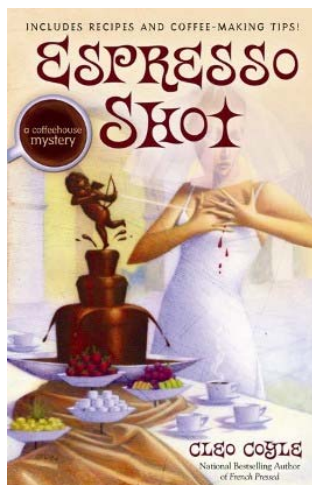
Step 2 – Whip Egg Whites: Place egg whites, cream of tartar, vanilla, and salt into bowl. Using an electric mixer or handheld whisk, begin to whip the whites. When you see soft peaks begin to form (see photo), continue beating while slowly sprinkling in the sugar. When the egg whites have become stiff and glossy (see photo), stop whipping. Sift the cocoa over the egg whites and gently fold into the mix. The whites will deflate a little, but that's okay.



Step 3 – Form Little Chocolate Clouds: Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. Make rustic little clouds by dropping batter in heaping teaspoons onto the paper. As a fun option and to create variety, try

sprinkling some with chocolate jimmies and others with finely chopped nuts or a few chocolate chips.

Step 4 – Bake in the preheated (300° F.) oven for about 25 to 35 minutes. They should be dry and somewhat firm on the outside (not hard just firm) and still gooey in the center. Remove from oven and carefully slide the parchment paper off the hot pan and onto a rack to cool. Note: Warm meringues will stick to the parchment paper. But as they cool, they will harden. Then you can easily lift them free and...



Eat with Joy!

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