

Coconut and Almond Macaroony Meringues with Mini Chips and Cherries

This cookie combines many of my favorite flavors and is a fabulous use for leftover egg whites. Please guard against over-mixing the meringue, though, as a few seconds too long can "break" the whites and mar the cookies' smooth finish. You want them to look glossy, not clumpy. (Then again, mine looked clumpy and I still ate 12 in an hour. They'll taste great regardless.)

Note, too, that this recipe calls for only 4 egg whites, or 1/2 cup liquid volume. You will have 2 whites (1/4 cup) left over if you made my crème brûlée.

Makes about 75 small cookies

1 cup toasted, chopped almonds (about 4.5 ounces)
1/2 cup sweetened, flaked coconut
1/4 cup granulated sugar, plus 4 teaspoons, divided
4 large egg whites (about 1/2 cup liquid equivalent)
Pinch cream of tartar
1/2 cup mini chocolate chips
3 tablespoons dried cherries, minced

Preheat the oven to 300 degrees. Line two baking sheets with Silpats or parchment.

Combine the almonds, coconut, and 1/4 cup sugar in a food processor and grind until powdery, about 10 to 15 seconds. Transfer to a large mixing bowl.

Using a hand-held electric mixer or stand mixer with the whisk attachment, beat egg whites until foamy. Add cream of tartar and continue beating, on high speed, until soft peaks form, about 1 minute. Slowly add the remaining 4 teaspoons sugar and continue beating until stiff but not dry, about 20 to 30 seconds longer.

Scrape egg whites into bowl with the nut mixture and fold in, along with the mini chips and cherries. Work quickly so the egg whites don't deflate.

Use a tiny scoop (1") to dollop the batter onto the prepared baking sheets, about 20-24 per sheet. Bake about 30 minutes, or until cookies turn toasty brown and feel relatively firm to the touch. Let cool completely on baking sheets, then transfer to an airtight container.