
Make Homemade Marshmallows with Karen Solomon

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

- Welcome to marshmallow class. I'm Karen Solomon, author of Asian Pickles; Jam It, Pickle It, Cure It; Can It, Bottle It, Smoke It; and blogger at ksolomon.com. We are gonna make some fabulous marshmallows today that are delicious, light, and airy. We're going to learn to make marshmallows. We're going to prepare the pan to make sure that your marshmallows don't become a sticky, gooey, mess and we're going to work with a candy thermometer to ensure that you get delicious results every time. Later, we'll roll the marshmallows in toasted coconut, powdered sugar, and cocoa powder for gorgeous and delicious gifts that are ready to give.

Chapter 2 - Materials

Materials

- This recipe will yield about 30 good sized marshmallows. To make this, I like to use an 8x8 square pan. That gives the marshmallows really nice thickness. To prepare the pan, I use a small, fine mesh sieve. That really helps get the powdered sugar in a nice even layer. Also to prepare the pan I use, a little bit of just a neutral flavored cooking oil, like canola and a little bit of paper towel just to wipe it around the edges really evenly. You'll also need a straight sided sauce pan. A straight side is really helpful if you're using a clip-on candy thermometer. If you have a fine lip on there, it'll work, but straight side is preferred. A little pastry brush or even a paint brush that you just use only for the kitchen is fine, and with a little bowl of water, just to wipe down any sugar crystals from the side of the pot. You'll need some water, a pinch of salt, three packets of gelatine. The gelatine is what helps the marshmallows set up and get that nice, firm texture that you can hold in your hand. One teaspoon of vanilla extract. I like to make my own, you certainly don't have to. Just buy one that's made from real vanilla, not that nasty imitation vanilla extract, okay? If you don't like vanilla, you can use peppermint, you can use lemon, you can use almonds, there's a lot of other extracts that you can use, and that's gonna impart a little bit of flavor to your marshmallows, too. In addition to that, we need one cup of light corn syrup, one cup of granulated sugar, and some additional water. You'll also require a really nice large cutting board, a good clip-on candy thermometer, some bowl scrapers, because making marshmallows is very sticky business, a good sharp knife, some parchment paper or wax paper. Either one will do, just something to keep the marshmallows from sticking, and a stand mixer. A stand mixer is really crucial for this recipe. You need something to beat the marshmallows into a frenzy, and your stand mixer needs to have the whisk attachment. This is really important. After your marshmallows are set, you need to roll them in something, because they're very, very sticky. White confectioner's sugar or powdered sugar is traditional, but for a little added flavor, texture, and color, I also like to use some toasted, shredded coconut, and some unsweetened cocoa powder. Whatever you choose though, you're gonna need about a cup of each.

Chapter 3 - Make Marshmallows

Prepare pan and ingredients

- To get this marshmallow party started we are gonna first prepare our pan, then we're gonna soften the gelatin in the stand mixer and then we're going to mix the sugar syrup together into our

saucepan and get it on the stove with the candy thermometer. So, first thing, prepare the pan. We're gonna pour about a teaspoon or so of vegetable oil. I like to use canola oil but anything that doesn't have a really strong flavor to it, into the pan and then I'm rubbing it around with a bit of clean paper towel. Be very thorough with putting the oil all over the pan, into every nook and cranny because there is nothing worse than a pan of marshmallows that won't release. In addition to the oil, we are gonna sprinkle the pan, really liberally, with powdered sugar. So this we've already sifted to get out all the lumps out of the sugar but using a tool like this, a fine mesh sieve of some sort, is really helpful for sprinkling the sugar on the pan. And it should be a nice, thick layer. First, cover the bottom. We need a little more sugar here. And remember, if you're not making a mess, you're not making marshmallows. All right, once you have the bottom really coated, then we wanna start working on the corners and the sides. Sprinkle really liberally with sugar. Again, this is gonna help your marshmallows to come out of the pan once they're set. We're gonna move over to our stand mixer and into this we're going to pour half a cup of tap water, and three packages of unflavored gelatin. We're gonna let this sit for a few minutes while we prepare some of the other ingredients just to let the gelatin soften a little bit. And one more. And just give that a little stir just to make sure all the gelatin is wet. Perfect. All right, this pan we're gonna put aside for now and we're gonna move onto our sugar syrup. Into our saucepan we're going to put one cup of sugar, one third a cup tap water, and a little pinch of kosher salt, and one cup of light corn syrup. It's really helpful to scrape this in. It likes to stick to the bowl, and just give it a little stir. Okay. We're gonna take this over to the stove. Clip on the candy thermometer and put it on medium-high heat until the mixture reaches 240 degrees. After you turn on the heat, use a nice, clean, silicone pastry brush to wipe down the sugar crystals off the side of the pot. This is gonna make sure that your marshmallows have a nice, smooth texture. Buying the right candy thermometer is really important. The very cheapest one is like this long, glass wand thing. I really don't recommend those. I've broken about three or four of those in my day. The one that I'm using is fully housed in metal and it has this really nice stop gap measure on the bottom that makes sure the thermometer does not touch the bottom of the pot, that's really important. It wasn't too much. It was about \$15. I highly recommend you make the investment if you plan on making any other kind of candy. It's also good for frying food as well. We're gonna let our little sugar mixture come to 240 degrees without stirring. That's really important. Don't disturb it, just let it come to a nice rapid boil and let it reach its temperature. When you make candy, temperature is really important. It's what gets the sugar syrup to the right consistency, and in this case, we're looking for 240 degrees, the soft ball stage. That's gonna make sure that your marshmallows are really tender, chewy and delicious. It gets to 220 degrees really quickly and you think, oh it's almost done, but it's not. Those last 20 degrees take a really long time, but by all means, don't leave the room. Keep your eye on the thermometer. Once that reaches 240, it is ready to pour that hot syrup into the stand mixer and you've got a go.

Whip marshmallows and pour into pan

- We're at 240 degrees. So I'm gonna take off the thermometer, put that aside. And then take our scalding hot mixture over here and turn the stand mixer on low and gently pour this in. Be really careful. This stuff is really hot. You can keep gently ramping up the power of your machine. Eventually you want it to be on high speed to really whip that marshmallow into a frenzy. You want it to turn white and get really sticky. Depending on your stand mixer, how old it is and how powerful it is, this can take anywhere from four to 13 minutes, depends on your machine. You know your marshmallows are done when they start pulling away from the side of the machine in long threads,

not big sheets. That's how you know that you have reached the right consistency. Whew! Our marshmallows are done. At this point, we can relax a little bit, the critical stage is behind us. Right here, I'm going to add a teaspoon of vanilla extract. And mix to incorporate. Oh yeah, that looks great. Dipping your bowl scraper in water is gonna help keep the marshmallow from sticking to it, but honestly, nothing helps 100%. And just try to work through the blades here and get as much marshmallow as you can into the bowl. I wouldn't blame you one bit if you stuck your finger in there for a quick taste. It's still warm. Once you've scraped off the whisk, bring your bowl over to your pan. This is so sticky, but so much fun. Okay. Pour this into the center of your prepared pan. Isn't that pretty? Try to scrape out as much as you can, but you know you always have to leave a little bit of marshmallow behind. With wet hands, make sure they're really wet, press down on the marshmallow. If you don't wet your hands, it's gonna stick to you completely. And really try to push it into the corners. Feel free to add a little extra water if you need it. Once those are smooth on top, you're gonna let the marshmallow sit in the pan and cool at room temperature, uncovered for about an hour. This way they'll firm up and reach the right texture.

Cut marshmallows and roll in sugar

- The marshmallows have cooled, and we are ready to cut and roll. Okay. You're going to need a really sharp knife. If you have a knife sharpener, break it out and sharpen your chef's knife before you get started. It's really gonna help cutting the marshmallows, which can be a little bit sticky and difficult. You're also going to need a glass of tap water nearby, something tall enough to take the entire knife blade. Keeping your knife wet as you cut is essential. It's going to really help with the sticky marshmallows. You're gonna go around the edge of the marshmallows and loosen it from the pan. Feel free to take your time with this, 'cause you want your marshmallows to come out in one piece. Gotta dip that knife again. Okay. So we've loosened it from all sides. Before we get the marshmallows out, we're gonna lay a little powdered sugar onto our cutting board. This is gonna help prevent the marshmallows from sticking to the board. And now, we're going to invert the marshmallows onto the board. There we go. If these marshmallows are just for you, to float on top of your own hot cocoa, or to roast over a campfire, go ahead and leave 'em as is, and just start cutting. But if your plan is to gift these marshmallows, I suggest that you cut off these uneven edges to make marshmallows that are more perfect square. So slow and careful cuts. I try to get a nice, even square. There we go. Now, these little scraps here, these are still delicious. It's a little treat of the chef. So dig your knife in really deeply and then cut across, and then use your other hand to try to get a clean cut. So at this point, you have some hard marshmallow decisions to make. If you're thinking you're gonna take these camping, and stick 'em on the end of a stick, you're probably gonna want larger marshmallow pieces. So I would suggest maybe one, two, three cuts. But if you're thinking smaller marshmallows for gifting and to be eaten as confections, I would suggest one, two, three, four, five cuts. We're gonna go with smaller ones. Because they're just cute and more candy-like. So we're gonna cut that right in half, and then work with one half at a time. Dipping my knife after each cut. And again, use your other hand to kind of guide the pieces apart. Then line these back up, and we'll cut them in half again, and then thirds. Go ahead and cut the other half of the marshmallows exactly the same way. We're gonna go ahead and get started rolling these. Now, regular white powdered sugar, confectioner's sugar, is the most basic topping for marshmallows. So why don't we start there? Take the marshmallow and roll it into the powdered sugar. Really coating all six sides, and pressing down into the sugar so that it doesn't feel sticky anymore. Just reserve it on a plate. You're gonna roll the marshmallows in the coconut and the cocoa powder in exactly the

same way. So this coconut I bought, it is unsweetened, and it is shredded. I recommend both, the unsweetened because the marshmallow is sweet enough, and also the shredded over the flake coconut because it's just the right size. With the coconut in particular, you really want to press the marshmallow down into it to get as much stuck to the marshmallow as possible. I toasted this coconut in a small skillet over medium high heat, stirring it really often with a wooden spoon. It doesn't take too long, just a few minutes. Make sure you don't burn it. These are lookin' good! For this last one, we are gonna roll it in some unsweetened cocoa powder. Don't use hot cocoa mix here. The marshmallows are plenty sweet enough.

Chapter 4 - Variations

Packaging ideas

- When it comes to packaging your marshmallows for a gift, you have lots of options. I like to use a set of chopsticks. Now these are not necessary, but it does help you keep from getting all that sugar and cocoa butter all over your fingers, while your gift wrapping. I'm moving the marshmallows onto a sheet of parchment paper, wax paper also works, really well. And you can put a few together, and fold them like so. Secure it with, a little piece of decorative tape. Now you have a lovely little hostess gift or something for a place setting or just a little stocking stuffer, just a cute little package to give someone. And of course, you can make this any size you like. Other options include, also with wax paper or parchment paper, putting in one marshmallow and just twisting it and giving it a little twist, like a little candy, like one little confection. Still, other options include, a pretty little jar and stacking them up in different colors and textures. They look really nice together. And of course, if you're going all out, there's a beautiful gift box of marshmallows. Kept in an airtight container, these marshmallows will last for at least four weeks or so. They always taste better, however, when they're really fresh. If you're gonna be storing them, keep them in between layers of parchment paper or wax paper. It's going to keep them from sticking to one another. Now we talked about the different flavor combinations you can make with different extracts. And that's wonderful, I encourage you to experiment but you can also roll your marshmallow in different flavors such as ground almonds or ground chocolate shavings. And if you prefer, you can also fold different flavors into your marshmallows, right when you add the vanilla extract. Think about maybe, dried cranberries or other dried fruit or cacao nibs, and that's also gonna add some nice texture there too. Your homemade marshmallows can beat any store-bought marshmallow in a bag, any day of the week. Enjoy them.