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BROWNE SWISS MERINGUE BUTTERCREAM

Yield: Makes enough to fill and ice a 10-inch (25-cm) cake

Ingredients

- 3 cups (675 g) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 8 large egg whites (about 1 cup/240 ml)
- 1 cup (200 g) granulated sugar
- Pinch of salt
- 1 cup (120 g) confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons Madagascar bourbon vanilla

Preparation

1. The night before making the buttercream, place 1 cup (225 g) of the butter in a sauté pan over medium-high heat.
2. Heat the butter until brown flecks appear. This will take 10 to 15 minutes. The butter will boil for a few minutes and then will settle and start to brown on the bottom. You need to keep your eye on this! Once the boiling settles, the browning happens very fast, so be sure to start stirring at that point. When you see a good amount of brown flecks, remove the pan from the heat and pour the butter into a bowl. Cover and let the butter cool overnight at room temperature.
3. The next day, in the top pan of a double boiler, heat the egg whites, granulated sugar, and salt, whisking constantly, until the sugar is dissolved. Heat the mixture slowly to avoid cooking the eggs!
4. Transfer the mixture to a stand mixer fitted with the whip attachment and whip on high speed until stiff peaks form, about 5 minutes.
5. Reduce the mixer speed to medium and add the remaining 2 cups (450 g) butter a little at a time. Add the browned butter, confectioners' sugar, and vanilla and mix until incorporated.