

Make some marchpane (marzipan)

Marchpane was a food substance made in Tudor times from ground almonds, sugar and rose water. Tudor cooks used to add food colourings to it and shape it into models of animals, flowers, fruits and even ships and castles!

Today a similar substance called marzipan is made from ground almonds, icing sugar and egg whites and used in cake decoration.

Make some marzipan by following this recipe:

1. Put two cups of ground almonds in a bowl.
2. Sift four cups of icing sugar onto the almonds.
3. Make a hollow in the centre of the mixture.
4. Take the whites of two eggs and lightly beat them.
5. Pour the beaten egg whites into the hollow in the bowl.
6. Stir the egg whites, almonds, and icing sugar to make a paste.
7. Knead the paste to make it smooth.
8. If the marzipan is a little dry, add a small amount of lemon juice.

Colouring marzipan

1. Take some marzipan and cut off a piece you want to use.
2. Select a coloured paste and place a small amount on the marzipan.
3. Knead the paste into the marzipan until the marzipan has taken up the colour evenly.
4. To make the colour darker add more paste and knead again.
5. To make the colour paler add more marzipan and knead again.

Try and make some marzipan models of your own.

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Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

For the recipe: 250 g (2 cups) ground almonds, 450 g (4 cups) sifted icing (confectioner's) sugar, 2 egg whites, large bowl, small bowl, egg whisk or fork, spoon. Alternatively, marzipan can be bought in some supermarkets and health food shops. It is also sold by suppliers of cake decorations. The type needed for colouring is called white marzipan. Food colouring pastes, knife, boards. Lemon juice.

Using the worksheet

This activity can be used as a homework or you may like to demonstrate it to the students or let the students help you. If high hygienic standards can be maintained the students could try the recipe for themselves. Worksurfaces and equipment need to be dust and grease free and very clean. Hands and fingernails need to be very clean or plastic gloves may also be used.

Younger students

The students will need help at home or in school.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Follow a recipe and make a food.
- Add colour correctly to marzipan.
- Make a marzipan model.

Older students

The students may be able to follow the instructions on the sheet on their own.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Follow a recipe and make a food.
- Add colour correctly to marzipan.
- Make a marzipan model.