



Tan Phay Shing holds a postgraduate degree in Mechanical Engineering and worked in engineering research before she chose to stay home to spend time with her children. However, her experiments did not end when she left the lab. Today, she continues to conduct experiments, albeit of a different kind, in her home kitchen, where she bakes creative macarons, choux pastries, cookies and chiffon cakes.

Phay Shing shares a blog, LovingCreations4U, with Susanne Ng, author of *Creative Baking: Chiffon Cakes*, *Creative Baking: Deco Chiffon Cakes* and *Creative Baking: Deco Chiffon Cake Basics*, where they delight readers with their unique creations. Visit their blog to learn more.

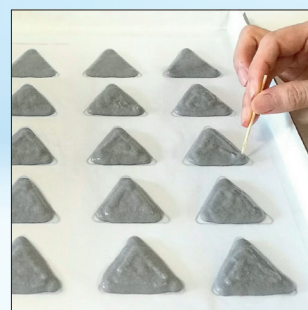
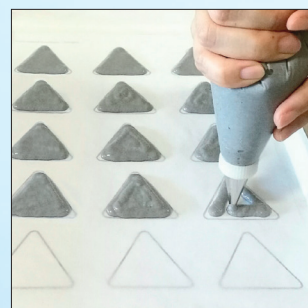
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CREATIVE BAKING

Macaron Basics

With their delicate meringue-based shells and variety of decadent fillings, macarons are the perfect treat to share with family and friends. Now you can take them to the next level with creative baker, Tan Phay Shing. Her first book, *Creative Baking: Macarons*, took the baking world by storm with a collection of macarons in the shape of animals, vehicles and things around the house. In this book, she shares all the basic techniques she uses to make her adorable macarons. With printable templates, video links and illustrated step-by-step instructions on how to whip up the perfect batter, pipe various shapes and designs, and even assemble macaron structures, this book will enable bakers of any skill level to create macarons of their dreams!



Tan Phay Shing

CREATIVE BAKING *Macaron Basics*

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CREATIVE BAKING

Macaron Basics

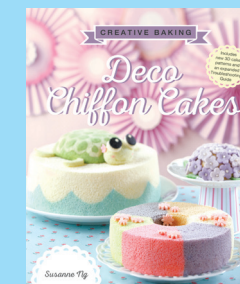
an illustrated step-by-step guide



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Tan Phay Shing

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INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLING SERIES

CREATIVE BAKING

Macaron Basics

an illustrated step-by-step guide



Tan Phay Shing



Marshall Cavendish
Cuisine

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Introduction

It has been almost three years since I published my first book on macarons. Between then and now, I have experimented with more recipes, designs and techniques, and I can't wait to share them with you! While I received positive feedback about how helpful the first book, *Creative Baking: Macarons*, was, and how beautiful the designs were, I also had feedback that some could not get the hang of making Italian meringue.

This book has thus been written with this in mind — to help home bakers overcome the various challenges they may face in making macarons, while providing even greater detail on the various techniques.

To this end, I have included a basic recipe for making the meringue using the French method because it is easier and does not require the use of a candy thermometer nor a stand mixer. The French method is also more suitable for home bakers who may only want to make a small quantity of macarons.

Although this book features fewer designs than *Creative Baking: Macarons*, it more than makes up for it by including all the basic techniques you need to know in order to create interesting features, designs and even structures. With this, you can come up with any creative design of your own! The designs in this book have been carefully curated, such that they are not too complex, yet relevant for a host of celebratory occasions, from Valentine's Day to Christmas and Chinese New Year, so you may share these cute and delectable treats with your family and friends.

I have also included new recipes for fillings that are yummy and not too sweet, and which will hold up even in hot and humid Singapore, and simplified previous recipes so they can be whipped up without too much fuss.

I hope you'll master the art of making these cute macarons with this book and the video tutorials linked to the recipes. Don't give up if things don't turn out well the first time — my first attempt at making macarons looked more tuiles!

Happy Baking!

Phay Shing



Basic Tools & Equipment

1

Electric Mixer

An electric mixer is useful for whipping up the meringue which forms the base of macarons. You can use either a handheld mixer or stand mixer for both French and Italian methods, but a stand mixer is preferable for making Italian meringue so you don't have to hold the mixer while adding the boiling syrup. If working with just a small volume of egg whites, a handheld mixer is preferable.

2

Mixing Bowls

Having several mixing bowls of different sizes on hand is useful when making macarons. Use a medium or large stainless steel mixing bowl for whisking meringue. Before using, wipe the bowl with a paper towel and some lemon juice or vinegar to remove any residual grease. The presence of grease may affect the foaming properties of the egg whites.

Use a heavy mixing bowl if using a handheld mixer. Use a medium bowl for mixing the mass (mixture of almond powder, icing sugar and egg white) in the Italian method, or holding the powdered ingredients in the French method. Smaller bowls will be useful for mixing batters of different colours.

3

Sieve

It is necessary to sift almond flour, icing sugar and other powdered ingredients such as cocoa powder and food colouring to break up any lumps and aerate the mixture. Large pieces of almond that are unable to pass through the fine mesh of the sieve should be discarded to ensure that the baked macaron shells have a smooth surface.

4

Kitchen Scale

Ingredients have to be weighed with precision for the macarons to turn out well consistently. Measuring the ingredients by volume using cups and spoons introduces more variation between batches of macarons. Choose a digital weighing scale that is able to measure at least 1 g as the smallest unit of measurement.

5

Candy Thermometer

When using the Italian meringue method of making macarons which uses hot sugar syrup, it is necessary to measure the temperature of the syrup before adding it to the egg whites. Hence, a candy thermometer or sugar thermometer is essential. The syrup needs to reach 115°C, also known as the soft ball stage, before it can be incorporated into the egg whites.

6

Oven Thermometer

It is helpful to have an oven thermometer in the oven throughout the baking time so you can monitor the temperature and ensure the macarons bake evenly. Macarons made using the Italian meringue method are typically baked at temperatures ranging from 130°C–140°C, and macarons made using the French method are typically baked at temperatures ranging from 140°C–150°C.

Light coloured shells are typically baked at a slightly lower temperature for a longer time to prevent the shells from browning while making sure that they are thoroughly cooked inside. An oven thermometer will allow you to have better control of the actual temperature of the oven for different coloured shells. Do bear in mind that individual ovens work differently, so learn to understand your oven and adjust the baking times and temperatures as necessary.

7

Baking Paper

I line the baking trays with baking paper when making macarons, so it is not necessary to use a silicone baking mat if you do not already own one. Choose heavy-duty baking paper that is non-stick and heat-resistant for the best results.

8

Baking Trays

Any type of metal baking tray that fits into your oven is suitable, although different metals conduct heat differently, so you may want to monitor your first batch of macarons more carefully.

Have several baking trays on hand as some recipes make 80–100 shells, depending on size, and the piped batter needs to be left on the trays to dry before baking.

The design templates provided in this book are meant to be enlarged by 200% on the photocopier, and printed on A4 size paper. Place the template on the baking tray under the sheet of baking paper. Baking trays that can fit an A4 sheet comfortably will do. For these recipes, I used trays measuring 35-cm x 25-cm.

9

Spatula

Choose a spatula with a firm wooden handle or a very stiff plastic handle to enable you to better handle the mass (mixture of almond powder, icing sugar and egg white) for the Italian method as it has a very thick consistency.

10

Piping Tips and Piping Bags

Round piping tips 4–7 mm in diameter are typically used for piping the base shells. Smaller piping tips 1–3 mm in diameter are used for piping features on the base shells. It is useful to have multiple piping tips of the same size on hand if working with various colours of batter.

I usually use small disposable plastic piping bags when piping fancy shapes for better control. Disposable bags also do away with the need for washing multiple bags if working with various colours of batter.

11

Toothpicks

In making creative macarons, toothpicks are used for nudging piped macaron batter into tight corners to create a more defined shape, or for pulling the batter to create fine features that stick out from the main shell body. Toothpicks are also used for nudging royal icing into tight corners or painting fine royal icing features onto baked shells.

12

Edible Ink Markers

Besides piping features on the baked shells using royal icing, edible ink markers can also be used for drawing fine features. As the ink may smudge when in contact with moisture, do not use markers to draw on royal icing for macarons that require refrigeration. The ink may also transfer and it is thus advisable not to stack the macarons if using ink markers.

Piping and Baking Macaron Shells



Scan the QR code to
view a video tutorial on
piping macaron batter.



1. Cut the tip off a disposable piping bag and fit your preferred piping tip into the hole. Use a round tip (4–7 mm) to pipe regular round shells and a small tip (1–3 mm) to pipe fine details.
2. Place the piping bag into a tall glass or mug, then fold the excess bag over the edges of the glass/mug.



3. Scoop macaron batter into bag.
NOTE Although macaron batter is fairly stable, it is best to transfer it into the piping bag as soon as it is ready or keep it covered with plastic wrap touching the surface of the batter to prevent a crust forming.



4. Pipe shells on baking paper using paper template as a guide. Hold piping bag perpendicular to tray, with tip 5–7 mm away from baking paper.
NOTE It is important to keep the tip in this perpendicular position and distance away from the baking paper in order to have nicely piped shells. You may rest your elbows on the table to steady your hands. Go slow if you are new to this. Practice makes perfect!



5. Press piping bag lightly to start piping. Release pressure on the piping bag when the batter is 2–3 mm away from the outline of the template as the batter will spread a little.
6. Give a little tip a little twirl before lifting tip off.
7. Hold baking paper down and hit tray hard on the worktop several times to release any trapped air bubbles. The peaks will flatten with tapping.



8. Leave shells to dry for 30 minutes to 2 hours, or until shells are dry to the touch and do not stick to your finger when you run it across the surface. In hot and humid climates, you may need to let the shells dry in an air-conditioned room or well-ventilated place with a fan.
NOTE Baking when the piped batter is still sticky will result in cracked shells. Leaving the piped batter out to dry for too long will result in poor feet formation.



9. Set oven rack on the lowest or second lowest position and preheat the oven. If your oven temperature is uneven, rotate the tray halfway through baking.
NOTE Use an oven thermometer to monitor the temperature of the oven at all times. This is important as home ovens can be off by 10°C to 20°C from the temperature set.
The temperature and time for baking depends on the colour and size of the shells, and individual oven behaviour. Macarons made using the French method need higher starting temperatures than those made using the Italian method.



10. Bake macarons using the French method at 150°C for the first 10 minutes, then 130°C for 5–10 minutes or until the feet do not appear wet.
11. Bake macarons using the Italian method at 140°C for the first 10 minutes, then 130°C for 7–10 minutes or until the feet do not appear wet.
12. For pastel or white-coloured shells, reduce the oven temperature to 110°C after 8–10 minutes and continue baking for 7–15 minutes.
NOTE Although I recommended a steady baking temperature for different coloured shells in my first book, I find that starting off at a higher temperature, then lowering it after the internal structure has set is better for preventing browning of shells, especially for lighter colours.



13. Remove from oven and let shells cool on tray before removing by gently peeling baking paper away. If feet appear a little wet, return tray to oven and bake at 110°C for another 5 minutes before checking again.
14. Do not attempt to remove shells from baking sheet if they are stuck as this means they are under baked.

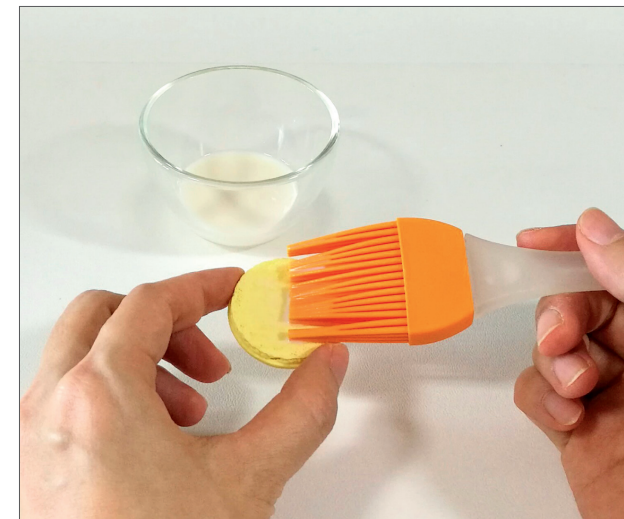


15. If shells appear to be browning, check that oven temperature has not exceeded 110°C. Bake for a few minutes and check again.
16. Store cooled shells in an airtight container if not using immediately.

Storing and Filling Macaron Shells



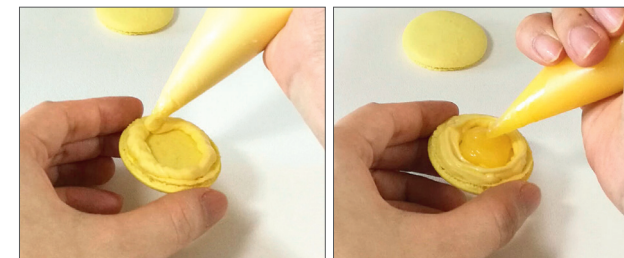
1. Macaron shells can be prepared in advance and kept frozen for up to 3 months.
2. To freeze shells, place between layers of baking paper in an airtight container.
3. Thaw at room temperature without opening the container, then decorate and/or fill as desired.



4. Freezing shells without any filling may alter the texture of the shells and cause them to become less delicate, so you may want to brush the bottom of the shells with syrup or cream to soften the shells slightly before filling.



5. Prepare desired filling and spoon into a small piping bag. Cut a small hole at the tip. Pipe filling onto half the shells and sandwich with the other half.



6. If using two types of filling, pipe a ring of the first filling on the shell, then pipe the other filling in the centre.

Piping Triangles

Snow-capped Mountain Macarons

French Meringue Method

Makes 12–14 macarons

50 g almond powder
50 g icing sugar
½ tsp charcoal powder
A pinch of salt (optional)

French Meringue

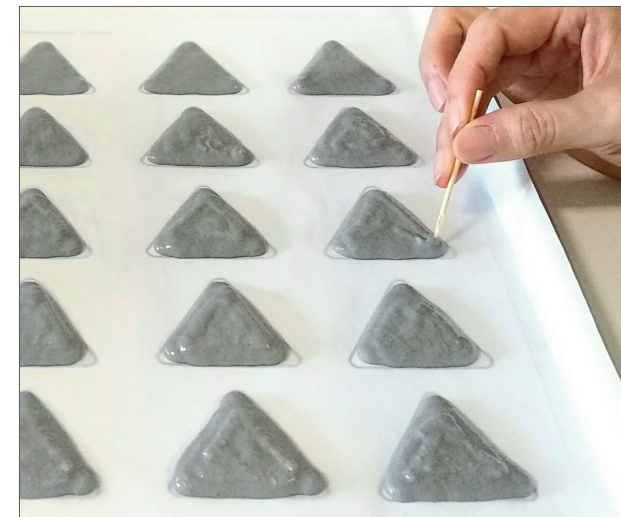
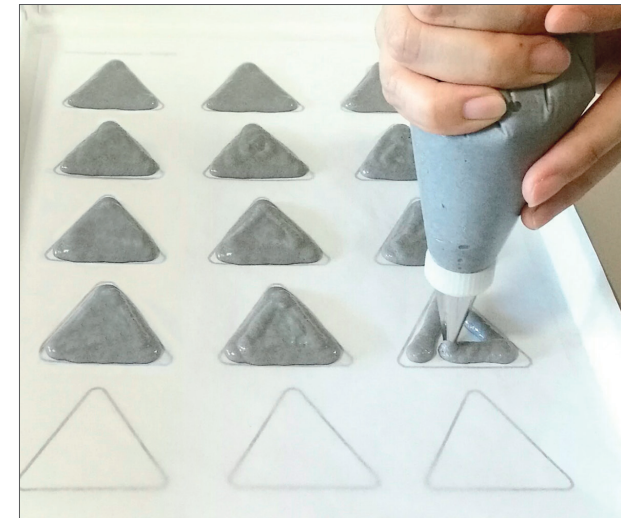
40 g egg whites, at room temperature
36 g castor sugar
⅛ tsp cream of tartar (optional)

Finishing

Flooding consistency white royal icing (page 28)

Suggested Filling

Matcha white chocolate ganache (page 34)



1. Prepare baking tray and mountain template (page 91).
2. Sift together almond powder, icing sugar, charcoal powder and salt. Set aside.
3. Prepare French meringue and macaron batter (page 16).
4. Transfer batter to a piping bag fitted with a 4-mm round tip.
5. Pipe triangles by tracing outline of triangle, keeping batter 2–3-mm away from outline.
6. Fill middle with batter.
7. Use a toothpick to nudge batter where necessary.
8. Hit tray on worktop to release any trapped air bubbles.
9. Let shells dry (page 24).
10. Preheat oven to 150°C. Place tray on bottom or second lowest rack in oven, and bake for 10 minutes, then reduce oven temperature to 130°C and bake for 5–10 minutes or until feet do not appear wet.
11. Rotate tray halfway through baking. Let shells cool on tray before removing.
12. Prepare white royal icing. Spoon royal icing into a piping bag and cut a small hole at the tip. Pipe some icing as snow at the peak of the mountain. Set aside for an hour until icing is dry.
13. Prepare and pipe filling.
14. Store in an airtight container and refrigerate for at least 24 hours before serving.



Scan the QR code to view a video tutorial on piping triangles.

Piping Batters Side-by-Side

Lunar New Year Macarons

Italian Meringue Method

Makes 40–50 macarons

Mass

200 g almond powder

200 g icing sugar

1/8 tsp salt (optional)

80 g egg whites, at room temperature

Orange/peach, red and black
gel food colouring

1 tsp charcoal powder, sifted

Italian Meringue

80 g egg whites, at room temperature

200 g castor sugar

75 g water

1/8 tsp cream of tartar (optional)

Finishing

Black edible food marker

Peach-coloured lustre dust

Red sugar flowers

Flooding consistency yellow royal icing
(page 28)

Suggested Filling

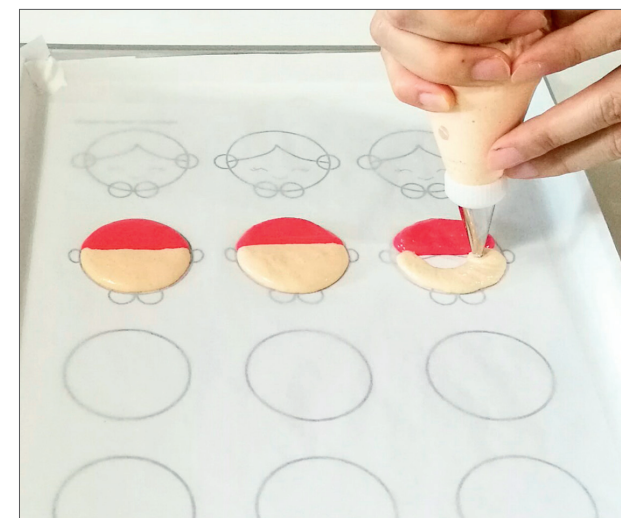
Strawberry SMBC (page 33) or

strawberry white chocolate

buttercream (page 34)

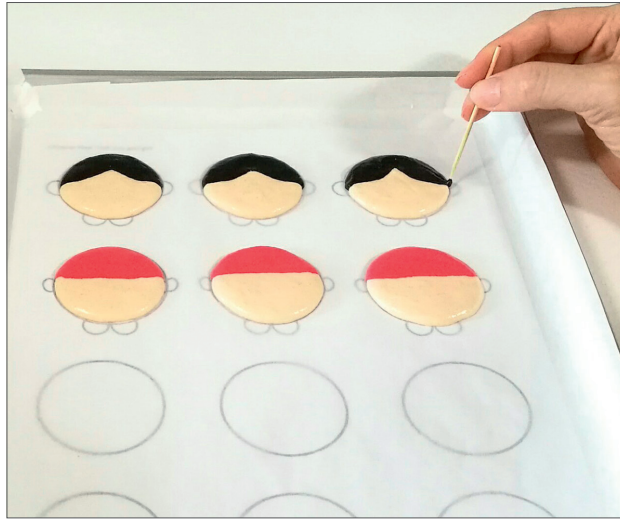


1. Prepare baking tray and Lunar New Year template (page 95).
2. Prepare mass. Sift together almond powder, icing sugar and salt. Add egg whites and mix well.
3. Divide mass into 3 portions in the ratio 1 (black) : 2 (beige) : 5 (red). Add a little of the respective gel food colouring to each portion and fold in using a spatula. Add charcoal powder to the black mass and mix well.
4. Prepare Italian meringue (page 20). Portion the meringue for each mass; each portion should be half the weight of the respective mass.

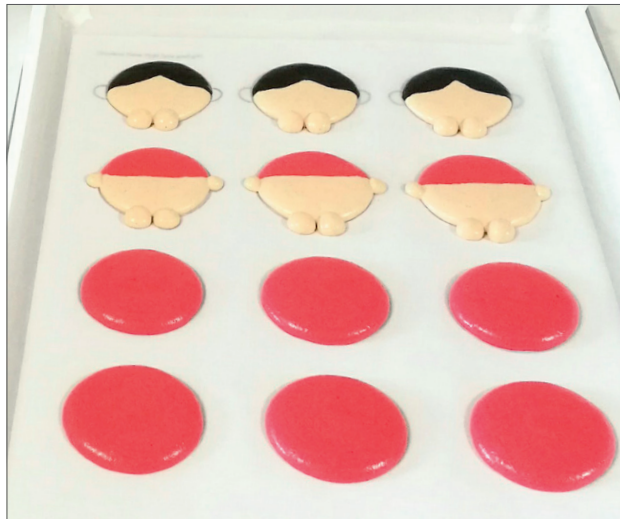


5. Prepare macaron batter (page 21). Fold meringue into mass.
6. Transfer each batter to a piping bag fitted with a 4–5-mm round tip.

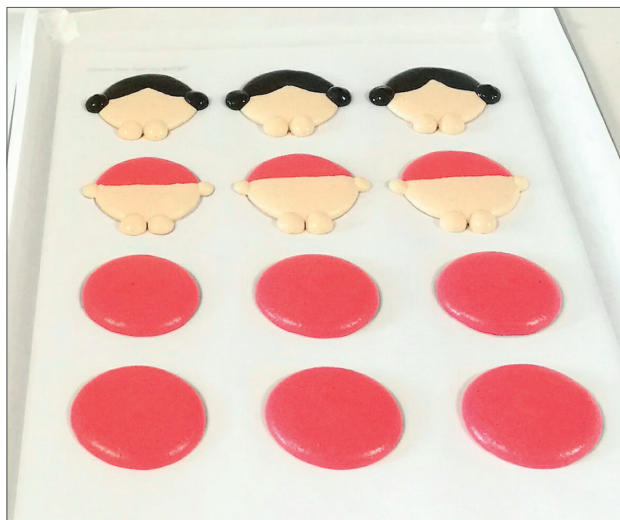
Using the trace-and-fill technique (page 50), pipe a semi-circle using the red batter for the boy's cap and another semi-circle using the beige batter for the boy's face. Use a toothpick to nudge the batter to fill the shape.



7. Using the same technique, pipe the girl's hair using the black batter and her face using the beige batter. Use a toothpick to nudge the batter to fill the shape.
8. Hit tray on worktop to release any trapped air bubbles.
9. Set aside for 15 minutes or until a thin membrane is formed.



10. Using the beige batter, pipe two small circles for hands for both boy and girl, and ears for the boy.



11. Using the black batter, pipe buns for the girl.
12. Gently tap the bottom of the tray to release any trapped air bubbles, being careful not to disturb the segments that were piped earlier.
13. Let shells dry (page 24).
14. Preheat oven to 140°C. Place tray on bottom or second lowest rack in oven, and bake for 10 minutes, then reduce oven temperature to 130°C and bake for 5–10 minutes or until feet do not appear wet.
15. Rotate tray halfway through baking. Let shells cool on tray before removing.



16. Draw eyes and mouth of boy and girl using black edible food marker. Draw hair for boy.
17. Using a small dry brush, dab a little lustre dust for the cheeks.



18. Pipe designs on boy's cap using yellow royal icing. Use a toothpick to nudge the icing into place.

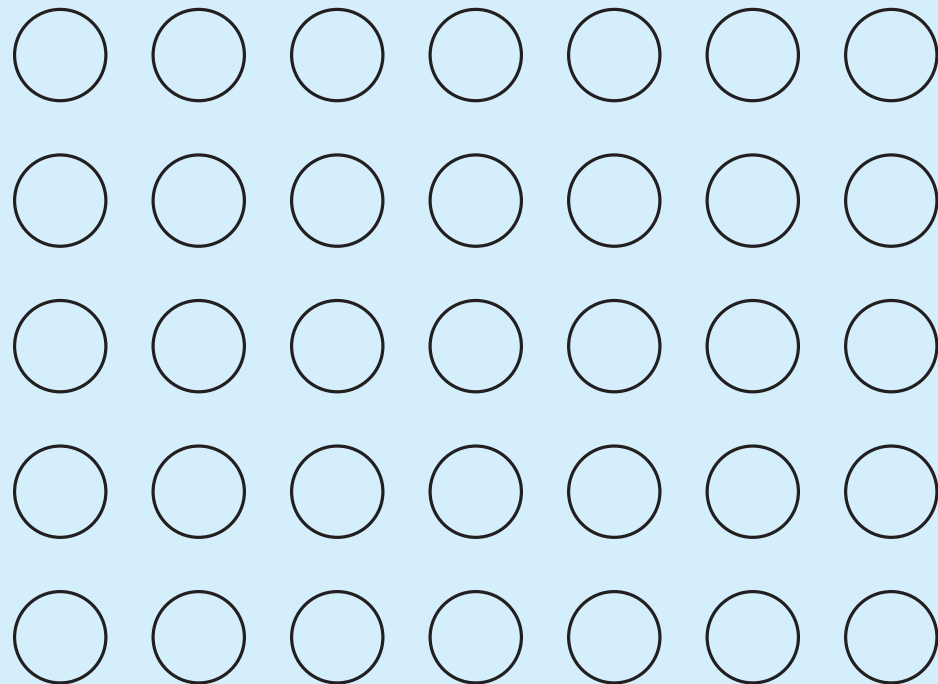


19. Glue red sugar flowers on the girl's head using royal icing. Set aside to dry for an hour.
20. Prepare and pipe filling.
21. Store in an airtight container and refrigerate for at least 24 hours before serving.

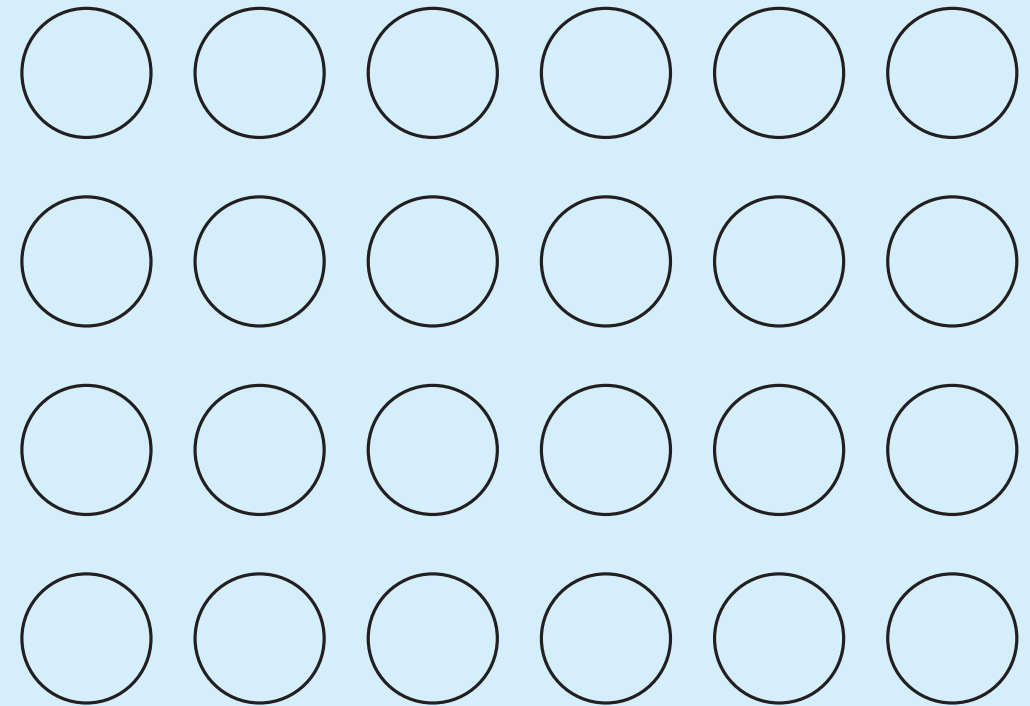
Design Templates

Use these templates to guide you in piping the macarons. Make a photocopy of your chosen design and enlarge it by 200%. Place the template on the baking tray and place a sheet of baking paper over it before piping. The template can be kept and reused each time you bake.

Piping Circles (page 36)
2.5-cm circles (Enlarge 200%)



Piping Circles (page 36)
3.5-cm circles (Enlarge 200%)



Piping Circles (page 36)
6-cm circles (Enlarge 200%)

