

What Katie ate...

CHOCOLATE, STRAWBERRY + BASIL MERINGUES

YOU WILL NEED

1 tsp cornflour
1 tbsp cocoa powder
100g 70% dark chocolate
1/2 lemon
6 free-range egg whites - at room temperature
300g caster sugar
1 tsp white vinegar
Whipped cream, to serve

FOR THE SAUCE

1 punnet strawberries
Handful fresh basil leaves
1 tbsp lemon juice
1/2 cup caster sugar
2 tbsp water

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MAKES 8 LARGE

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Place strawberries and basil into a small saucepan along with 2 tbsp water, lemon juice and sugar, simmer over low-medium heat until strawberries have turned to mush - about 5 mins.

Pass through a fine sieve retaining the strawberry pulp and sauce. Return sauce to the pot. Simmer over medium heat until thickened to a syrupy consistency. Set both sauce and fruit aside to cool.

Preheat the oven to 140 °C and line two baking trays with non-stick baking parchment.

Finely chop chocolate and add to a small bowl along with cream of tartar, cornflour, cocoa powder, stir to combine and set aside.

Wipe the inside of the bowl of an electric mixer with the cut-side of the lemon to remove any traces of oil. Add the egg whites and beat on medium speed until soft and frothy and just starting to hold soft peaks.

Turn up the speed to medium-high and gradually add the caster sugar, beating just until the mixture turns thick and super-glossy and holds stiff peaks.

Add the dry ingredients and the vinegar, then gently fold together using a large metal spoon (don't overwork the mixture – five or six folds should do it). Carefully fold 2 tbsp (only or meringues will flop when cooking) of the cooled strawberry pulp into the meringue.

Using a large metal spoon take 6 - 8 spoonfuls mixture and slowly drop/nudge onto the prepared trays - use a dessert spoon to help slide the meringue off the spoon. Drizzle cooled strawberry syrup over the meringue mounds.

Bake in the oven for 1 hour or until the bases of the meringues are firm, then turn off the oven and leave the meringues in the oven to cool (use a wooden spoon handle to keep the oven door ajar, if you wish).

Serve with freshly whipped cream.