



# Marshmallow madness

Soft, squishy, sweet globs of deliciousness that provide a delicate melt-in-your-mouth sensation — this is the accurate definition of a marshmallow for me. These little, cute pillows of sweetness are more than just a candy, which can be used to confect inventive desserts and snacks that are sinfully indulgent.

The versatility of this tasty treat allows it to be enjoyed as it is, be used as a core ingredient in cooking myriad desserts and also act as an accoutrement to a plethora of dishes. This is partly the reason why marshmallows are largely enjoyed equally by both children and adults!

Thus, read on to explore the endless possibilities of delectable food you can concoct with marshmallows, and you may even consider grabbing a pack of this addictive snack to munch on while you're at it.

Bon appétit!

## Homemade marshmallows 101

Marshmallow, one of the earliest forms of confection, has to be listed as one of the greatest inventions of the humankind as well. Albeit an everyday sweet treat that is widely available now, the earliest forms of edible marshmallows were in fact food reserved only for the royals and rulers in ancient Egypt.

Enough with the food history now!

Although marshmallows are readily available at stores in a variety of shapes, sizes, and colours, you will be surprised to know that they are actually very simple to whip up at home. But why go through the effort of homemade marshmallows when you can easily grab a pack from a candy store?

The same reason why you would make homemade bread or cookies — because they are tastier and you can infuse any flavour your heart desires into them. Homemade marshmallows are usually softer as well, and there is definitely something irresistible about a freshly made batch of marshmallows.

## BASIC MARSHMALLOWS

### Ingredients

1 tbsp vegetable oil



½ cup icing sugar  
1 cup cold water  
4 tsp gelatine powder  
1½ cups granulated sugar  
1 cup light corn syrup  
1 tsp flavouring or extract  
Pinch of salt  
Food colour

### Method

Prepare a square or rectangular baking pan by generously coating all sides with oil and a good dusting of icing sugar meticulously, to ensure no spots are left. Also, bloom the gelatine with half cup of cold water and set it aside.

Pour the remaining water in a saucepan along with corn syrup, granulated sugar, and salt. Cook this over medium heat and stir until the sugar has dissolved completely. After that, stop stirring and bring this to a boil. Using a food thermometer, remove it from heat once this reaches 115° C.

With the bloomed gelatine, start whisking it on a low speed and slowly pour in the hot sugar mixture in a streak. Once all the liquid is incorporated, gradually increase the speed to high and beat this until it reaches a thick, velvety consistency.

In the last minute of whisking, add in the flavouring or extract of your choice — such

as vanilla, peppermint, or fruit extracts. For funky looking marshmallows, add in a couple droplets of food colour. Once completely done, pour this mixture into the prepared baking pan and smoothen the top with a greased silicon spatula.

Leave this to set for 4 hours or longer at room temperature. When slicing in, make sure to dust the surface, knife, and your hands with powdered sugar, as they tend to be very clingy.

## VEGAN MARSHMALLOWS

### Ingredients

100ml aquafaba  
½ tsp cream of tartar  
1 tsp extract or flavouring  
½ cup cold water  
1 tsp agar-agar  
1 ¼ cup granulated sugar  
Food colour  
¼ cup icing sugar



¼ cup corn starch  
1 tbsp vegetable oil

### Method

Aquafaba is the liquid in which legume seeds are soaked in, so you can drain a can of chickpeas and use the liquid inside for this vegan recipe. Whisk the aquafaba and cream of tartar together on high speed for approximately 30 minutes, or until stiff

peaks form. Add in your choice of extract or flavouring and whisk for another 10 minutes or so.

In a saucepan, add cold water and agar-agar and allow it to simmer for a couple of minutes while stirring constantly. Drop in granulated sugar and simmer this mixture until it reaches 115° C.

Once there, remove it from heat and drop this very gradually into the aquafaba mixture. Once fully incorporated, increase the speed to high and continue whisking for another 10 minutes. If you want to add food colour, now is the time!

Mix icing sugar and corn starch to attain a uniform mixture. Grease a square or rectangular baking dish generously with oil and then coat all sides heavily and evenly with the icing sugar mixture. Pour the glossy, voluptuous marshmallow mixture into the pan and level it off with



an oiled spatula.

Leave this to firm up at room temperature for 6 hours or longer. Once they are ready, slice them through with a sharp sugar coated knife on a dusted surface, as they will be very sticky.

By Fariha Amber

Photo: Fariha Amber

# Slushies: Summer's delight

As we roll into peak summer season, when the sun is ablaze making it harder for the populace living in a tropical monsoon climate, we are also blessed with the opportunity to enjoy summer to the fullest.

Our souls don't crave for frozen desserts or drinks during any time of the year like summer, and slushies are a fun way to beat the heat. They are fruity, delicious, and rejuvenate our body with their rapid cooling effects, not only quenching our thirst but permeating right into the soul.

The core ingredients that go into a slushie are only a couple — ice and flavoured syrup. Once you figure out the appropriate ratios to combine the two, you may play around with delectable flavour combinations and



concoct your own masterpiece!

Berry flavoured simple syrup with crushed ice make for a fruity treat. Raspberries, blueberries, and strawberries all are great options. To cut through the sweetness of berries and add a fresh zing, try squeezing in some lemon juice, which will add another layer of flavour.

But if you find making syrups at home

time consuming, you may opt from the wide array of bottled fruit syrups that are vastly available now. Peach, lime, kiwi, cucumber, mint, and passion fruit are everyday crowd pleasers that are packed with concentrated bright notes.

On the other hand, if you are feeling adventurous, you can experiment with funky flavours that pack a punch — such as tea, cola, or coffee. You may also turn your favourite mocktails into slushies, by adding grenadine or blue curacao syrup substituting the ordinary fruity ones.

However, if icy slushies tend to give you a brain freeze or trigger tooth sensitivity, worry not as you have an abundance of alternatives. Summer comes tied with a

bounty of tropical fruits, and what better way to amp up the flavour of summer slushies than by using real fruits?

A great technique is to use frozen fruits instead of ice, which will give the slushie a smoother and thicker consistency. With the icy component sorted with frozen fruits, you may swap the syrup for various liquids as well.

Pineapple with coconut milk, lychee and coconut water, and mango-orange slushies are delicious flavour pairings. With so many options to choose from, make the best of summer season with delightful slushies!

By Fariha Amber

Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed