



Yield: 1-2 dozen

Ingredients

4 lbs. Dark Chocolate

1-2 Dozen Strawberries

Equipment Needed

Digital thermometer

Stainless steel bowl

Rubber spatula

TEMPERING CHOCOLATE & DIPPING STRAWBERRIES

At Recchiuti Confections, some tempered chocolate is always at the ready for lining molds, slowly churning in machines that keep it at a precise temperature. Mastering tempering opens the door to the world of chocolate confectionary and lets you expand your candy-making skills. This recipe is a sure fire way into your loved one's heart this Valentine's Day.

TEMPERING THE CHOCOLATE

- First things first, have your equipment ready. A stainless steel bowl, rubber spatula, and a thermometer (preferably digital) will be your main tools. The room you are working in should be neither hot nor cold, preferably 65-70°F. If you are using chocolate by the block you will need to chop the chocolate into pieces no more than 1" by 1". Be sure to wash your strawberries and lay them out on paper towels and give them ample time to dry. Water will seize your beautifully tempered chocolate and it will no longer be usable for tempering, although still edible.
- Start by scaling and chopping 4 pounds of chocolate. Place 3 pounds of chocolate in the bowl over a pot of shallow simmering water, making sure the bowl does not touch the water. Melt the chocolate, in this case dark, until the temperature reads 118°F.
- Once you reach the desired temperature remove the bowl from the pot and add 2/5 of the 1 pound un-melted chopped chocolate (roughly 20% of the 3 lbs) to the melted and start stirring. Keep stirring until the chopped chocolate has completely melted. Take the temperature. It should read around 92-94°F.
- The current temperature will determine how much more of the chopped chocolate to add. At this point you may start adding small amounts of the chopped chocolate. Your final temperature should be 89-90°F. Continue stirring and after each addition of chocolate melts take the temperature. If the chocolate stops melting and there are leftover chunks you may pick them out and place them in plastic wrap to save for another time. After you reach the final temperature take a little chocolate on your rubber spatula and drizzle it onto a sheet of parchment. In 4-6 minutes the chocolate should start to set up.
- A key factor to tempering, other than temperature of course, is agitation. In the pastry kitchen you hear the phrase "Agitation promotes crystallization," very often. What you are doing when you temper chocolate is causing certain crystals to align and give it the familiar shine and snap that we all love. If you met all the temperatures and your chocolate is streaky and hazy take another 4-5 minutes to stir, and then take another test.

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DIPPING THE STRAWBERRIES *(continued from previous page)*

- It is best to dip the fruit the same day you plan on eating them. There is moisture in the strawberries that will leak through the chocolate layer and affect the look and mouth feel of the chocolate. Line a sheet pan with parchment or wax paper. Line up your strawberries, bowl of beautifully tempered chocolate, and parchment lined sheet tray in that order and start dipping! The left over chocolate can be poured onto a parchment lined sheet tray. When the chocolate sets up break it up and put it into a Ziploc bag to save for another day.