Egg Whites

LEAN AND VERSATILE

Egg white is the common name for an egg's clear liquid albumen, which serves to protect the egg yolk. Rich in protein, the white contains more than one half of an egg's total protein, is cholesterol-free, virtually fat-free and has high nutritional value with niacin, riboflavin, magnesium and potassium. Upon closer inspection, one will notice more than one consistency in the albumen; it contains four alternating layers of thick and thin consistencies, with the outermost thick layer containing the protein and nutrients.

A large egg white in the United States contains approximately 20 calories and 40 different proteins. Used by athletes and bodybuilders as a health food supplement, egg whites are recommended to chemotherapy and renal patients as a source of lean protein, critical for tissue repair, muscle preservation and the creation of important enzymes and hormones.

A FEW SIMPLE TIPS

- In recipes, two egg whites can be used to replace one egg yolk.
- It is best to avoid using the shell when separating eggs. Using an egg separator or funnel will prevent introducing the shell's bacteria into the yolk or the egg white.
- Pasteurized liquid egg whites can be refrigerated unopened for three to four months, or about one week after opening.

MERINGUE

While egg whites are used in a number of ways, they are perhaps best known as the base for meringue. When an egg white is beaten vigorously, it foams and increases in volume six to eight times. The process of beating egg whites causes hydrogen bonds in the proteins to break. This unraveling of the protein molecules, called denaturation, allows air to mix into the whites, changing the consistency of the egg whites to an airy foam. Many meringue recipes call for a binding agent, such as cream of tartar, to stabilize the foam. From angel food cake to lemon meringue pie to Baked Alaska, meringue adds a special quality to numerous desserts while maintaining the low fat nature of the egg whites used to create it.

TIRAMISU CINNAMON RUM MERINGUES
Meringue Shells

2 egg whites

1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar

1/4 teaspoon cinnamon, ground

1/4 teaspoon rum extract

1/2 cup sugar

Coffee Cream Filling

2 teaspoons instant coffee granules

2 cups milk, fat free

2 (1 ounce) instant vanilla

packages pudding mix, sugar free

4 ounces cream cheese, fat free

1 cup whipped topping, fat free

Place egg whites in a small mixing bowl; let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Beat on medium speed until foamy. Add cream of tartar, cinnamon and rum extract. Beat until soft peaks form. Gradually add sugar, 1 Tablespoon at a time, beating until stiff peaks form.

Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Spoon meringue to create four mounds on baking sheet. Using the back of a spoon, shape each mound into 3-inch cups. Bake for 35 minutes. Turn off oven and do not open the oven door; allowing meringues to dry for 1 hour. Then remove from oven and cool meringues on a wire rack.

For filling, place coffee granules in a large bowl. Add milk, stirring until coffee granules are dissolved. Add pudding mix and whisk for 2 minutes.

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth. Fold in pudding mixture and let stand for 2 minutes. Fold in whipped topping, cover and refrigerate at least 1 hour.

Just before serving, spoon cream mixture into meringue shells.

Optional: Garnish with fresh berries or a dollop of whipped topping, miniature chocolate chips and a dusting of baking cocoa.

Makes 4 servings.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

One serving: 1 filled meringue (without optional toppings)

Calories 249

Fat 5gm

Saturated Fat 2gm

Cholesterol 62 mg

Sodium 109 mg

Carbohydrate 45 gm

Protein 7 gm

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