

THE RECIPE

Eton Mess

CULTURE

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Stanley Spencer's favourite dessert is a typical of his home region of Berkshire.

The Eton Mess is a traditional British dessert, referring to the famous Eton College located in Berkshire, west of London. At the origin of its name is the story of a Labrador dog that sat on a picnic basket during the annual cricket match at this famous English college, thus crushing the meringues, strawberries and cream of the traditional dessert

reserved for the team winning the match... Far from laughing or being offended - self-control *oblige* - the recipients of this dessert declared, stoically and with great dignity: "This is absolutely delicious! These strawberries are delicious! Scrumptious!". Is it worth pointing out that since that day, this dessert has starred on the best tables?

It is a perfect dessert for the summer, but don't hesitate, depending on the season, to vary the fruit, the connotation may be less traditional but it will be just as good: raspberries, blackcurrants, blackberries, bananas, pears among others!

Ingredients

2 large egg whites

120g caster sugar

500g strawberries, hulled and roughly chopped

450ml whipping cream

1 tablespoon icing sugar

Preparation

Heat the oven to 120°C / 100°C ventilated, and line a large baking tray with baking paper. Beat the egg whites in a clean bowl with an electric whisk until stiff, then add the sugar in 3 parts, whisking each time until stiff. Using a spoon, spoon small amounts of the mixture onto the baking paper and bake on the bottom rack of the oven for 1 hour - 1 hour 15 minutes until the meringues are completely hard and come away easily from the paper. Leave to cool.

Blend one third of the strawberries to make a strawberry sauce. In a large bowl, whip the cream with the icing sugar until stiff. Coarsely crush three quarters of the meringues and pour over the crushed strawberries and mix, then stir in the strawberry sauce.

Pour into bowls, then crush the remaining meringues, sprinkling the pieces on top.

(Liana Marabini)