

The Concorde

<http://userealbutter.com/2014/02/02/concorde-chocolate-meringue-mousse-cake-recipe/>
from *Chocolate Desserts by Pierre Hermé, by Dori Greenspan*

meringue

1 cup (100 g) confectioner's sugar
3 tbsps Dutch-process cocoa powder
4 large egg whites (133 g), room temperature
1/2 cup (100 g) granulated sugar

mousse

8 3/4 oz. (250 g) bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped
8 3/4 oz. (250 g) unsalted butter, room temperature
6 large egg whites (200 g), room temperature
1 tbsp granulated sugar
3 large egg yolks, room temperature and lightly beaten

Prepare your equipment: Preheat the oven to 250°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Draw two 8 1/2-inch circles with a pencil on one sheet of parchment paper. Turn it over on the baking sheet so the lead is face down and will not touch the food. Draw one 8 1/2-inch circle on the other sheet of parchment paper and turn it face down on the baking sheet. Make sure you can see the outlines from the other side of the parchment because you will be using these as guides for your meringue layers. Fit a large pastry bag with a plain 1/2-inch tip. Fit a smaller pastry bag with a plain 1/4-inch tip.

Make the meringue: Sift the confectioner's sugar and cocoa powder together into a medium bowl. Whip the egg whites on high speed until soft peaks form (holds shape, but the peak will droop when held upright). Add 1/4 cup of the granulated sugar while still whipping until the whites turn glossy and hold firm peaks (this took me less than 30 seconds, so watch closely). Reduce the mixer speed to medium-low and beat in the remaining 1/4 cup of granulated sugar. Gently fold the cocoa mixture into the egg whites with a large spatula. Don't freak out if the whites deflate – they will do that – but work quickly.

Spoon 2/3 of the meringue mixture into the large pastry bag. Pipe from the center of each circle outline on parchment paper in a tight outward spiral, making sure each ring touches the previous ring and that the whole layer is no more than 1/3-inch (1 cm) in height. Fill the small pastry bag with the rest of the meringue and pipe as many long strips as possible on the parchment paper with the single disk. Lightly even the disks with a metal spatula to fill any holes or level the top. Bake the meringues for 1 1/2 to 2 hours with a wooden spoon handle in the oven door (to keep it ajar). Rotate the pans top to bottom and front to back 2-3 times during baking. They should be firm, but not colored. Turn off the oven and let dry for 2 hours to overnight with the door closed. Let

cool on parchment on cooling racks. The meringues can be made up to 1 week ahead if stored in a cool, dry place (if you live in a dry place) or wrapped up tight and frozen.

Make the mousse: Melt the chocolate over a double boiler, a water bath (don't let the bowl touch the water), or in a microwave oven on half power for 30 seconds at a time (stirring in between each 30 second interval). You want the chocolate just melted, not burned. Cool the chocolate to 114°F. Beat the butter with a whisk attachment on high until it is smooth (about 3 minutes). Add the chocolate in thirds, beating until blended. Pour the mixture into a bowl. Clean and dry the bowl and whisk attachment. Whip the egg whites on high speed until soft peaks form. Add the sugar and whip until the whites are glossy. The recipe says firm peaks, but I think it's best to keep the whites soft. While the mixer is still running, pour the yolks into the egg whites and whip another 30 seconds. Stir 1/4 of the egg mixture into the chocolate with a spatula. Fold the remaining egg mixture into the chocolate. This should be ready right before assembly.

Assemble the cake: Using a serrated knife, cut the long strips of meringue into 1/2-inch long logs. Don't worry if they aren't perfect or if you have a lot of crumbs – you will use it all. Set aside. Place a daub of mousse in the center of the flat part of a meringue disk and secure the disk to a cake board. Spread 1/3 of the mousse over the meringue disk. Set a second disk over the mousse and gently press it down until it is level. Spread another 1/3 of the mousse of the second disk. Turn the third disk over so that the flat bottom is facing up and place it on top of the mousse. Gently press the disk down into the mousse until it is level. Frost the cake with the rest of the mousse, covering the top and sides completely. The recipe instructs us to freeze the cake for 2 hours and then use a hair dryer to warm the sides and press the meringue logs and bits on the sides and top of the cake. I didn't bother freezing and placed the logs on the cake. Wrap the cake in plastic wrap and freeze for a day before serving at room temperature (it makes for a more tender meringue). Serves 8.