

# Chocolate Marshmallows

In a very clever moment, I figured out that the same Chocolate Magic Dust (*see recipe below*) that makes a truly outrageous mug of hot chocolate can also be used to make a truly outrageous chocolate marshmallow. Once you've made Vanilla Bean Marshmallows (*recipe not included*), this recipe will be easy for you.

MAKES ABOUT 160 (1-INCH) SQUARES IF MADE IN A FRAME OR 115 (1-INCH) SQUARES IF MADE IN A PAN

## FOR THE BLOOM

20 sheets silver leaf gelatin

120 grams ice-cold water

## FOR THE MIXER BOWL

98 grams glucose syrup

3 grams vanilla bean powder

125 grams Chocolate Magic Dust (*see below*)

5 grams kosher salt

## FOR THE COOKING POT

500 grams granulated sugar

155 grams water

## FOR THE MARSHMALLOW POWDER

114 grams cornstarch

114 grams powdered sugar

Set up a 12 by 14-inch candy frame but instead of buttering the work surface, lightly coat it and the inside surfaces of the acrylic frame with vegetable oil, or lightly oil a 9 by 13-inch pan.

**The Bloom.** Place the gelatin sheets in a shallow heat-proof bowl and place the bowl on your scale. Slowly drizzle *exactly* 120 grams of ice-cold water over the top. Allow the water to settle, then lift, shift, and nudge the gelatin sheets apart so that each of them has a fair chance of becoming uniformly wet and soaking up an equal amount of water. The gelatin will absorb all 120 grams of water, but you'll want to help it along a bit to make sure no rough patches remain. It should take 8 to 10 minutes for the gelatin to soak up the water.

**The Mixer Bowl.** While the gelatin is absorbing the water, place the mixer bowl on the scale and weigh the glucose syrup, vanilla bean powder, magic dust, and salt directly into it. Set the bowl aside, as you won't need it until a little later.

**The Cooking Pot.** Weigh the granulated sugar directly into a heavy-bottomed pot and sprinkle the water over it. Set the pot over medium-high heat and allow the sugar to begin to melt, poking it into the water with a high-heat spatula or a wooden spoon here and there only if necessary. Cook the sugar and water to a temperature of 225°F, which will take about 6 minutes.

**Back to the Bloom.** While the sugar syrup is cooking, set up a double boiler for the gelatin. Select a pot that will hold the bowl of gelatin snugly in its rim. Pour water to a depth of a few inches into the bottom of the pot, place the pot on the stove top, and rest the bowl in the rim, making sure the bottom of the bowl is not touching the water. Turn on the heat to medium-high and bring the water to a simmer. The gelatin will melt into a thick liquid in 4 to 6 minutes. When it has melted, remove the pot from the heat, but leave the bowl resting in the rim so the gelatin stays warm.

**Back to the Cooking Pot.** By now the sugar syrup should be close to 225°F. Test the temperature with a thermometer. If it has reached its target, it's time to return to the mixer bowl and prepare to add the melted

gelatin and the sugar syrup to the glucose syrup, vanilla bean powder, and magic dust that have been waiting in the bowl.

**Back to the Mixer Bowl.** Fit the mixer with the whisk attachment and pour the hot sugar syrup in a slow stream into the mixer bowl. Once all of the sugar syrup has been added, pick up the bowl of melted gelatin and ease that oozy stuff into the mixer bowl. To review: The mixer bowl now contains the glucose syrup, vanilla bean powder, magic dust, the hot sugar syrup, and the melted gelatin. Take care because everything is hot.

Starting the mixer on low speed and gradually increasing the speed to high, whip the marshmallow for 8 to 10 minutes, until it becomes a fluffy, sticky mass that's roughly three times greater in volume than when you started. When the marshmallow is sufficiently whipped, its temperature should have cooled to between 90° and 95°F.

Tip the bowl and allow gravity to help you push the sticky marshmallow out of the bowl and into the prepared candy frame or pan. Use a butter knife or an offset spatula to ease the marshmallow into the corners of the frame or pan, spreading it as evenly as you can. The top of the marshmallow will look like beautiful, smooth chocolate snowdrifts, unless you get fussy and attempt (crazily) to get it perfectly smooth (I don't recommend it). Allow the candy to cool and then set completely, keeping in mind that gelatin doesn't fully set until it cools to 68°F. Translation: Wait for at least a few hours or up to overnight before cutting.

**To Make the Marshmallow Powder.** Sift together the cornstarch and powdered sugar into a bowl. (The powder can be stored in an airtight container in a cool, dry place indefinitely.)

**To Finish.** If using a candy frame, remove the bars. If your marshmallows are in a pan, ease the candy out of it and set it on a cutting surface. Cut the marshmallow slab into 1-inch squares by first cutting it into 1-inch-wide rows and then cutting across the rows at 1-inch intervals. You may want to use a ruler (if you seek perfection) and either a good knife or a metal bench scraper. You may need to wipe the knife or scraper with a damp kitchen towel once or twice during cutting, as it can get quite messy, which makes cutting more difficult than it needs to be. Once the marshmallows are cut, toss them in the marshmallow powder, taking care to coat them completely.

The marshmallows are now ready to eat, to add to another recipe, or to store in an airtight container in a dry, cool place, for up to 4 weeks, keeping in mind that the fresher they are, the more delightful they will be.

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## Chocolate Magic Dust

This dust is the foundation of countless recipes, comes together in a flash, and stores beautifully in your pantry. Because the dust is over-the-top usable, I like to make large batches of it. I promise you, if you have the dust at the ready, you will be more likely to use it. Think of it as a pantry staple, and when you want to make a cup of hot chocolate, a glass of chocolate milk, a batch of chocolate ice cream, or any other chocolaty treat, the main component of the recipe is there in the pantry all ready to go.

**MAKES ABOUT 600 GRAMS**

460 grams granulated sugar  
116 grams cocoa powder (see below)  
2 grams kosher salt  
3 grams vanilla bean powder  
2 grams ground cinnamon

Pour the sugar into a large bowl. Sift together the cocoa powder, salt, vanilla bean powder, and cinnamon into a small bowl to break up any clumps. Add the sifted mixture to the sugar, grab a whisk, and whisk, whisk, whisk everything together until it looks like a big bowl of sparkly chocolate powder (again, *magic*).

The magic dust is now ready to use. Store in an airtight container or ziplock bags. As long as the container is airtight and moisture-free, the dust will last for up to 12 months.

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## marshmallow technique

In general, marshmallows are easy to make, but you do need to pay attention to what I'm saying here. So, read these words carefully, do what they say, and you'll have outrageous marshmallows on your hands in no time.

### INGREDIENTS

Marshmallows are made with gelatin, which they rely on for their signature texture. Gelatin is a hydrocolloid (a technical term that means it forms a gel when combined with water). It's an ingredient that can both thicken and gel. This thickening and gelling is key in marshmallows because it helps produce that bouncy-soft texture that then gives way to an almost creamy texture in your mouth.

Gelatin is thermoreversible, which means it's a gel when cooled and a very thick liquid when heated. And that transition is not permanent. Simply because you've made the candy and it looks perfect now doesn't mean it won't melt if subjected to heat later. That's why I say that you should never leave candies like marshmallows (or gumdrops, which are also made with gelatin) in your car on a hot day. Even shipping them during the summer can get tricky. The gel that's formed by gelatin will melt at temperatures right around 86°F. That translates into gelatin being responsible for the best melt-in-your-mouth sensation you could ever hope to achieve. Basically, the minute these marshmallows hit your mouth, they begin melting, and then the melty sensation gives way to flavor. And great flavor is what you want, especially after the pouf of the marshmallow has melted in your mouth.

The recipes that follow call for leaf gelatin, the kind of gelatin that comes in sheets. I make marshmallows with leaf gelatin because it produces stellar results and has no lingering flavors that can get in the way of the candy. In my work, gelatin sheets have always bloomed in water more evenly than powdered gelatin does. They melt nicely with no granules left behind, unlike what often happens when I use powdered gelatin. They also don't require weighing because I use them in specific numbers. I always love finding ways to increase my odds of success in a recipe, and because these marshmallows rely so heavily on gelatin, the exactness of counting sheets rather than fussing with a scale means something to me. Leaf gelatin, sometimes called *sheet gelatin*, comes in four types, all named after precious metals: bronze, silver, gold, and platinum. All of the recipes that follow call for silver leaf gelatin, which is the same type we use at QUIN.

### EQUIPMENT

First, you'll need something to contain the candy while it sets. I like to use a 12 by 14-inch candy frame (see page 162 to 163 (*not included*)), but a 9 by 13-inch pan will work in a pinch. A marshmallow frame is made the same way as the caramels and Dreams Come Chew frames. After the frame is built, however, marshmallows take a different turn. All four bars and the work surface on which the frame is built need a light sheen of vegetable oil applied to them prior to the candy going in.

Second, you'll need a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment to achieve a light and fluffy result and to cool the marshmallow adequately. (If you don't have a stand mixer, a handheld mixer and a mixing bowl will work.)

Inadequate cooling prior to scooping the oozy marshmallow into a frame or pan will result in a soggy-bottomed marshmallow (and no person I know enjoys a soggy-bottomed marshmallow).

Third, you'll need a thermometer to check the temperature a few times along the way.

### **BASIC STEPS**

Marshmallow creation happens in a few distinct steps. Here's a quick rundown: There's gelatin to bloom (in a bowl), gelatin to melt (the bowl in which it was bloomed now sits atop a double boiler), a sugar syrup to cook to a specific temperature (in a pot on the stove), and a mixer bowl containing additional ingredients. The mixer bowl will eventually contain everything—the melted gelatin, the hot sugar syrup, and the ingredients that you put into it in the first place.

Once everything has been whipped into fluffy oblivion, the marshmallow is scooped out of the bowl into a frame or pan to cool and set. When it has set, it's cut and dusted with marshmallow powder, which is equal parts cornstarch and powdered sugar sifted together. The powder prevents the finished candy from sticking together and forming a crazy (but delicious) mass.

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