



CHOCOLATE MOUSSE WITH CRISP BEET MERINGUE is excerpted from [The Flavor Matrix](#) © 2018 by James Briscone. Reproduced by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. All rights reserved.

CHOCOLATE MOUSSE WITH CRISP BEET MERINGUE

This recipe delivers unexpected flavors atop a familiar foundation. There is nothing more comforting than a creamy bowl of chocolate mousse. Beets, camomile, and orange zest punch up the flavor of that classic dish, while the beet meringue adds crunch and makes for a dramatic presentation.

SERVES 6

BEET MERINGUE

3 large egg whites

Pinch of cream of tartar (optional)

½ cup granulated sugar

¾ cup powdered sugar

¾ cup roasted beet purée (or 1 cup peeled and chopped beets, boiled until very soft, peeled, and puréed in a food processor or blender until smooth)

CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

¾ cup heavy cream

Grated zest of 1 orange (about 1½ tablespoons)

1 tablespoon dried camomile flowers (optional)

8 ounce semisweet chocolate (at least 70% cacao), chopped

1 tablespoon unsalted butter, softened

6 large egg whites

2 tablespoons granulated sugar

1. *Make the beet meringue:* Preheat the oven to 150 to 200°F. Line a 13 by 9- inch baking pan with a silicone baking mat or parchment paper and coat with nonstick cooking spray.
2. Whip the egg whites and cream of tartar (if using) with an electric mixer until frothy. Gradually add the granulated sugar and continue whipping until stiff peaks form and the whites are smooth and glossy. Sift the powdered sugar over the meringue, then gently fold it in.
3. Place dollops of meringue all over the baking pan. Measure out ½ cup of the beet purée; set aside the remaining ¼ cup for the mousse. Drop spoonfuls of the beet purée in between dollops of meringue, then gently swirl with a spatula and smooth into a thin layer. Bake for about 6 hours at 150°F or 3 hours at 200°F, until crisp but not browned.



Remove from the oven and let cool to room temperature. Break into pieces and store in an airtight container in a cool, dry place.

4. *Make the mousse:* Combine the cream, orange zest, and camomile (if using) in a small saucepot and bring to a boil over medium heat. Turn off the heat, cover the pot, and let steep for 10 minutes.
5. Combine the chocolate and butter in a heatproof bowl. Strain the cream through a fine-mesh sieve into the chocolate and let stand for 3 minutes. Whisk until all the chocolate has melted and the mixture is smooth. Stir in the reserved beet purée.
6. Using an electric mixer, whip the egg whites to soft peaks. Gradually add the granulated sugar and continue whipping until stiff peaks form. Gently fold the whipped egg whites into the chocolate mixture one-third at a time until fully incorporated. Refrigerate until well chilled.
7. When you're ready to serve, divide the mousse among six bowls and top each with pieces of beet meringue.

A close-up photograph of a chocolate swirl on a black plate. The chocolate is a rich, dark brown color and is swirled into a circular pattern. It is topped with numerous small, irregular shards of candy. The candy shards are primarily white with a vibrant pink or magenta color on one side, suggesting a raspberry or strawberry flavor. The shards are scattered across the top of the chocolate swirl, some overlapping and some lying flat. The background is a solid black, which makes the chocolate and candy stand out prominently.

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