

## **Swiss Meringue Buttercream**

**¾ cup (approx. 5 egg whites) large egg whites, at room temperature for 30 minutes**

**1 ½ cups granulated sugar**

**¼ teaspoon salt**

**¾ pound (3 sticks) unsalted butter, softened**

**4 ounces shortening**

**1 ½ Tablespoons pure vanilla extract**

**Special equipment : a stand mixer fitted with whisk attachment; a pastry bag fitted with a 1/4-inch plain tip**

- 1. In the bowl of a stand mixer, vigorously whisk together the egg whites, sugar, and salt.**
- 2. Set the mixer bowl over a 4-quart pot of barely simmering water until the sugar is dissolved and the mixture is warm. The mixture should be 130 degrees, using an instant read thermometer to record a temperature.**
- 3. Place the bowl on the mixer stand and using the wire whip attachment, beat at medium-high speed until whites hold stiff, glossy peaks. Continue to beat, scraping down side of bowl with a rubber spatula, until meringue is completely cool to the touch, about 5 minutes. (The outside of the bowl should feel cool, before proceeding to the next step.)**
- 4. Switch to the paddle attachment and beat at low speed. Gradually add butter ½ stick at a time, beating well after each addition until incorporated. (If buttercream looks soupy after some butter is added, meringue is still too warm. If so, briefly chill bottom of bowl in a larger bowl filled with ice water for a few seconds before beating in the remaining butter.)**
- 5. After all of the butter is added, increase mixer speed to medium, add the shortening and continue to beat until the buttercream is thick and smooth-up to 5 minutes longer. Continue beating until the buttercream is smooth. (The buttercream may look curdled before all of the butter is added but will come back together by the time beating is finished). Add vanilla extract and beat 1 minute more or until incorporated.**
- 6. Use the buttercream immediately or refrigerate or freeze until ready to use. Buttercream is best after it is first made. If refrigerated or frozen, bring buttercream to room temperature prior to re-whipping before use.**