

CLEO COYLE'S LITTLE CHOCOLATE CLOUDS

*"I had some dreams,
they were clouds in my coffee..."*

One of songwriter Carly Simon's many inspired lines was my inspiration for these Little Chocolate Clouds. These simple chocolate meringues are easy to whip up and bake. They are bursting with chocolate flavor yet still light and have the added bonus of protein.

Serve these as an after-dinner treat or satisfying coffee break snack. You can even float one in a hot coffee or espresso. It will melt slowly into the liquid, adding a hint of mocha flavor to your cup. The only tricky technique to making this simple recipe is beating the egg whites, but I've included some tips for getting optimum results.

May you eat them with joy! ~ **Cleo**



PHOTO BY
CLEO COYLE

Cleo Coyle's Little Chocolate Clouds

Text & photos (c) by Alice Alfonsi, who writes the [Coffeehouse Mysteries](#) as [Cleo Coyle](#) with her husband, Marc Cerasini

Makes 24 to 30 cookies, depending on size

Ingredients:

- 4 egg whites (room temperature)
- ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar (to stabilize egg whites)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ¼ teaspoon table salt
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 3 Tablespoons unsweetened cocoa

Optional decorations: chocolate sprinkles, mini chocolate chips, chopped nuts, shredded coconut



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Step 1 – Before You Begin: First preheat the oven to 300° Fahrenheit. Some notes to help you get the best results here: Start with a mixing bowl that is glass, metal, or ceramic. The bowl must be free of grease for your egg whites to whip up properly. (Grease clings to plastic bowls, which is why you should not use plastic.) Also, for best results, your egg whites should be room temperature. I simply set my cold eggs in a bowl of warm tap water for 2 to 3 minutes before cracking.



Step 2 – Whip Egg Whites: Place egg whites, cream of tartar, vanilla, and salt into bowl. Using an electric mixer or handheld whisk, begin to whip the whites. When you see soft peaks begin to form (see top photo), continue beating while slowly sprinkling in the sugar. When the egg whites have become stiff and glossy (see 2nd photo), stop whipping. Sift the cocoa over the egg whites and gently fold in. The whites will deflate a bit, but that's okay.

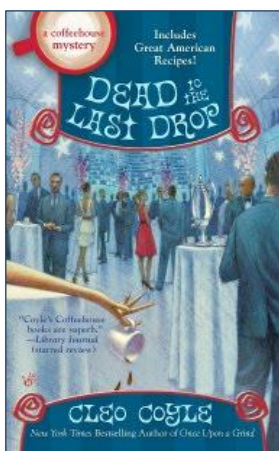
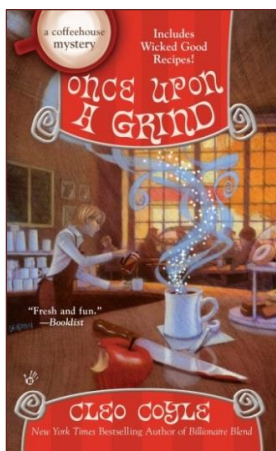


Step 3 – Form Little Chocolate Clouds: Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Make rustic little clouds by dropping batter in heaping teaspoons onto the paper. As a fun option and to create variety, try sprinkling

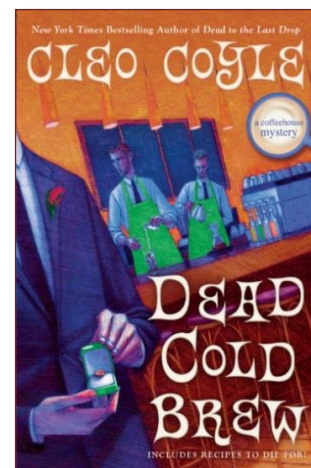
some with finely chopped nuts, others with shredded coconut, chocolate sprinkles, or a few mini chocolate chips.



Step 4 – Bake in your preheated (300° F.) oven for about 25 to 35 minutes. Cookies should be dry and somewhat firm on the outside (not hard just firm) and still gooey in the center. Remove from oven and carefully slide the parchment paper off the hot pan and onto a rack to cool. Note: Warm meringues will stick to the parchment paper. But as they cool, they will harden. Then you can lift them free and...eat with joy!



Cleo Coyle's [Coffeehouse Mysteries](http://www.CoffeehouseMystery.com) are bestselling culinary mysteries, set in a landmark Greenwich Village coffeehouse. Each includes the added bonus of recipes. To learn more and see more recipes, visit Cleo's online coffeehouse at www.CoffeehouseMystery.com And her recipe blog at www.CleoCoyleRecipes.com



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