

Click here for our Google map of macaron bakeries in New York:

[MACARONATHON NEW YORK](#)



MACARONATHON™

Have you been swept up in the macaron craze? Bon Appétit Magazine calls these rainbow-colored confections the “new cupcake.” Parisian-style macaron shops dot the landscape from Philadelphia to LA. Even Ladurée, the macaron mother-ship opened a branch in New York this fall.

French macarons are one delicious sensation we’re happy to support. To introduce [our new web site](#), join us in celebrating all things macaron. Here we’ll share some tips on what to look for in a macaron and give you a map of macaron bakeries in New York to get you started. (And for those who want to try their hand at making these elegant confections, we have some tips from Chef Jacquy Pfeiffer, co-founder of the French Pastry School in Chicago.)

Macaroon, macaron, macaWHAT?



complemented by the filling.

Most Americans know macaroons, those moist and chewy cookies made with coconut. They are delicious but have nothing in common with a Parisian macaron. The French cookie is made from two smooth-topped almond meringues. The small shells are sandwiched with fruit jam, buttercream or chocolate ganache. The dome-shaped cookies, in a rainbow of colors, have a delicate, crunchy surface and a meltingly, tender interior

For something so simple-looking, macarons come in a range of styles and flavors. That’s what makes eating Parisian macarons such a pleasure and hunting for them part of the fun. (Read about our Macaronathon tour below.) And with prices starting at about \$2.00 each, macarons are an affordable luxury, the kind of tiny treat we welcome.

The standard-bearer of macarons is Ladurée in Paris, credited with inventing the cookie as it is known today. Pastry chef Pierre Hermé, who worked at Ladurée before opening his own shops, vies for the title of *Meilleur Macaron* with his trend-forward flavor combinations. Like many patissiers, he is inventive combining white truffle and hazelnut, caramel and fleur de sel or rose and pistachio in his macarons. Stateside, pastry chefs are putting their own flavor spin on the French treat. Like Chef Hermé, who introduces seasonal collections of macaron flavors, bakeries here also offer these treats in limited editions. This season at Bisous Ciao in Little Italy, for example, spiced pumpkin macarons are available only through December.

Selecting, Savoring and Evaluating a Parisian Macaron

Whether you are ready to try a macaron for the first time or are already addicted, here is what to look for. According to Anne McBride and Kathryn Gordon authors of *Les Petits Macarons* there are three things that make an authentic Parisian macaron.



-the shell

"A slightly shiny thin shell with a slight crunch" is how they describe the ideal French macaron. The shell should be as thin as a hair's width and smooth, not flaking.

-le pied or the foot

"A proportional narrow foot" should encircle the bottom of the shell. It is formed as the macaron rises in the oven.

-inside

"An interior that is soft, moist and only slightly chewy" describes the texture of the perfect French macaron.



When you bite into the macaron, the shell should be crisp without being dry. The shell will resist at first before your teeth will sink into it says McBride. Then there is the silken filling. Most often the filling is a smooth, fine buttercream flavored with fruit purées, chocolate, vanilla beans or essential flavoring oils. Although there can be some bold flavor combinations, vanilla, hazelnut, chocolate, pistachio, lemon and raspberry are the classics.

Macarons are meant to be savored. McBride recommends eating them a few bites at a time. It takes a while for the palate to experience all the flavorful pleasures in the tiny cookie. There is the crunch, the texture of the shell then the flavors of both the shell and its filling. When sampling macarons from different bakeries or even from one sole shop, McBride recommends selecting a few classic flavors then one or two experimental flavors. This helps establish a benchmark when comparing bakeries and is just plain fun. (You can even create a Tasting



Score Sheet to compare the appearance, flavor and texture of macarons from different shops.)

Macaronathon New York

Ready to set out on your own exploration of all things macaron? Click here for our Google map of macaron bakeries in New York:

MACARONATHON NEW YORK



We've put together this map to make it easy for you to get your macaron fix. Among these shops, we hope you'll find a favorite but often it is a matter of taste. Often we like a macaron that allows the delicate flavor of almonds to shine through as in the vanilla macaron at Mille-Feuille. Or when the butter cream melts and fuses with the shell. Some people like a macaron that brims with buttercream like those at Ladurée. But are times when nothing beats a chocolate-filled macaron. (Those at Almondine and La Maison du Chocolat rival the best bonbon, *naturellement*.)

Some flavor combinations we like include passion fruit and raspberry. Tart flavors in the filling, says McBride, balance the sweetness of the shell. Some shops have specialties such as

tea-flecked macaron at Boise, tea salon. At minimalist Bisous, Ciao, the macaron are displayed like jewelry under a glass counter. And during your Macaronathon expect some memorable encounters. At Ladurée, there is the crowd-watching and tempting gifts. Or at an intimate boutique like Kee's Chocolate, you might get a chance to talk to the founder about her philosophy of macaron and chocolate flavors.



Making Les Macarons Chez Vous



Dedicated Parisian macaron bakeries are gaining in popularity. (Watch our Macaronathon map grow in the future.) But if you want to try your hand at making them at home, we recommend the book, [Les Petits Macarons: Colorful French Confections to Make at Home](#). In a compact format with delicious color photos throughout, this book includes recipes for all styles of macarons.

And for professionals or those with a more technical bent, we have put together All About Parisian Macarons. It is a step-by-step discussion of making macaron with photos, a recipe and tips from Chef Jacquy Pfeiffer from the French Pastry School in Chicago. Click here:

ALL ABOUT PARISIAN MACARONS

Macarons By Mail

If you live far from Paris or another great macaron mecca, there are numerous mail order sources where you can find these delicious treats. Here are two New York businesses that specialize in mail order macaron you might like to try.

[Itzy Bitzy Patisserie](#)

[Macaron Parlour](#)

Storing Macarons

Whether you've made them yourself or opened a box just delivered, there are some best practices to keeping the macaron fresh. Refrigerate them in an airtight container for up to three days. Be sure to bring the macaron to room temperature before eating.

Macarons lend themselves to freezing, especially those filled with buttercream or ganache. Gordon and McBride advise wrapping 6 at a time in plastic wrap then freezing them in a crush-proof container. When time to eat, thaw them in the plastic wrap in the refrigerator. Any condensation will cling to the plastic not the macaroon. Then bring the macarons to room temperature before eating.



Other Fun Macaron Resources

It is easy to get overwhelmed by the amount of information on French macarons available. We find this resource from pastry pro and adopted Parisian David Lebovitz, especially comprehensive. Click here for more information:

[MAKING FRENCH MACARONS](#)



About Our Company

From around the corner to around the world, American Almond Products Company understands bakeries. It's where we started over 87 years ago and we've learned a lot along the way. Providing ingredients that inspire bakers and pastry chefs to create new cakes, cookies, chocolates, frozen desserts and pastries is what we do.

And for home bakers we have our Love'n Bake®, the same artisan ingredients we pack for professionals in smaller sizes.

Now all of our products are available for home and professional bakers, pastry chefs and confectioners at www.AmericanAlmond.com

