

Salted Caramel Buttercream

Poetry & Pies

cook time: 10-15 minutes

prep time: 10 minutes

total time: 25 minutes, plus an hour cooling time

yields: about 2 cups, or enough to frost an 8" or 9" cake



Ingredients

- ½ cup [vanilla salted caramel sauce](#) (or thicker style store-bought caramel)
- 1 ½ cups (3 sticks) European style butter, room temperature
- 4 cups powdered sugar
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon sea salt (or to taste)

Instructions

1. First, make the caramel sauce then let it cool completely. Be sure you let it cook until a deep golden color and no graininess remains (test this by grabbing some out with a spoon then letting it cool for a minute before touching).
 - If using store-bought caramel, make sure it is a thick consistency that will harden in the fridge. You also may need to add extra salt to create the right flavor. Be sure to heat it until it can be drizzled, but make sure it's not hot. There's a sweet spot between too hot and too cool that you want to reach before using it.
2. While the caramel cools, you can take out your butter and let it come to room temperature. Both it and the caramel need about an hour to reach room temperature. At that point, if the caramel is still warm, you can refrigerate it for a few minutes, stirring frequently, until completely room temperature but still in liquid state. You want it liquid so it blends with the buttercream but if it is warm *at all* it will make a big soupy mess.
3. Beat the room temperature butter on high until smooth, about 30 seconds. Add 1 cup of the powdered sugar and beat on low then slowly increase to high (to avoid a sugar cloud). Beat on high for about 30 seconds, until completely smooth. Continue this process until you've added all 4 cups of powdered sugar.

4. Scrape down the bowl then add about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup caramel sauce, the vanilla, and the salt. (If the caramel has thickened too much, you can heat it over a double boiler or by placing your glass jar in a small pot of simmering water that covers about half the jar, until it can drizzle in ribbons but isn't hot.) Beat on high until completely smooth.
5. Taste the buttercream, adding more salt or caramel sauce (up to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup more, or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup total) as needed. If *truly* necessary, you can also add some more powdered sugar, but first try refrigerating if it needs to stiffen up some.
6. Scrape down the bowl then beat on high for 2-3 minutes, to fluff up the frosting. This is optional but creates a great texture. Afterward, stir with a spatula or wooden spoon for a minute to release any large air bubbles.

Enjoy! Frosting can be made ahead and stored in an airtight container on the counter overnight, in the fridge for 2-3 weeks, or the freezer for 1-2 months. If chilled, defrost on the counter for a few hours then beat again on high until smooth.