

Calaveras de Azúcar



Sugar Skulls (Makes 1 large skull)

1 lb. granulated sugar (2 cups)

2 tsp. meringue powder*

2 tsp. water

*Please buy CK Products' meringue powder. It is more concentrated than other brands and will yield a sturdy skull.

→ Pour sugar and meringue powder into a large bowl. Using your hands, toss the ingredients together.

→ Add the water. Continue to mix with your hands making sure that every bit of water moistens all of the sugar. You will know when the mixture is ready by making a fist to squeeze the sugar. If the sugar holds its form when you release your fist, the sugar is perfect for making a skull. It will feel like cool, moist sand.

→ Using your hands, begin to pack the sugar into the face side of your skull mold. Make sure to press the sugar into every crevice so that your skull has nice definition when released. Scrape the flat side of the skull smooth with a knife. Then, take a piece of sturdy cardboard and turn the sugar skull onto the cardboard.

Sugar Skulls (Makes 10 large skulls)

10 lbs. granulated sugar (21 cups)

½ cup meringue powder*

7 TBSP water

→Repeat the step above for the back side of the skull.

→Let the skulls dry for 4-5 hours before handling them. After this time has elapsed carefully pick the face side of the skull up, and hollow out a well in the back using a melon baller. Be sure NOT to hollow out any part of the neck. Then repeat with the back side of the skull. Let the skulls dry for an additional 20 hours or overnight.

→In order to connect the face side and back side of the skull, pipe white royal icing around the perimeter of the back side. Gently press the two together until the skull is sealed and firm.

→Decorate the skull as you would like with colored royal icing, sequins, cut foil, glitter, feathers, etc.

Royal Icing (Will decorate about 5-10 skulls)

2/3 cup water

½ cup meringue powder

2 lbs. powdered sugar

→Mix water, meringue powder, and powdered sugar with a stand mixer until icing peaks (about 9 minutes). Do NOT mix more than 2 lbs. of sugar at a time. Keep the icing in a tightly covered container or bag until ready to use. Do NOT refrigerate.

→Spoon the desired amount of icing that you would like to tint into a separate bowl. Add a “toothpickful” of gel food coloring. Mix until the color is dispersed throughout. Place the icing into a pastry bag with or without a pastry tip. You can create about 6-8 colors per batch of icing.

NOTES:

- I bought all of my sugar skull supplies from www.mexicansugarskull.com. They have a variety of molds to choose from and you can find the meringue powder here, as well. They also sell colored foil and food coloring. Each mold comes with directions. This company is very professional and great to work with. They have a very detailed explanation of sugar skull making on their website.
- It's important to scoop out the large skulls because they tend to trap moisture. In addition, they slide apart easily if not scooped. However, you can use the sugar you scoop out to make more skulls. Just store it in a plastic bag until ready to use. You may need to add a little more water before making the skulls a second time.
- I cut my cardboard/cardstock to approximately 6.5" x 8.5" to fit nicely on the mold.
- If you are putting the icing into pastry bags with tips, please store the bags inside a large Ziploc bag. This ensures that the icing will not dry out around the tip.
- Keep in mind that you should work in an easily cleanable area. The sugar tends to get everywhere and you will definitely need to sweep the floor and wipe down countertops and tables.
- You can cut the foil freehand using sharp scissors or you can use craft punches that already come in predetermined shapes.

- In order to make 30 skulls, I bought 30 lbs. of sugar and used part of a 16 oz. bag of meringue powder. I made 3 batches of the royal icing by using the rest of the meringue powder. I have found that it is better not to use pastry tips when working with high school kids. I created 15 bags of colored icing and 3 bags of white icing.
- While sugar skulls are edible, they are usually an art form rather than a food product.

Recipe Source: Adapted from www.mexicansugarskull.com.

