

Q&A

Yvonne Maffei teaches us how to guarantee our fondant and cheeses are 100% halal.

What do I need to make a halal fondant?

There are a few basic ingredients (powdered sugar, gelatine, glycerine and vanilla extract) needed to make a fondant, some of which may not be so easy to find with halal ingredients. Here are a few suggestions I hope will help you make gorgeous fondant for your special occasion cakes.

For starters, when adding sugar or confectioner's sugar to your fondant you should know that refined sugar might be processed using a bone char filter which comes from animals (activated carbon) and is used to whiten raw cane sugar. If there isn't a halal certification on the product to verify this is the result of an authenticated process and ingredients, then it is best to avoid the product. Instead, use an organic sugar sweetener that is vegan or vegetarian certified. Another alternative is to use beet sugar due to the fact that its processing does not require bone char to remove the coloring of the raw product.

Choose a food-grade glycerine that is vegetarian and also alcohol-free. The same goes for many flavoured extracts, which are typically made using high concentrations of alcohol to extract their flavours. Many health food stores and grocers will carry them or can direct you to a reputable product. See details below.

Due to the high likelihood that commercial gelatine is made from pork, sourcing halal gelatine is hugely important for making halal baked goods and thankfully, alhamdulillah, we can often times use sea flakes (also known as agar-agar) to create some wonderful baked goods such as fondant. And don't worry - it won't come out tasting like fish whatsoever.

Do you have any cooking-related questions for Sister Yvonne? Email her on info@myhalalkitchen.com with 'SISTERS Column Q&A' in the subject line.



Online Resources

Glycerine - amazon.com or wilton.com
Alcohol-free extracts - frontiercoop.com
Vegetarian/vegan sugar - www.wholesomesweeteners.com
Fish-derived gelatine - www.edenfoods.com

I don't really see a need for halal cheese products. Why are there halal-certified options?

There are a couple of reasons why people question the permissibility of cheese products in the marketplace and they basically involve the inclusion of rennet and enzymes in those products. There is a difference of opinion amongst the Hanafi school of thought and the others in that the Hanafi school states all cheese is

considered halal unless the animal source of that cheese rennet is porcine (which is highly unusual, Alhamdulillah). If a source is unknown, it's best to call the food company directly to find out its origin. If you're still not convinced, that's where the halal certification labels or stamps come in to offer assurance that the product itself, its processing and sometimes even its packaging are completely and authentically halal.