

## Baking Ice Cream: All it Takes is Some Insulation

Have you ever wondered how ice cream can be baked without melting? In desserts such as baked Alaska, ice cream is coated with meringue (beaten egg whites with a little sugar). The meringue acts as insulation, much as an insulated foam drinking cup or a down-filled coat. Insulation has small air spaces trapped in it that slow down the passage of heat or cold. When egg whites are beaten to make meringue, many small air spaces are created. When the meringue is spread over ice cream, the ice cream is insulated so the heat of the oven cannot get in during the short baking time that is usually used. It is important to completely cover the ice cream.

### MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT

- 3 egg whites
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 3 chocolate chip cookies
- 1 cup ice cream

- baking sheet
- aluminum foil
- oven
- ice cream scoop

### PROCEDURE

1. Heat the oven to 500 degrees.
2. Cover the baking sheet with aluminum foil.
3. Beat egg whites until they form soft peaks.
4. Add sugar to the beaten egg whites, a tablespoon at a time, beating the egg whites after each addition.
5. Continue to beat the egg whites and sugar until the mixture is thick and glossy. This is called meringue.
6. Put the cookies on the baking sheet.
7. Place a scoop of ice cream on each cookie.

8. Spread meringue thickly over the ice cream. Be sure that the ice cream is completely covered with meringue.
9. Place baking sheet in the oven. Bake on the lowest rack of the oven for 3 to 5 minutes until the meringue is lightly browned.
10. Eat right away. Why isn't the ice cream melted?

*From: "Foodworks," Ontario Science Centre, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1987.*

