

## French Vanilla Buttercream a la Toba

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My adaptation of Toba Garrett's recipe for French Vanilla Buttercream from *"The Well Decorated Cake"* available at Amazon.com (a book I highly recommend)

*With notes by Laurie Clarke*

Toba's comments: "This is simply the most delicious icing ever. It tastes like vanilla ice cream. Use this icing when looking for something similar to whipped cream".

*Laurie's notes: This is my very favorite off-white, super-smooth icing. This recipe can be made with half shortening half butter (or even margarine if you're cost-conscious) to get something a little lighter (otherwise it's butter yellow) and whipping cream may be omitted for a thicker buttercream (when cake can't be refrigerated until display). I would refrigerate this icing after 6 hours rather than leaving it out overnight. This icing is okay at room temperature but not ideal for transport or display above 80 degrees. For warmer days definitely use part or all shortening and omit whipping cream, but if the day is likely to be above 80F switch to another icing (at least a Swiss or Italian meringue, or, ideally, a powdered sugar buttercream such as Wilton's "Snow White Buttercream")*

*The original recipe makes about 5 cups of icing. Below is my doubled recipe for a 4.5 q mixer bowl. One of the best things about this recipe is that you can make a whole ton of the roux (custard) and keep it in the fridge to make multiple batches of buttercream with only one cooking time. Make a double batch and weigh/measure out roux -- next time you can make 4 or 8 times as much and freeze roux in individual packages for later use.*

*This recipe freezes and thaws very well. Simply bring to room temp slowly and beat to restore silky consistency. If using cream keep in fridge only one week and freezer only 3 months. Without cream keep in fridge 3 weeks and in freezer 6 to 9 months.*

### **5 cup recipe:**

**1 1/2 Cups (345g) granulated sugar**  
**3/4 Cup (6 fl oz) milk**  
**1 1/2 Tbsp all-purpose flour**  
**1/4 tsp salt** (*omit if using salted butter*)  
**1 Tbsp pure vanilla extract** (*use clear if you don't want an ivory-yellow icing*)  
**1 tsp butter flavoring** (*if using shortening*) (*optional*)  
**3/8 Cup (3 fl oz) whipping cream**  
**1 1/4 lbs (567 g) unsalted butter, room temperature** (*salted butter is okay, too, esp. when subbing half shortening*)

### **7.5 Cup recipe:**

**3 Cups (690g) granulated sugar**  
**1 1/2 Cups (12 fl oz) milk**  
**3 Tbsp all-purpose flour**  
**1/2 tsp salt** (*omit if using salted butter*)  
**1 Tbsp pure vanilla extract** (*use clear if you don't want an ivory-yellow icing*)  
**1 tsp butter flavoring** (*if using shortening*) (*optional*)  
**3/8 Cup (3 fl oz) whipping cream**  
**1 1/4 lbs (567 g) unsalted butter, room temperature** (*salted butter is okay, too, esp. when subbing half shortening*)

1. Make custard by heating milk and sugar until sugar crystals dissolve. Add flour and salt and whisk over an ice bath until the custard has cooled, or cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1/2 hour to cool the mixture (*to room temp*). Whisk in vanilla extract.

2. Pour custard mixture into a mixer bowl with a paddle attachment. Add cut-up butter and add whipping cream. Mix on LOW speed to incorporate ingredients. Gradually increase speed to MEDIUM-HIGH until the mixture begins to thicken. It takes at least 7 to 9 minutes for the butter to be completely incorporated. (*will become silky smooth and increase slightly in volume*) Toba's Note: Don't panic if the buttercream looks like cottage cheese. The more you beat this buttercream, the creamier it gets.

3. *Best when used immediately, or:* put the icing in a plastic container with a lid and refrigerate. *Cannot be kept on counter for days like powdered sugar buttercreams, even when cream is omitted.*