

Double Chocolate Zucchini and Spice Cupcakes

These cupcakes travel well if just dusted with powdered sugar and packed in a container but you can turn them up a notch with Cream Cheese Frosting.

Recipe courtesy Merle Ann Loman, 2010

Prep Time: 20 min

Inactive Prep Time: --

Cook Time: 25 min

Level: Easy

Serves: 24 cupcakes



Ingredients

- ½ cup butter, softened
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 1 ¾ cups sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- ½ cup buttermilk, room temperature
- 2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground cloves
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 cups grated zucchini (if the grated zucchini is wet, drain in colander lined with cheese cloth)
- 1 cup chopped pecans or walnuts
- 1 cup chocolate chips

Cream Cheese Frosting:

- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- ¼ cup butter, softened
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups sifted confectioners' sugar

Directions

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line 2 (12-cup) muffin pans with cupcake papers.

In a medium mixing bowl, sift together the flour, cocoa powder, cinnamon, cloves, baking soda, salt. In a large bowl, cream together the butter, oil, sugar and vanilla. Gently beat buttermilk and eggs together and add to the butter, oil, sugar mixture. Stir zucchini into wet mixture. Combine wet ingredients with a spoon until smooth. Add the sifted dry ingredients, nuts and chocolate chips to the wet mixture and mix with a spoon until smooth and thoroughly combined.

Divide the batter evenly among the cupcake tins, filling cupcake papers about $\frac{2}{3}$ full. Bake in 350 degree oven for about 22 to 25 minutes, turning the pans once, half way through. Remove from oven.

The cupcakes are sweet enough on their own and travel best if not frosted. If you like, dust with powder sugar while still warm. When cooled completely, pack in a Tupperware or other plastic container that will fit in your cooler or backpack.

Cream Cheese Frosting:

Note: Cool cupcakes completely before frosting.

In a large mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese, butter and vanilla together until smooth. Add the sugar and on low speed, beat until incorporated. Increase the speed to high and mix until very light and fluffy. If you want the frosting to be stiffer, add more confectioners' sugar.

The cupcakes are delicious garnished with chopped nuts and fresh raspberries or strawberries.