

Chocolate Fudge Cupcakes

INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup (120mL) water

1 cup (200g) granulated sugar

1/2 cup (41g) unsweetened cocoa powder

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/2 cup (1 stick / 115g) unsalted butter

1/4 cup (60mL) vegetable oil

2 large eggs, at room temperature

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract (optional)

1 cup (120g) all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

Your choice of candy, for filling the cupcakes (some filling ideas include chocolate chips/bars, marshmallows, chocolate eggs, or sprinkles)

For the buttercream:

1 cup (2 sticks / 230g) unsalted butter, softened to room temperature

4 & 1/2 cups (540g) powdered sugar, sifted

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract (optional)

4 to 6 tablespoons strawberry purée (about 8 to 10 large strawberries puréed in a food processor)

METHOD

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F / 177°C. Line a 12 count cupcake tin with paper liners and set aside.
2. Make the chocolate cupcakes: In a medium saucepot, combine water, sugar, cocoa powder, and salt. Whisk to combine and break up any large clumps of cocoa.
 3. Add your butter to the pot, and place over a stove burner set to medium-high heat. Warm the mixture, stirring constantly, until the butter is fully melted and the mixture just starts to boil. Turn off the heat, and set your pot aside for 10 minutes to allow the mixture to cool down slightly.
 4. In a large bowl, combine the slightly cooled cocoa mixture, oil, and eggs. Whisk to combine.
 5. In a separate medium bowl, whisk together your flour and baking powder. Add the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients, and fold together until just combined. Take care not to over mix! The batter will be loose.

6. Portion the batter into your prepared cupcake cups. Bake in the centre of your preheated 350°F / 177°C oven for 15 to 20 minutes, or until a skewer inserted into the centre of a cupcake comes out clean. Cool the cupcakes in your tin for about 10 minutes, then transfer onto a wire rack to finish cooling completely to room temperature.
7. Core the centres of the cooled cupcakes with a cutout that's about 3/4" / 2cm / 18mm large. Be careful not to cut through to the bottom of the cupcake, otherwise the filling may spill out.
8. Fill the centres of each cupcake with your favourite candies. If using larger candy or bars, chop them into smaller pieces to fit. Set aside to prep the frosting.
9. Make the strawberry buttercream frosting: In a large bowl, combine butter, powdered sugar, and salt. Using an electric mixer or stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, mix on low speed to combine. The mixture will be slightly crumbly.
10. Add your vanilla and 4 tablespoons of strawberry purée to the butter/sugar mixture. Mix on low speed until the sugar is fully dissolved, then increase your speed to medium and beat together for 2 to 3 minutes, or until light and fluffy. If needed, mix in more strawberry purée, 1 tablespoon at a time, until it reaches a spreadable consistency.
11. Pipe or spread your frosting on top of the filled cupcakes.

SERVE ON:

A DINNER PLATE