Perfect Chocolate Cupcakes

for the cupcakes:
1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder
1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon hot water
2 1/4 cups flour
3/4 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 sticks butter, cut into small pieces
1 2/3 cup granulated sugar
3 large eggs, room temperature
1 tablespoon vanilla
3/4 cup sour cream

for the frosting:
1 cup butter, softened
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
3-4 tablespoons milk
1/2 cup cocoa powder
3 1/2 cup powdered sugar

To make the cupcakes, preheat oven to 350 and line 2 cupcake pans with paper liners. In a small bowl or measuring cup, whisk together cocoa powder and hot water until smooth. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, baking powder, and salt, and set aside.

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, stir together butter and sugar. Heat, stirring occasionally, until the butter is melted and the mixture is smooth. Transfer to the bowl of a stand mixer or a large mixing bowl, and beat until the mixture is cool, 4-5 minutes. Add eggs one at a time, mixing well after each addition. Add vanilla and cocoa mixture, and blend until smooth. With the mixture on low speed, add the flour mixture in three additions, alternating with the sour cream. Mix until smooth. Scoop into prepared pans, filling 2/3 full. Bake until a toothpick comes out clean, about 15-18 minutes. Let cool.

To make the buttercream, in a large bowl or the bowl of stand mixer, cream the butter until light and fluffy. Beat in vanilla and milk, then add cocoa and powdered sugar. Whip until the mixture lightens and is smooth and creamy. Frost cooled cupcakes and enjoy!

Cupcakes adapted from Mel's Kitchen Cafe and frosting adapted from Cooking Classy