

Carrot Cupcakes

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups plus 2 Tablespoons oil
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup white sugar
- 6 eggs
- 1 1/2 Tablespoon vanilla extract
- 3 1/4 cups flour
- 2 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoon salt
- 1 Tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg (optional)
- 1 lb. finely-grated fresh carrots (about 8 small carrots)
- 1 1/2 cups chopped pecans

Cream Cheese Icing

- 2 (8 oz.) bricks cream cheese, room temperature
- 10 Tablespoons unsalted butter, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- pinch of salt
- 4 cups powdered sugar (or more if needed)
- 1/2 cup coconut flakes
- orange and green food coloring

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Add cupcake liner to cupcake tins.
2. In the bowl mix together oil and sugars until combined and smooth. Add in the eggs one at a time, then the vanilla, and mix until smooth. (I prefer to use my Kitchen Aid mixer but a regular mixer would work.)
3. Add the flour, baking soda, salt, baking powder, and spices and mix until it is combined. Mix it until it is just combined, scraping down the pan at least once to be sure that everything is well mixed.
4. Finally, fold in the grated carrots and nuts by hand, and stir until combined.
5. Pour the batter evenly into the prepared cupcake liners. Then bake for 12-14 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the middle of the cakes comes out clean. Remove pans and let them cool on a wire rack until the cakes reach room temperature.
6. Repeat until you have a ton of cupcakes!

Cream Cheese Icing

1. Using an electric mixer, cream together cream cheese and butter on medium speed for 1 minute or until smooth. You want to make sure all the cream cheese lumps are gone. Add in vanilla extract and salt, and continue mixing until combined. Lower speed to medium-low and gradually add in powdered sugar. Increase speed to medium-high and beat until combined.
2. Add in vanilla extract and salt, and continue mixing until combined. Lower speed to medium-low and gradually add in powdered sugar. Increase speed to medium-high and beat until combined.
3. Lower speed to medium-low and gradually add in powdered sugar. Increase speed to medium-high and beat until combined. You can add less powdered sugar if you have your desired consistency.

Decorating the cupcakes:

1. This recipe makes enough icing to generously frost each cupcake. Plus you will have extra to make orange icing for carrots. Add a few drops of orange food coloring to the remaining icing. Add the icing to a plastic sandwich bag and cut off the tip. Draw a carrot on each cupcake.
2. In another plastic baggie add about 1/2 cup of coconut flakes. Then add a few drops of green food coloring. Seal the bag and mix it around to coat the coconut flakes. Add them to the top of the carrot and you are done!
3. Don't let all the steps keep you away from making this recipe! It's really not that hard and you get a ton of cupcakes to share with your friends and family!