

Pumpkin Chocolate Cupcakes

By: Monica Schumacher

Cake

Ingredients:

<i>King Arthur</i> All-purpose Flour	2 2/3 cups
Pumpkin Pie Spice	1 ½ tablespoons
Baking Soda	1 teaspoon
White Sugar	2 cups
Eggs, beaten	3
Pumpkin	1 can (15 ounces)
<i>Barry Callebaut</i> Bittersweet Chocolate	3 ½ ounces
Baking Powder	2 teaspoons
<i>Plugra</i> European-Style Butter	½ cup
Applesauce	1/3 cup
Heavy Cream	½ cup
<i>Nielsen Massey</i> Vanilla	½ teaspoon

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350°F/175°C. Lightly grease 6 3-inch mini Bundt pans.
- Melt chocolate in microwave, stirring until melted.
- In a medium bowl, mix the flour, pumpkin spice, baking powder and baking soda. In a large bowl, beat together ½ cup butter, sugar, applesauce, and eggs. Mix in ½ cup heavy cream, ½ teaspoon vanilla and pumpkin. Blend in melted chocolate. Fold into the flour mixture just until blended. Spread evenly in the prepared pan.
- Bake 20 – 25 minutes in the preheated oven, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cupcake comes out clean. Allow to cool in the pans on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Invert cupcakes onto a wire rack to finish cooling. Pour more batter into the pans and bake again until batter is gone.
- Prepare frosting and cut off the tops/peaks of the cupcakes.
- Place one mini cake upside down and frost the top; then place another mini cake on top, right side up. Lightly frost entire pumpkin shaped cake with buttercream icing. Let it set for at least 15 minutes.
- Pour or spoon fondant frosting over frosted cupcakes and decorate with chocolate plastic decoration.
- Makes about 9 pumpkin cupcakes.

Dark Chocolate Butter Cream Icing

Ingredients:

Solid Vegetable Shortening	½ cup
<i>Plugra</i> European-Style Butter	½ cup
<i>Barry Callebaut</i> Bittersweet Chocolate, melted	7 ounces
<i>Nielsen Massey</i> Vanilla	1 teaspoon
Confectioners Sugar, sifted	4 cups (approx. 1 lb)
Milk	4-5 tablespoons
Light Corn Syrup	3-4 tablespoons (optional)

Directions:

- Cream shortening and butter with electric mixer. Add melted chocolate and vanilla. Gradually add sugar, one cup at a time, beating well on medium speed. Scrape sides and bottom of bowl often. When all sugar has been melted in, icing will appear dry. Add milk and beat at medium speed until light and fluffy.
- Add 3-4 tablespoons light corn syrup per recipe to thin icing if desired. Keep icing covered with a damp cloth until ready to use.
- Makes about 3 cups.

Pour-On Fondant Icing

Ingredients:

Sifted Confectioners Sugar	6 cups
Water	½ cup
Light Corn Syrup	2 tablespoons
<i>Nielsen Massey</i> Vanilla	1 teaspoon
Orange Icing Color	As needed

Directions:

- Place sugar in saucepan. Combine water and corn syrup; add to sugar and stir until well-mixed. Cook over low heat. Don't allow temperature of mixture to exceed 100°F. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla and icing color.
- Pour icing on center of cupcake using pan or measuring cup. Or, pipe icing from a cut decorating bag.
- Cover tops and drip over the sides. Touch up and bare spots with spatula. Let set.
- Makes about 2 ½ cups icing.

Plastic Chocolate

Ingredients:

<i>Barry Callebaut</i> Bittersweet Chocolate, chopped	1 pound
Light Corn Syrup	¾ cup

Directions:

- Melt chocolate in a large metal bowl over a pan of simmering water. Stir in occasionally until smooth.
- Remove from heat, and stir in the corn syrup. The mixture will become sticky, but keep stirring until very well blended.
- Spoon onto a piece of plastic wrap, and wrap tightly. Let stand at room temperature until firm before using. Overnight is best. Use unsweetened cocoa powder on work surfaces to prevent sticking.

- Soften the hardened chocolate by kneading it with glove-covered hands, or microwave in short 10-second intervals until it becomes soft enough to work with. Continue to knead until it is smooth and pliable. Do not worry if your chocolate plastic has lumps – these can be worked out through the kneading process. Dust your hands with powdered sugar if the chocolate begins to stick. At this point, you can divide it and knead different food coloring into the chocolate, if desired. Be sure to change your gloves between batches to avoid muddying the colors.
- Makes a little over 1 pound of chocolate plastic.