

MOCHACHINO CUPCAKES: ESPRESSO CUPCAKES WITH KAHLUA-SPIKED CHOCOLATE PASTRY CREAM FILLING

INGREDIENTS

for the cupcakes

1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
3/4 teaspoons table salt
1 cup granulated sugar
1 1/2 sticks unsalted butter, softened but slightly cool, cut into 12 pieces
3 large eggs
3/4 cups milk
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 1/2 teaspoon coffee extract
2 tablespoons espresso powder

for the pastry cream

1 1/2 cups heavy cream
3 large egg yolks
1/3 cup granulated sugar
pinch of table salt
4 teaspoons cornstarch
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cold cut into 2 pieces
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
3 tablespoons kahlua

Additionally:

1 cup heavy cream
1/4 cup chocolate shavings

DIRECTIONS

For the cupcakes: Preheat oven to 350F. Line a standard muffin pan with paper baking cups and set aside. Note: I made these in actually coffee cups, sprayed with cooking spray, but the recipe is designed for 12 standard cupcakes. If you do go the coffee cup route, make sure that the cups are oven-safe.

In the bowl of a stand mixer, combine the flour, baking powder, espresso powder, salt, and sugar on low speed. Add the butter, 1 piece at a time, and combine until the mixture resembles coarse sand. Add the eggs, 1 at time, and mix until fully combined. Add the milk, vanilla and coffee extracts, increase the speed to medium, and mix until the batter is light, fluffy and free of lumps.

Fill the lined muffin cups three-quarters full, being careful not to overfill. Bake until a toothpick inserted in the center of the cupcake comes out clean, about 18 to 20 minutes. Cool the cupcakes in the pan for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

For the pastry cream: Bring the cream to a simmer in a medium saucepan over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Meanwhile, whisk the yolks, sugar, cocoa powder and salt together in a medium bowl. Add the cornstarch and whisk the mixture is pale cocoa/brown and thick. When the cream reaches a full simmer, slowly whisk it into the yolk mixture. Return the mixture to the saucepan and cook over medium heat, whisking constantly, until thick and glossy. Off the heat, whisk in the butter and vanilla. Transfer the pastry cream to a small bowl and refrigerate, with plastic wrap pressed flush against its surface, until cold and set, at least 2 hours. After 2 hours, whisk to loosen and add the kahlua.

Before assembly, whip 1 cup heavy cream to soft peaks and shave chocolate.

To assemble: Insert a small knife at a 45 degree angle about 1/8 inch from the edge of each cupcake and cut all the way around, remove a cone of cake. Cut away all but the top 1/4 inch of the cone; leaving only a small disk of cake which will be used to top the cupcake. Fill each cupcake with 2 tablespoons of pastry cream and top with the disk of cake. Pipe whipped cream on top, and decorate as desired. Refrigerate until set, about 30 minutes. Refrigerate until ready to serve, but best served not overly cold so remove from refrigerator about 10-15 minutes before serving.