

CHAMPAGNE AND RED CURRANT AMARETTI CAKES

INGREDIENTS

for the cupcakes

1 cup all-purpose flour
3/4 cup almond meal/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
2 teaspoons almond extract
30 or so amaretti cookies, crushed
4 tablespoons amaretto (optional)

for the vanilla frosting

8 ounces (1 package) cream cheese, softened to room temperature
1 stick unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1 teaspoon almond extract
3 cups confectioners sugar

additionally: 1/2 pint each red and champagne colored currants

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350F. Line a muffin pan with paper baking cups and set aside.

In the bowl of a stand mixer, combine the flour, almond meal, baking 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 and almond extract, 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. Sprinkle crushed amaretti cookies over each cupcake and pat down to make sure they stick to the tops of the cupcakes. Bake until a toothpick inserted in the center of the cupcake comes out clean, about 20-22 minutes. Cool the cupcakes in the pan for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

While your cupcakes are cooling, make your frosting. In the work bowl of your stand mixer, cream together the cream cheese, butter, and vanilla and almond extracts. Add in the confectioners sugar.

To assemble, take a fork and stab each cupcake 3 or 4 times. Pour over a few drops of amaretto (the forking helps loosen the tops so the alcohol absorbs better). Frost with the vanilla frosting and garnish with the red and champagne colored currents. Keep cool until serving.