

"MOVEMBER" CUPCAKES  
(CHOCOLATE CUPCAKES WITH VANILLA FROSTING AND HANDLEBAR 'STACHES)

INGREDIENTS

for the cupcakes

4 1/2 ounces high-quality bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped  
9 tablespoons (1 stick plus 1 tablespoon) unsalted butter, room temperature  
1 cup confectioners' sugar  
6 large eggs, separated, at room temperature  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/2 cup granulated sugar  
1 cup all-purpose flour

for the frosting

1 cup unsalted butter, softened  
1/2 cup vegetable shortening  
2 cups confectioners sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/2 teaspoon salt

You will also need candy mustaches.

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 400F. Prepare a muffin pan with lines.

In the top part of a double boiler over very hot, but not simmering, water, or in a microwave at medium power, melt the chocolate. Remove from the heat or the oven, and let stand, stirring often, until cool.

Beat the butter in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle blade on medium-high speed until smooth, about 1 minute. On low speed, beat in the confectioners' sugar. Return the speed to medium-high and beat until light in color and texture, about 2 minutes. Beat in the egg yolks, one at a time, scraping down the sides of the bowl. Beat in the chocolate and vanilla.

Beat the egg whites and granulated sugar in a large bowl with an electric mixer on high speed just until they form soft, shiny peaks. Do not overbeat. Stir about one fourth of the beaten whites into the chocolate mixture to lighten it, then fold in the remaining whites, leaving a few visible wisps of whites. Sift half of the flour over the chocolate mixture, and fold in with a rubber spatula. Repeat with the remaining flour.

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 20-22 minutes. Cool the cupcakes in the pan for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

To make the frosting, cream butter, vegetable shortening and salt together until smooth. Beat in sugar, adding by a tablespoon at a time. Finally, add in the vanilla extract and food coloring. Chill buttercream for 20 minutes before filling a pastry bag.

Pipe frosting onto the cupcakes and decorate with your candy mustaches. Refrigerate until ready to serve.