

DUCKS TAKING A SWIM CAKE

INGREDIENTS

for the cake

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

for the frosting

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

For assembly and decoration

1 container Piroulette Cookies (or any other cylindrical cookies)
A lot of blue M&Ms or Smarties (I bought 3 large bags of the Easter ones and sorted out all the blue)
Ribbon of your choice
Plastic mini-ducks (can be found at stores like Michael's or AC Moore, or on Amazon)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350F. Prepare two 8-inch round spring form pans with baking spray.

In the bowl of a stand mixer, combine the flour, 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 vanilla, increase the speed to medium, and mix until the batter is light, fluffy and free of lumps.

Split the batter between the two spring form pans and bake until a toothpick inserted in the center of the cupcake comes out clean, about 30-35 minutes. Cool the cakes in the pan for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

For the frosting, cream the cream cheese, butter, and vanilla in the bowl of your stand mixer. Add the sugar and beat until smooth.

To assemble, cut off the domes of the two cake rounds. Frost the top of the bottom round and place other round on top, bottom side up, so that you have a completely level top. Frost all sides and top of the cake with a fairly thin layer of frosting. You don't have to be particularly neat, as no one will see the frosting anyway. "Glue" prirouette cookies all around the outside of the cake. You will likely need to break off an inch or so of the cookies. I made them of different height, just to make the cake look rustic. Work quickly as if the frosting gets too soft, they will start to fall off. Using your ribbon, tie the prirouette in place. Refrigerate for 15-20 minutes.

Remove from fridge and line the top of the cake with your blue M&Ms to represent the water. You could just pour them on top, but I placed each one as I didn't want the M&M logo to show. Affix your mini-ducks to the top.

Return to the fridge until ready to serve. Once serving, remove the ribbon and slice between the prirouettes.