
The Dish

October 2009

Level: Master's

RECIPE 2

Pumpkin Cupcakes with Cream Cheese Frosting

Beat in a few drops of orange food coloring to tint the frosting, if you like, for these cheerful Halloween treats.

Cupcakes:

- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- 3/4 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup canned pumpkin puree
- 1 large egg
- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour (5.5 ounces)
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup reduced-fat buttermilk

Frosting:

- 1 (8-ounce) block cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, softened
- 1 pound powdered sugar, sifted
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Orange food coloring (optional)

Remaining ingredient:

- Assorted Halloween-theme candies (candy corn, sprinkles, etc.)

1. Preheat oven to 375 °F.
2. To prepare cupcakes, combine first 4 ingredients in a large bowl. Beat with a mixer until light, fluffy and well combined. Combine pumpkin and egg, stirring with a whisk. Add pumpkin mixture to butter mixture; beat well.

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3. Lightly spoon flour into a dry measuring cup; level with a knife. Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt, stirring with a whisk. Alternate adding flour mixture and buttermilk to pumpkin mixture, beginning and ending with flour. Beat just until blended. Line 12 muffin cups with paper liners. Divide batter evenly among paper liners. Bake at 375 °F for 20 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in the center comes out nearly clean. Cool in pan for 5 minutes. Remove cupcakes from pan; cool completely on a wire rack.
4. To prepare frosting, place cream cheese and 1/2 cup butter in a large bowl, beat with an electric mixer until smooth, fluffy, and well combined. Gradually beat in powdered sugar. Beat in vanilla. Tint frosting with food coloring, if desired. Spread or pipe frosting onto cooled cupcakes. Decorate with Halloween-themed candies as desired. Yield: 1 dozen cupcakes.