

Perfect Vanilla Cupcakes

- 1½ sticks (12 Tbs.) softened butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 1½ cups self-rising flour*
- 1 Tb. warm water
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract

Adjust oven rack to lower-middle position and heat oven to 400 degrees. Line a 12-cup muffin tin with cupcake papers. Beat butter and sugar until light and

fluffy. Starting and ending with an egg, alternate adding eggs and flour, beating until each is thoroughly incorporated. Beat in water and vanilla until just incorporated.

Evenly divide batter among prepared cups. Bake until fully cooked and golden, 15 to 17 minutes. Remove from oven. Let cupcakes stand a couple of minutes, then turn onto a wire rack to cool.

Makes 1 dozen

1 Plain Vanilla Cupcake, no frosting: 241 calories, 29g carbohydrates, 3g protein, 13g fat (8g saturated fat), 83mg cholesterol, 0g fiber, 298mg sodium

*Or whisk 1½ tps. baking powder and ¼ tsp. salt into 1½ cups bleached all-purpose flour

Coconut Cupcakes

Make 1 recipe Perfect Vanilla Cupcakes, adding ¼ tsp. coconut extract along with the vanilla.


Make 1 recipe All-Purpose Cream Cheese Frosting, stirring in ¼ tsp. coconut extract.

Frost cupcakes, then dip tops in 1¼ cups sweetened flaked coconut.

Per cupcake: 410 calories, 41g carbohydrates, 5g protein, 26g fat (16g saturated fat), 114mg cholesterol, 1g fiber, 411mg sodium

Chocolate-Covered Strawberry Cupcakes

Make 1 recipe Perfect Vanilla Cupcakes, then spoon half the batter into muffin cups. Drop 1½ tps. strawberry jam (don't stir to loosen it) into each. Fill cups with remaining batter, spreading to ensure jam is covered.

Make Cheater's Chocolate Frosting. Frost cupcakes, garnishing each with a fresh strawberry half (or quarter, if large). 



Contributing Editor
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