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by Liz Robb

Strawberry and Vanilla Cupcakes



Ingredients

115g butter or soft margarine
115g caster sugar
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon of vanilla extract
115g self-raising flour
2 tablespoons of milk
6 teaspoons of good strawberry jam
For the topping:

75g strawberries for the puree
130g butter
260g icing sugar
2 tablespoons of milk
3 large strawberries

Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 180 degrees or 160 degrees fan oven.
2. Cut the softened butter, if using, into small pieces. Put the butter or soft margarine into a large bowl with the caster sugar and cream together well.
3. In a separate small bowl, beat the eggs then mix with the vanilla extract. Add them to the butter and sugar and whisk until smooth and well combined.
4. Gradually sift in the flour and gently fold it in until it is all combined, then stir in the milk.
5. Place a fairy cake paper case into the 12 spaces in a bun tin. Spoon some of the cake mixture into the bottom of each paper case, carefully place half a teaspoon of strawberry jam in the middle, then cover with a little more cake mixture so that the jam is in the centre
6. the cases should be up to three quarters full. Bake in the preheated oven for 12-15 minutes, until they are a light golden colour and a skewer comes out clean. Allow to cool.
7. For the topping:

8 Slice the stalks from the tops of 75g of strawberries then chop them into pieces and blend them into a puree.

9 Remove the butter from the fridge well before you are ready to make the topping. Cut the softened butter into small pieces, place in a large bowl, sift in half of the icing sugar and beat together well until you have a smooth mixture.

10 Beat in the remaining icing sugar until smooth, then beat in the strawberry puree. Add milk if necessary, a little at a time, until the mixture reaches the desired consistency for piping.

11 Pipe the icing onto the cooled cakes, starting on the outside and spiralling into the centre.

12 Slice the stalks from the tops of the 3 large strawberries and cut them into quarters lengthways. Press a strawberry piece into the icing on top of each cake. Chill in the fridge for a little while, just until the icing is set.

Cooks Note

Treat yourself this Easter by baking these sweet and pretty little cupcakes. Vanilla sponge with a strawberry jam centre, strawberry buttercream icing and a fresh strawberry on the top; how much more strawberry flavour can you fit in one cake!

Makes 12 fairy cakes.