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by Cake Days by Tarek Malouf and The Hummingbird Bakers (HarperCollins, 2011)

Malted Chocolate Cupcakes



Ingredients

For the Sponge
150ml (5 ½ fl oz) sunflower oil
75ml (2 ½ fl oz) whole milk
75ml (2 ½ fl oz) buttermilk
1 large egg
1 ½ tsp vanilla essence
240g (8 ½ oz) plain flour
25g (1 oz) cocoa powder
2 tsp baking powder
¼ tsp salt
330g (11 ½ oz) caster sugar
150ml (5 ½ fl oz) boiling water
For the Frosting
200g (7oz) dark chocolate chips (minimum 70% cocoa solids)
240ml (8 ½ fl oz) double cream
115g (4oz) malted-milk powder
50g (1 ¾ oz) full-fat cream cheese (such as Philadelphia)
35g (1 ¼ oz) caster sugar
36-48 Maltesers, to decorate

One or two 12-hole deep muffin tins

Preparation

1. 1. Preheat the oven to 190°C (375°F), Gas mark 5, and fill a muffin tin with muffin cases.

2. 2. Using a hand-held electric whisk or a freestanding electric mixer with the paddle attachment, beat together the oil with the milk, buttermilk, egg and vanilla essence on low speed until well blended. Sift together the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt, then stir in the sugar. Add a third of these dry ingredients to the oil and milk mixture and beat in slowly until evenly incorporated.

3. 3. Beat in a third of the boiling water, followed by another third of the dry ingredients, then repeat with the remaining ingredients, mixing together until they are all combined. Remember to scrape down the sides of the bowl after each addition, to ensure a well-mixed batter.

4. Divide the mixture between the paper cases, filling each by two-thirds. Any remaining batter can be used to fill one to four more cases in a separate tin. Place in the oven and bake for 18-20 minutes or until springy to the touch. Allow to cool a little before removing from the tin, then transfer to a wire rack to cool down completely before adding the frosting.

5. To make the frosting, place the chocolate chips in a bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water and allow to melt, then remove from the heat and set aside to cool.

6. Meanwhile, using the electric whisk, whip the cream with the malted-milk powder until it forms soft peaks. In a separate bowl, beat the cream cheese with the caster sugar until combined, then add the cooled chocolate and mix again.

7. Carefully fold the whipped cream into the cream cheese mixture, adding half the whipped cream at a time. Divide the frosting between the cupcakes, smoothing and swirling with a palette knife, then decorate each cupcake with 3 Maltesers.

Cooks Note

One of the most popular daily specials we've ever sold in our branches, we still get requests to bring this flavour back. Chocolate and malted milk just work so well together. Either use whole Maltesers for the decoration, or you can crush them and sprinkle over the top.

Makes 12-16 cupcakes

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