

RED VELVET CUPCAKES WITH WHITE CHOCOLATE CREAM CHEESE FROSTING + A SEA SALT CARAMEL DRIZZLE

INGREDIENTS

for the cupcakes

2 1/2 cups sifted cake flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons cocoa powder (unsweetened)
2 ounces red gel food coloring
1/2 cup unsalted butter, at room temperature
1 1/2 cups sugar
2 eggs, at room temperature
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup buttermilk, at room temperature
1 teaspoon white vinegar
1 teaspoon baking soda

For the frosting

1 stick unsalted butter, at room temperature
1 package ("brick") cup cream cheese, at room temperature
1 tablespoon white chocolate extract (sub: vanilla extract)
3 to 3 1/2 cups confectioners sugar, sifted
1/4 cup store-bought sea salt caramel sauce / 1ce cream topping to drizzle

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line a standard muffin pan with paper baking cups.

Sift together the cake flour, baking powder, and salt into a medium bowl; set aside. In a small bowl, mix food coloring and cocoa powder to form a thin paste without lumps; set aside.

In the mixing bowl of your stand mixer, beat butter and sugar together until light and fluffy, about 3-4 minutes. Beat in eggs, one at a time, then beat in vanilla and the red cocoa paste, scraping down the bowl with a spatula as you go.

Add one third of the flour mixture to the butter mixture, beat well, then beat in half of the buttermilk. Beat in another third of flour mixture, then second half of buttermilk. End with the last third of the flour mixture, beat until well combined, making sure to scrape down the bowl with a spatula. Note: if you have never made red velvet cake, the color is shockingly red... it's supposed to be that way, obviously.

In a small bowl, mix vinegar and baking soda. Yes, it will fizz! Add it to the cake batter and stir well to combine. Fill the cupcake liners 2/3 of the way full and bake cupcakes for 22-25 minutes. Cool the cupcakes in the pan for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

Once cooled make the frosting. Place the butter and cream cheese into a large bowl and beat until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes on med-high speed. Add in the extract, then the sifted confectioners' sugar and, starting on low, mix until the mixture starts coming together, then turn the speed up and beat until light and smooth. Fill a piping bag and pipe a swirl on each cupcake. Drizzle with caramel sauce, to garnish.