

# Devil's Mini-Cupcakes with Lemon Cream Cheese Frosting

August 2014 YWCA Luncheon prepared by Barbara Haughey

## For the cupcakes:

- 2 cups (7 oz) sifted (before measuring) cake flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ cup sifted natural cocoa powder
- ½ cup lukewarm water
- ½ cup buttermilk, at room temperature
- ½ cup water
- 2 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- 8 tbsp (1 stick, 113 g) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 cup fine granulated sugar
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar

## For the frosting:

- 1 lb cream cheese, at room temperature
- 8 tbsp (1 stick, 113 g) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- ½ cup sour cream, cold, right from the fridge
- 2 cups icing sugar, sifted
- **Zest of 1 large lemon**
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1 tsp pure lemon extract

## Make the cupcakes:

Fit parchment mini-cupcake liners into 48 mini-cupcake molds. Spray the liners lightly with oil spray (the cupcakes are tiny, you don't want to waste anything that sticks to the liners).

Center an oven rack and preheat the oven to 350F.

In a medium bowl, mix together the flour, baking soda, and salt, then sift onto a sheet of parchment paper or into another bowl. In a small bowl, whisk together the cocoa and lukewarm water; set aside to cool. In a glass measure, combine the buttermilk. The remaining water, and the vanilla. In a small bowl, whisk the eggs briefly to combine the whites and yolks.

In a large bowl, beat the butter with an electric mixer for a few seconds, until creamy. Gradually add the sugars and beat until light and fluffy, 6 to 7 minutes. With the mixer on medium, slowly add the eggs, taking about 2 minutes in all. Continue to beat, scraping the bowl as necessary, until the mixture is fluffy and velvety. Stop the mixer and scrape in the cocoa mixture, then beat on medium speed just until combined. Stop the mixer, add one-third of the flour mixture, and beat on low speed only until no flour is visible. Stop the mixer and add half of the buttermilk mixture, and beat only until the liquid is absorbed. Repeat with half of the remaining flour, then all of the remaining buttermilk, and finally the remaining flour. Scrape the bowl as necessary, and beat only enough to incorporate the ingredients after each addition.

Transfer the cake batter into a large pastry bag fitted with a large plain tip and pipe the batter into the prepared molds filling them about ¾-full. *This is the easiest way to equally divide the batter between so many mini-muffin molds. Although you also can use a spoon.*

Bake the cupcakes for about 14-15 minutes, until puffed and a cake tester comes out clean. Cool the cupcakes for 5 minutes on a cooling rack, then unmold and completely cool on the rack before frosting.

**Make the frosting:**

In a large bowl, beat the cream cheese with electric beaters until smooth and lump-free. Beat in the butter, mix until well combined. Then beat in the sour cream, icing sugar, zest, and extracts. Continue mixing until combined and light in texture, scraping the sides of the bowl as needed. Transfer the frosting into a piping bag fitted with a large star tip and pipe a rosette over the top of each cupcake. Refrigerate to firm up the frosting. Remove the cupcakes from the fridge 30 minutes prior the serving time.

The cupcakes can be made a day in advance and kept in the refrigerator in an air-tight container.