



# Chocolate Cupcakes

Everyone needs to know how to make chocolate cupcakes!! I keep a container of decaf instant coffee in my baking drawer to use in chocolate cakes and sometimes brownies.. it intensifies the chocolate flavour, but won't make them taste like coffee! If you prefer vanilla frosting on your cupcakes, leave the cocoa out. You could also tint vanilla frosting with a few drops of food colouring!

1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour  
1 1/2 cups packed brown sugar  
3/4 cup cocoa  
1 tsp baking powder  
1 tsp baking soda  
1/2 tsp salt  
1 cup milk (any kind- dairy, oat, coconut, soy)  
1/2 cup canola oil  
2 large eggs  
1 tsp vanilla  
1 cup coffee (instant is fine, also decaf)

Frosting:

1/2 cup butter or shortening  
3 cups icing sugar  
1/2 cup cocoa (optional)  
1/4-1/2 cup cream or milk  
a few drops of vanilla (optional)

Preheat the oven to 350° F.

In a large bowl, stir together the flour, brown sugar, cocoa, baking powder, baking soda and salt. You can use a whisk for this, or the whisk attachment of your stand mixer.

Add the milk, oil, eggs and vanilla and whisk or beat until well blended and smooth. Add the coffee and whisk or beat on low speed just until blended. The batter will be thin. Fill paper-lined muffin tins almost full and bake for 25-30 minutes, until the tops are domed and springy to the touch.

To make the frosting, beat the butter, sugar, cocoa (if you're using it) and about 1/4 cup milk or cream along with the vanilla, then add more milk or cream a bit at a time (you may not need it if you don't add cocoa) until the mixture is smooth and fluffy. (You may need a bit more sugar or milk to achieve a creamy, spreadable frosting that's not too soft or too stiff.) Wait until your cupcakes are completely cool before you frost them.

Makes 1 1/2 dozen cupcakes.