

Strawberry Filled Bitter Chocolate Devils Food Cakes with Vanilla Bean Syrup



Ingredients

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| 6 oz. unsalted butter | 1/3 tsp salt |
| 1 1/3 cup granulated sugar | 4 1/2 oz. bittersweet chocolate, chopped |
| 1/8 tsp. ground cinnamon | 4 1/2 oz. semisweet chocolate, chopped or chips |
| 2 large eggs | Pan spray, Florida Strawberry Jam |
| 2 1/4 tsp. vanilla extract | 2 cups granulated sugar |
| 2 cups cake flour | 2/3 cups water |
| 1 1/2 cup buttermilk | 1 vanilla bean |
| 1 tsp baking soda | Fresh Florida Strawberries for garnish |
| 1/3 tsp. baking powder | Powdered Sugar for garnish |

Procedure

1. Preheat oven to 300°F.
2. Cream the butter, sugar, and cocoa powder, until it just starts to stick to the bottom of the bowl.
3. Scrape the sides. Add the eggs and vanilla. Mix until just incorporated. Do not mix over mix. Scrape down the bowl well.
4. Sift together the flour, cinnamon, baking soda, baking powder, and salt.
5. Add about half of the flour mix. Mix until flour lumps are almost gone, add about 1/4 of the buttermilk, and mix well. Add the rest of the flour and mix. Then add the rest of the buttermilk. Scrape down, and add chopped chocolate, and mix one more time, just until incorporated
6. Spray cup cake pans, or larger cake ring molds very well. Fill rings 2/3 full.
7. Bake for about 25 minutes in a 300°F preheated oven. When the cakes are done, press the center of the tops. It should feel firm.
8. While the cakes are baking, make the vanilla syrup: put 2 cups of granulated sugar and 2/3 cups of water in a saucepan. Split the vanilla bean in half and scrape the seeds out of each half with the back of a knife blade. Put the vanilla bean and the seeds in the sugar mixture.
9. Put over medium low heat, and stir until the sugar is dissolved. Cook until the mixture is thick and syrupy, about 2 minutes after boiling.
10. Let syrup sit at room temperature until needed for service. Remove vanilla bean before serving.

11. When the tops of the cakes feel firm, remove from oven and let still for about 3 minutes. Remove from oven and set on a wire rack.
12. While the cakes are still warm, take the tip of a knife and insert into the center of the cake. Insert the knife tip so it goes down $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way. Make sure you do not poke through the bottom of the cake.
13. Stir the strawberry jam until it is smooth. Put jam into a small pastry bag fitted with a small tube tip.
14. Fill the center of each cupcake with approximately 1 tbsp. of strawberry jam by inserting the tip of the pastry bag into the slit. Do not squeeze too hard, or the jam will pop out the bottom. If you squeeze slowly, the jam will seep into the holes in the cake.
15. These cakes are best served warm, or at room temperature.
16. Serve with approximately 1 tbsp. of vanilla syrup drizzled on the plate, and garnish with fresh fruit and powdered sugar.

Makes approximately 24 cupcakes, or 12 8-oz molds

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