

## Pumpkin Patch Cakes

Dish | October 2008



*Individual Pumpkin Patch Cakes spring from a sweet stretch of crushed chocolate wafers. They start with a batter made from pound cake mix, canned pumpkin, spices, and chocolate chips, then are baked in the new Dimensions Multi-Cavity Mini Pumpkins pan from Wilton. \$31; wilton.com. Vines and leaves shaped from green fondant finish this edible patch.*

PREP/FROST: 1 HOUR BAKE: 20 MINUTES COOL: 10 MINUTES OVEN: 325°

- 1 PKG. (16 OZ.) POUND CAKE MIX
- $\frac{3}{4}$  CUP CANNED PUMPKIN
- 2 EGGS
- $\frac{1}{2}$  CUP APPLE JUICE
- 2 TSP. PUMPKIN PIE SPICE
- 1 TSP. BAKING SODA
- 1 CUP MINIATURE SEMISWEET CHOCOLATE PIECES
- 1 RECIPE CREAM CHEESE FROSTING
- ORANGE DECORATING SUGAR (OPTIONAL)
- 2 OZ. BROWN-COLORED FONDANT (OPTIONAL)
- 6-8 OZ. GREEN-COLORED FONDANT (OPTIONAL)
- CRUSHED CHOCOLATE WAFERS OR GRAHAM CRACKERS (OPTIONAL)

Grease and flour the pumpkin-shape cups of a nonstick cast-aluminum baking pan; set aside. In a large bowl beat cake mix, pumpkin, eggs, apple juice, pumpkin pie spice, and baking soda with an electric mixer on low speed until moistened. Beat on medium speed for 3 minutes. Stir in chocolate pieces. Spoon  $\frac{1}{3}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup batter into each prepared cup (chill remaining batter for a second batch), baking as directed in cooled pan.

Bake in a 325° oven for 20 to 25 minutes or until cakes spring back when lightly touched. Cool in pan on wire rack for 10 minutes. Remove to wire rack to cool completely. If cakes have rounded tops, use a serrated knife to cut off a thin layer until flat. Attach each top and bottom cake (to make a whole pumpkin) with a layer of orange-tinted *Cream Cheese Frosting*.

Frost pumpkins with orange frosting as desired with a knife or place frosting in a piping bag fitted with a basket-weave tip and pipe in vertical strips from tops to bottoms of pumpkin cakes to cover (you can also add short horizontal strips in an alternating pattern to look like a basket weave). If desired, sprinkle with orange sugar. If using fondant, knead until it can be shaped. Use brown fondant to shape pumpkin stems and place on top of cakes. On powdered-sugar-sprinkled surface, roll green fondant until about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch thick; cut with leaf-shape cutters and attach leaves to tops of cakes. Roll additional fondant into vines. You can also use tinted frosting for stems, leaves, and vines. If desired, arrange on a serving tray spread with crushed wafers. Serve immediately or cover and chill for up to 3 days. Makes 8 cakes (16 servings).

**CREAM CHEESE FROSTING:** In a medium mixing bowl beat one 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened;  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup butter, softened; and 2 teaspoons vanilla with an electric mixer on low to medium speed until light and fluffy. Gradually add  $5\frac{1}{2}$  to 6 cups powdered sugar to make a frosting that is easy to spread. Tint frosting orange with food coloring. Makes about  $3\frac{3}{4}$  cups frosting.

Per 1/2 cake: 452 cal., 19 g total fat (11 g sat. fat), 57 mg chol., 271 mg sodium, 69 g carbo., 0 g dietary fiber, 4 g protein.