

Lemon Cupcakes with Lemon Cream Cheese Frosting

Cupcakes, Cookies, and More | February 2007



BAKING SECRETS FROM A PRO: CUPCAKES

- For piping, three basic tips are ideal: a small round tip for writing and polka-dots; an open star tip for stars and borders; and a flat-shaped basketweave tip for textured stripes and basketweave patterns. See www.wilton.com to buy tips and for piping pointers.
- If the frosting is too soft, a bit of powdered sugar will improve the consistency. Too stiff? Thin with milk. Too soft while piping? Chill in the pastry bag until it firms up.
- Disposable piping bags work well and save cleanup time. In a pinch, you can use a plastic storage bag instead of a piping bag and tip. Snip off the corner to make a small hole.
- Before piping, squeeze the air out of the bag and twist the top of the bag shut (or use a twist tie to keep it closed). Practice designs on a piece of parchment or waxed paper to get a feel for the flow.

Let your inner artist shine. Cupcakes are a fun way to experiment with piping frosting and trying out new decorating ideas. If you mess up, just eat it!

- 2¹/₃ CUPS ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
- 1¹/₂ TSP. BAKING POWDER
- 1¹/₂ TSP. BAKING SODA
- 1¹/₄ TSP. SALT
- 1 CUP BUTTER, SOFTENED
- 2 CUPS SUGAR
- 4 EGGS
- 1 CUP BUTTERMILK OR SOUR MILK*
- 2 TSP. FINELY SHREDDED LEMON PEEL
- 2 TBSP. LEMON JUICE
- 1 RECIPE LEMON CREAM CHEESE FROSTING
- EDIBLE FLOWERS, SHAVED WHITE CHOCOLATE, AND LEMON ZEST (OPTIONAL)

Line twenty-four 2¹/₂-inch muffin cups with paper bake cups; set aside. In a medium bowl combine flour, baking powder, soda, and salt. Set aside.

In a large mixing bowl beat butter with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add sugar and beat until well combined. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating well after each. Add flour mixture and buttermilk or sour milk alternately to beaten mixture, beating on low speed after each addition just until combined. Stir in lemon peel and lemon juice (batter may appear slightly curdled). Divide evenly among prepared muffin cups.

Bake in a 350° oven for 15 to 18 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted near the center of the cupcakes comes out clean. Cool cakes in pans for 5 minutes; remove from pans and cool thoroughly on wire racks.**

When completely cooled, pipe or spread with *Lemon Cream Cheese Frosting*. Decorate as desired with additional piped frosting, edible flowers (pesticide-free), shaved white chocolate, and lemon zest. Store frosted cupcakes in a covered container and keep refrigerated. Makes 24 cupcakes.

LEMON CREAM CHEESE FROSTING: Finely shred 1 teaspoon lemon peel; set aside. In a medium mixing bowl combine two 3-ounce packages cream cheese, softened; 1/2 cup butter, softened; and 1 teaspoon lemon juice; beat with electric mixer on low to medium speed until light and fluffy. Gradually add 2 cups sifted powdered sugar, beating well. Gradually beat in 2¹/₂ to 2³/₄ cups additional powdered sugar to make frosting that is easy to spread. Stir in the lemon peel. If desired, tint some of the frosting with pink gel icing color for decorating.

*NOTE: To make sour milk, place 1 tablespoon lemon juice or vinegar in a glass measuring cup, then add enough milk to make 1 cup. Let stand 5 minutes before using.

**MAKE AHEAD: Freeze unfrosted cupcakes in a freezer container for up to 3 months. Bring to room temperature before frosting. The frosting can be made up to 3 days ahead, covered, and refrigerated. Set out at room temperature to soften enough to spread.