

Gingerbread Cupcakes with Cream Cheese Coconut Frosting *makes 20 cupcakes*

1 3/4 c boiling water
1/3 cup brown sugar
1 3/4 cup molasses
2 eggs, well beaten
12 Tablespoons unsalted butter, melted (1 1/2 sticks)
3 3/4 cups all-purpose, unbleached flour
2 Tablespoons ground ginger
2 teaspoons cinnamon (I like Vietnamese)
3/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1 teaspoon finely fresh ground black pepper
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
Cream Cheese Frosting (see below)
2 cups sweetened, shredded coconut for garnish

Preheat the oven to 350 F. Grease and flour muffin pans (makes about 20). If you want to line the cups with paper wrappers, you can. I think they take the moisture out of the cupcake or muffin and make the cake steam in a way I don't like. I like the hot metal on the batter for a firm, crispy crust. Try it once.

Beat well together the liquid ingredients in a medium bowl or 8 cup measuring cup. In large mixing bowl, stir together the dry ingredients. Add liquids and stir until barely combined. Using a large padded ice cream scoop, scoop the batter into the prepared pans, filling each cup no more than 3/4 full.

Bake about 15 minutes until toothpick comes out clean. Remove from oven and let set a few minutes before turning out onto cooling racks. Cool completely before icing. After icing, dip tops, using a rolling motion, into a shallow bowl filled with the coconut.

Store in Tupperware or on a tray carefully covered with foil (stick toothpicks in a few cupcakes to keep foil from sticking.) Serve immediately or refrigerate.

**This recipe developed from reading two recipes and creating the cupcake recipe with my own additions/changes. 1. THE FANNY FARMER BAKING BOOK Marion Cunningham, p 325, "Soft Gingerbread" and 2. THE SPLENDID TABLE'S HOW TO EAT SUPPER by Lynne Rossetto Kasper and Sally Swift, p 310 "Dark and Moist Gingerbread."*

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Cream Cheese Frosting

from Grace Herson, chef extraordinaire, Woodlawn Plantation, Mt. Vernon, Virginia—Grace gave me this recipe in 1985 in a cookbook she and others wrote for me..

4 Tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
8 oz package cream cheese (low-fat), softened
3-4 cups powdered sugar (start with 3 c)
2 teaspoons vanilla

Place butter and creamed cheese in mixing bowl, and using electric mixer, beat together for 2 minutes. Stop mixer, add 3 cups powdered sugar, starting the beater slowly, combine and then and beat well. Add vanilla and beat again 2 minutes. Add more powdered sugar to desired thickness. Use frosting immediately and refrigerate leftovers

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