

HIDDEN CHERRY & LEMON CUPCAKES

THE BIG

SPOTACULAR

WITH

Blue Peter

BRING & BUY SALE

by Candice Brown



“These quick and easy cupcakes are perfect to make with the kids on a weekend or to take to work for cheeky elevenses. I like the hidden surprise of the cherry in the sponge – an unassuming, pretty cupcake with a little treat inside! The beauty of frozen cherries is that you can get the juiciness of fresh cherries whenever you like.”

Ingredients

- 225g self-raising flour
- 225g golden caster sugar
- 225g unsalted butter, softened
- 4 eggs
- 2 tsp baking powder
- grated zest and juice of 1 lemon
- about 24 frozen black cherries, thawed

For the buttercream:

- 225g unsalted butter, softened
- 500g icing sugar
- grated zest and juice of 1 lemon, plus extra grated zest to decorate
- about 25g full-fat soft cheese
- red food colouring gel
- 6 fresh cherries, halved and stones removed

1. Preheat the oven to 160°C fan (180°C/350°F/ Gas Mark 4). Place paper cupcake cases in 12 muffin tin holes.
2. Put the flour, sugar, butter, eggs, baking powder, lemon zest and juice in a large bowl and mix together with an electric mixer until combined and fluffy.
3. Spoon the mixture into the cupcake cases, filling each two-thirds full. Push a thawed frozen cherry into the centre of each one. Bake for 20–25 minutes until risen and golden. Remove from the tin to a wire rack and leave to cool.
4. To make the buttercream, put the soft butter in a large bowl and beat with an electric mixer until pale. Sift in the icing sugar and add the lemon zest, then continue to beat until combined. The mixture will be quite stiff at this point so slowly add the soft cheese a teaspoon at a time and enough of the lemon juice to make a smooth and fluffy buttercream (it should not be gritty). I prefer buttercream to be soft but still able to hold a good shape.
5. Fit a star nozzle on a piping bag. Add a drop of red food colouring gel to the top of the bag and allow to trickle down inside. Spoon the buttercream into the piping bag.
6. Pipe buttercream in a rose shape on the top of each cupcake.
7. Place a fresh cherry half or two on top of each swirl and grate over some fresh lemon zest.

Makes 12



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