

TONI'S CHRISTMAS CUPCAKES

Note depending on the kind of fruit mix you use you may get 17 cupcakes as I did, or 11 baked in ' ½ cup' ramekins. If you have soaked fruit in booze and choose to include the liquid you may use an extra ½ cup flour, as I do. Use organic ingredients where possible, as always.

Ingredients

- 125g Cardin margarine
- 100g sugar
- 2 generous tsp molasses (oil the spoon so it runs off easily)
- 125 ml soya or rice milk with 1 tsp cider vinegar added – let stand
- 500g dried mixed fruit that incl chopped cherries, chopped glace (or Turkish) apricots, melon and pineapple (the mixture preferably soaked in brandy / rum overnight or longer, and then well drained)
- 60g chopped pecans
- 125ml frozen pure orange concentrate (Dairymaid unsweetened tins)
- 250ml self raising flour
- 1 tsp mixed spice

Method

1. Preheat oven to 170°. Line twelve muffin pans with cases (optional) or Spray and Cook well. (I recommend also using paper liner at the bottom of tins to prevent breaking apart when removing)
2. Beat the marg, sugar and molasses in a bowl until creamy
3. Stir in the dried fruit, walnuts and frozen orange concentrate. (*don't panic if it looks curdled*).
4. Stir in the flour and mixed spice. Add the soured milk mixture, stir in well.
5. Spoon into the lined pans and smooth the surfaces.
6. Bake for 30 - 35 minutes or until cupcakes are firm to touch or a toothpick inserted comes out clean
7. Set aside in the pans for 5 minutes to cool before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

If not using paper cups, turn cupcakes upside down and decorate 'bottom's' to look like mini puddings.

Decorate as desired.

One idea: pour plain white icing over cupcakes. Top with a small swirl of firmly whipped Orleywhip (about R5 coin size) on top of which you place a fresh OR sundried Strawberry, and you top the point of the strawberry with a tiny point of Orley, to make mini Santa Hats.

Or add a dash of ground cinnamon to the icing mixture, ice and top each cupcake with a whole pecan (sugared or roasted if preferred) or glace cherry.