

Vanilla Bean Cupcakes

Posted By [Anna](#) On March 31, 2011 @ 11:28 am In [Bake Sale,Cupcakes,Yellow or White](#) | [33 Comments](#)

Today's recipe is another one I plan to make for [Austin Bakes for Japan](#). Inspired by Stef and her [vanilla bean buttercream](#) (she said it tastes like melted ice cream!), I made a batch of white cupcakes which really showcase the flavor of vanilla bean paste. Why the paste instead of the bean? Vanilla beans are pricey, but the paste has almost as much depth of flavor and costs about \$8.00 a bottle — almost the price of one bean in some stores. I found mine at the grocery store down the street, but if your grocery store down the street isn't a gourmet/grocery hybrid like mine, you can order vanilla beans off ebay, Nielsen Massey's website or Amazon.

Here's the recipe. The cake is excellent! It's adapted from a Cook's Illustrated perfect white cake and it's definitely the best white cake recipe I have. If you'd like to make a small batch of 8, I've also included a scaled down version of the cupcake which works really well.



Vanilla Bean Cupcakes

6 large egg whites ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup), at room temperature
1 cup whole milk, at room temperature
1 teaspoon almond extract
1 teaspoon vanilla paste
 $2\frac{1}{4}$ cups cake flour (9 ounces)
 $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups granulated sugar ($12\frac{1}{4}$ ounces)
4 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon table salt
12 tablespoons unsalted butter ($1\frac{1}{2}$ sticks), softened but still cool and cut into pieces

Vanilla Bean Frosting
2 sticks (8 oz) butter, softened
3 cups powdered sugar
4 teaspoons vanilla bean paste
2 tablespoons milk

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line 24 cupcake pans with paper liners.

Combine egg whites, milk, almond extract and vanilla paste in a large glass liquid measuring cup. Mix with a fork until blended.

Mix cake flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt in bowl of electric mixer at slow speed. Add butter and beat on low speed until mixture resembles moist crumbs, with no powdery streaks remaining.

Add all but 1/2 cup of milk mixture and beat at medium speed for 1½ minutes. Add remaining ½ cup of milk mixture and beat 30 seconds more. Stop mixer and scrape sides of bowl. Return mixer to medium (or high) speed and beat 30 seconds longer.

Divide batter evenly between cupcake cups . Bake on center rack for 20 minutes or until cupcakes test done – a toothpick should come out with moist crumbs.

Let cupcakes rest in the pan for about 5 minutes, then carefully remove them from the pans and let them cool on a rack.

To make icing, mix together the butter and powdered sugar. Mix in the vanilla bean paste and some of the milk. Beat on high until light and creamy, scraping sides of bowl. Add remaining milk if needed. Taste test and add more sugar, vanilla bean paste or milk to get the consistency you want.

Makes 24 cupcakes

Small Batch Scratch White Cupcakes

2 large egg whites (1/4 cup), at room temperature
1/3 cup whole milk, at room temperature
1/2 teaspoons almond extract
1/2 teaspoon vanilla paste
3/4 cups cake flour (3 ounces)
1/2 cup plus 4 teaspoons granulated sugar (4.1 oz)
1 1/3 teaspoons baking powder
1/3 teaspoon table salt
4 tablespoons unsalted butter (½ stick), softened but still cool and cut into little pieces

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Line 8 cupcake cups with paper liners.

Mix egg whites, milk, almond extract and vanilla paste together in a 1 or 2 cup glass measuring cup.

Mix cake flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt in mixing bowl (I use a medium size bowl). Add butter and beat at low speed with a hand-held mixer until mixture resembles moist crumbs, with no powdery streaks remaining.

Add all but 2 tablespoons of milk mixture to flour mixture and beat at medium speed for 1½ minutes. Add remaining milk mixture and beat 30 seconds more. Stop mixer and scrape sides of bowl. Beat for another 30 seconds.

Divide batter evenly between cupcake cups and bake on center rack for 22 minutes. Let cupcakes cool in the pan for about 5 minutes then remove them from the cupcake pans to finish cooling. Makes 8.

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