

K's Kitchen: Cupcakes for adults

By Kathryn Reed

Eating a leftover cupcake from a 5-year-old's birthday has made me want to keep her parents' cookbook until I've made all of the recipes.



Having neither made cupcakes from scratch nor being proficient in the world of vegan baking, I asked Jen and Bob if I could have the recipe for the cupcakes she made for Scarlett. They said if I liked that one, I really ought to try the margarita ones.

Wow! I'm not sure if it's all the lime or the tequila that's in them that makes them so wonderful, but one really isn't enough.

They are so yummy I'm bringing them to a New Year's Eve party because a dessert is what we are supposed to bring.

Until last weekend, my experience with cupcake baking only involved a box. Now I'm embarrassed by that fact. Not only are these cupcakes scrumptious, but they are easy to make.

The recipe creators have such a great intro that all I can say is get baking.

The recipe comes from "Vegan Cupcakes Take Over the World" by Isa Chandra Moskowitz and Terry Hope Romero.

Mucho Margarita Cupcakes (makes 12)

These cupcakes have a lot going for them – lots of fresh lime juice, pretty green lime zest, and even a shot of tequila. But let's get serious ... it's all about the margarita icing. The

pale green frosting has a secret ingredient – kosher salt – that makes each bite sweet, tangy, and savory. If salt in a glaze sounds weird or you like your margaritas sans the salted rim, leave it out today, but make it with the salt for the margarita lover in your life tomorrow. The large crystal sugar that decorates the edges is worth finding; the crunch is a treat contrast to the cool, smooth icing.

$\frac{1}{4}$ C freshly squeezed lime juice

$1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp finely grated lime zest

1 C soy milk or rice milk

$\frac{1}{4}$ C canola oil

2 T tequila

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp vanilla extract

$\frac{3}{4}$ C granulated sugar

1 $\frac{1}{3}$ C all-purpose flour

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp baking soda

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp baking powder

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line muffin pan with cupcake liners.

In a large bowl beat together lime juice, zest, soy milk, canola oil, tequila, vanilla, and sugar. Sift in flour, baking soda, baking powder, and salt. Mix until batter is smooth. Fill liners three-quarters of the way full and bake 20 to 22 minutes until a toothpick or knife inserted through the center of one comes out clean. Transfer cupcakes to a cooling rack and let cool completely before frosting; allowing cupcakes to set for an hour or two helps the flavor to develop fully.

Margarita Icing

$\frac{1}{4}$ C margarine, softened

1 T soy milk or rice milk

3 T lime juice

1 T tequila

Tiniest drop of green food color or food color paste you can manage, optional

2 C confectioners' sugar, sifted

Generous pinch or $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon kosher or coarse salt, optional

Blend margarine with a fork until soft and fluffy, then stir in soy milk, lime juice, tequila, and food coloring if using (the effect is just to give the icing a very pale green tint, even lighter than mint green). Sift in 2 cups confectioners' sugar and blend until creamy and smooth. If it's a little too liquidy for your taste, sift in the remaining confectioners' sugar, one tablespoon at a time until a thick but spreadable consistency is reached. Refrigerate until ready to use.

Spread icing on cupcakes, spreading all the way to the edges, then roll just the outer edges of cupcakes in sugar crystals. If this is way too messy, just sprinkle sugar crystals on edges of cupcake by hand.