

CHRISTMAS CUPCAKE



Ingredients

- 1 1/2 mixed dried fruits like dark raisins, dried cranberries, dried pineapple, dates, dried figs, candied orange, etc.
- 1/2 cup strong black coffee for soaking the dried fruits (black tea is fine too)
- 1/2 cup fresh pear or apple
- Approximately 2 teaspoons fresh grated ginger
- 1 teaspoon orange zest
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1/2 cups brown sugar or regular granulated sugar
- 2 eggs, or egg substitute like flax or chia eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- Salt, pinch
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon cardamom
- 1/8 teaspoon pumpkin spice
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
- Anise pods, 2
- Whole cloves, 10-12
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour (regular or gluten free)
- 2 tablespoons Cocoa
- 1/2 cup applesauce or mashed banana
- 5 tablespoons butter or vegan butter
- 1/2 cup chopped nuts of your choice, I will be using sliced almonds

Decorating (optional)

- Blanched almonds
- Any preserve or honey
- Cherries or sugared cranberries or dried cranberries

Instructions

Before the class

- Cut all the dried fruits and the pear (or apple) to the almost the same size as the raisins and cranberries in a medium bowl, pour in 1/2 cup black coffee or tea, heat it to a boil and let the dried fruits soak in it for 30 min.

- Place the star anise pods and the whole cloves in a small pouch of cheesecloth so that you can easily fish it out of the mixture later. You can also empty a tea bag and put star anise pods and the whole cloves in and tie it with the teabag string.

We will do this together

- In a large saucepan, combine the soaked dry fruits, the pouch with anise and cloves, the zest, grated ginger, spices, sugar, applesauce (or mashed banana) and vegan butter and bring to a boil.
- Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes on low heat. Let it cool for about 15 minutes.
- Preheat the oven to 375°F.
- Chop the nuts to a small size.
- Sift the flour, baking powder and soda, cocoa and salt. Beat the eggs.
- Remove the pouch of whole spices (anise pods and cloves) and discard it. Add the nuts and the sifted flour, egg, baking soda and powder.
- Pour the batter into muffin pans lined with cupcake liners (you can also use a parchment paper lined, greased loaf pan). Fill the batter almost to the top.
- Bake in the oven (preheated to 375°F)
 - For Cupcakes: bake for 6 min, then reduce heat to 350°F for another 6-10 minutes till done.
 - For the loaf pan: bake for 11 min, then reduce heat to 350°F for another 16-18 minutes till done.
- Take the cupcakes/loaf out of the pan when it's cool to touch and place onto a wire rack to cool.
- Brush with preserve and decorate with blanched almond and dried fruits.

Divit and Hema