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May Recipes

Whoopie Pies

Page 2

- Marshmallow Creme/Fluff
- Mock Cream Filling
- Chocolate Buttercream filling

Red Velvet Whoopie Pies

Page 4

French Macaroons

Page 5

- Ganach Filling
- Classic Buttercream Filling

Rum & Toasted Coconut Ice-cream

Page 7

Caesar Salad

Page 8



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Whoopie Pies

(Makes about 10 pies)

125 g	unsalted butter, softened
250 ml	brown sugar, firmly packed into the measuring cup
1	large egg
500 ml	cake flour
125 ml	cocoa powder
5 ml	baking powder
5 ml	salt
250 ml	milk or buttermilk
5 ml	vanilla extract



1. Preheat oven to 200° C and line two baking trays with Wizbake baking sheets or baking paper.
2. In a large bowl, cream the butter and sugar with an electric mixer at medium-high speed until pale and fluffy, about 3 minutes in a standing mixer or 5 minutes with a handheld mixer.
3. Add the egg, beating until combined well.
4. In another bowl, combine the cake flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt.
5. In a small bowl, combine the milk or buttermilk and the vanilla extract
6. Add the dry ingredients to butter mixture, alternating with the milk mixture; beating until smooth.
7. Drop 3 to 4 tablespoons (45 to 60 ml) of the batter onto the prepared baking sheets.
8. Spread the batter with the back of a spoon into 10 cm circles, leaving approximately 5 cm between each cake.
9. Bake for 15 minutes or until they are firm to the touch.
10. Remove the cakes from the oven and let it cool completely on a cooling rack.
11. Make the filling of your choice - see options overleaf.
12. When the cakes are completely cool, turn half of the cakes bottom side up and spread the flat side (bottom) of one cake with a generous amount of filling - about 30 ml.
13. Top with another cake, pressing down gently to distribute the filling evenly.
14. Repeat with all cakes to make 9 pies.
15. Let the whoopie pies cool completely.
16. Wrap whoopie pies individually in plastic wrap, or place them in a single layer on a platter (do not stack them, as they tend to stick).

Note: The cakes can be made 3 days ahead and stored layered between sheets of wax paper in an airtight container at room temperature.



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Filling 1: Marshmallow Creme/Fluff

125 g	unsalted butter, softened
300 ml	icing sugar
250 ml	marshmallow creme/fluff (available from most food stores)
5 ml	vanilla extract

1. Beat together butter, icing sugar, marshmallow, and vanilla in a bowl with electric mixer at medium speed until smooth, about 3 minutes.

Note: Marshmallow creme is made from the same ingredients which are used to make marshmallows, except that they are whipped to turn the confection into a creamy spread, rather than puffed into marshmallows.

Filling 2: Mock Cream Filling

125 ml	cold water
10 ml	gelatin
250 ml	cream
160 ml	fat-free plain yogurt
125 ml	icing sugar
5 ml	vanilla extract

1. Combine the water and gelatine in a small heat-proof jug and microwave on Medium for 30 seconds to 1 minute or until melted. Do not let it boil.
2. Set it aside to cool for 10 minutes.
3. Beat the cream, yogurt, icing sugar, and vanilla extract in a medium bowl with an electric mixer on high speed until very thick, about 1 minute.
4. With the mixer beating constantly, add the gelatin mixture in a steady stream until well combined.
5. Cover and refrigerate until the cream filling is thickened to the consistency of pudding, about 30 minutes. Whisk again until smooth.

Filling 2: Chocolate Buttercream Filling

310 ml	icing sugar, sifted
125 ml	cocoa powder, sifted
60 ml	unsalted butter, at room temperature
45 ml	heavy cream
5 ml	vanilla extract
2.5 ml	salt

1. Sift together the icing sugar and cocoa powder in the bowl of a stand mixer.
2. Add the butter and beat on low until the mixture is crumbly.
3. Add the heavy cream, vanilla extract and salt and mix on high speed until the buttercream is smooth and fluffy, about 3-4 minutes.



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Red Velvet * Whoopie Pies

(Makes about 10 pies)

180 g	unsalted butter
2	large eggs
7.5 ml	apple cider vinegar
2.5 ml	vanilla extract
15 ml	red food coloring
560 ml	cake flour
250 ml	castor sugar
60 ml	cocoa powder
10 ml	baking powder
1.25 ml	bicarb of soda
2.5 ml	salt



Filling

225 g	cream cheese, at room temperature
45 ml	unsalted butter, at room temperature
625 ml	icing sugar, sifted
1	vanilla bean, halved lengthwise and seeds scraped out

1. Preheat the oven to 200° C and line 2 large baking sheets with Wизbake baking sheets or baking paper.
2. Whisk the melted butter, sour cream, eggs, vinegar, vanilla and food coloring in a bowl until combined.
3. In another bowl, whisk the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking powder, bicarb of soda and salt.
4. Add the flour mixture to the butter mixture in four equal batches, whisking each batch completely before adding the next.
5. Drop 3 to 4 tablespoons (45 to 60 ml) of the batter onto the prepared baking sheets.
6. Spread the batter with the back of a spoon into 10 cm circles, leaving approximately 5 cm between each cake.
7. Bake for 15 minutes or until they are firm to the touch.
8. Remove the cakes from the oven and let it cool completely on a cooling rack.
9. To make the filling, beat the cream cheese and butter until smooth with a hand mixer.
10. Beat in the icing sugar and vanilla seeds.
11. Refrigerate 30 minutes before using to fill the cakes.
12. When the cakes are completely cool, turn half of the cakes bottom side up and spread the flat side (bottom) of one cake with a generous amount of filling - about 30 ml.
13. Top with another cake, pressing down gently to distribute the filling evenly.
14. Repeat with all the cakes and set aside for it to cool completely.
15. Wrap whoopie pies individually in cling wrap, or place them in a single layer on a platter and cover with cling wrap. Do not stack them, as they tend to stick.

* A **red velvet cake** is dark red in colour and is usually prepared as a layer cake topped with a cream cheese icing. Beetroot or red food colouring is used to create the colour.



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French Macaroons

(Makes 2 dozen)

115 g	almond flour
230 g	icing sugar
144 g	egg whites (temperature not NB!)
72 g	white sugar
2.5 ml	salt
few drops	food colouring, e.g. pink or brown
few drops	food flavouring, e.g. coffee

Ganache Filling

150 g	70% dark chocolate
100 ml	cream
100 ml	icing sugar
pinch	salt



1. Preheat oven to 200° C and line two baking trays with Wizbake baking sheets or baking paper. If using baking paper, use a 4 cm cookie cutter to trace out guide-circles (about 2.5 cm apart) with a pencil.
2. Also have a piping bag, fitted with a plain tip, ready.
3. Sieve the almond flour and icing sugar into a large bowl. If the almond flour is too coarse to go through the sieve, process it with the icing sugar in a food processor until fine.
4. In the bowl of a stand mixer, combine the egg whites, white sugar and salt and turn the mixer to medium (No. 4 on a Kitchen Aid Mixer). Whisk for 3 minutes. The mixture will not seem very foamy at that point.
5. Increase the speed to medium-high (No. 7 on a Kitchen Aid Mixer) and whisk another 3 minutes, then crank the speed to No. 8 and whisk for another 3 minutes.
6. At that point, turn the mixer off and add in the flavoring and/or coloring until you have the desired shade and flavour and mix at low speed until evenly combined.
7. Whisk for one more minute at a high speed. You should have a very stiff, dry meringue.
8. When you remove the whisk attachment, there will be a big clump of meringue in the center, just knock the whisk against the bowl to free it. If the meringue has not become stiff enough to clump inside the whisk, continue beating for another minute, or until it does so.
9. Add the dry ingredients all at once and fold it in with a flexible silicone spatula.
10. Use both a folding motion (to incorporate the dry ingredients) and a pressing motion, to deflate the meringue against the side of the bowl. The batter needs enough thickness that it will mound up on itself, but enough fluidity that after 20 seconds, it will melt back down. I.e. it must have the consistency of molten lava.
11. Transfer half of the batter into the piping bag. Be careful not to overfill it as it will be difficult to handle.
12. Pipe the batter into the pre-traced circles on the baking sheet. Stop piping just shy of the borders of the circle, as the batter will continue to spread a little bit.
13. After piping your macaroons, take hold of the baking tray and hit it hard against your counter. This will dislodge any large air bubbles that might cause your macaroons to crack.
14. Set the macaroons aside for at least 15 minutes. This will help in developing a "foot" - the ruffled edge macaroons are known for.



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15. The macarons should form a very thin, smooth crust where, if you tap it lightly with your finger, the batter will not stick to your finger. If after 15 minutes, the batter is still sticky, let it dry longer. This may take up to an hour on humid days.
16. Bake for about 18 minutes, or until you can cleanly peel the parchment paper away from the macaroons. If the top comes off in your hand when you try to pick up a macaroon, it's not done.
17. Once the macaroons have baked, cool thoroughly on the baking trays, before peeling the cooled macaroons from the baking paper. Use a egg lifter if necessary.
18. To make the filling, melt the chocolate without stirring in a double-boiler or a glass bowl fitting snug on a saucepan with water. The saucepan should not touch the water.
19. Beat in the cream.
20. Stir in the icing sugar and salt and set aside until ready to use.
21. Fill the piping bag with the filling and pipe a 2.5 cm mound of filling onto half of the shells, then sandwich them with the rest of the halves.
22. The assembled macarons can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to one week.

Buttercream

(Makes enough for 2 dozen macaroons)

100 g	unsalted butter, softened
2	large egg yolks
60 ml	white sugar
50 ml	milk
5 ml	vanilla extract
few drops	food colouring

1. Cut butter into pieces and mash with a spatula until the consistency resembles mayonnaise.
2. In a small bowl, whisk the egg yolks, then add the granulated sugar and whisk until the mixture lightens to an off-white and you can no longer see the granules of sugar. Add the milk, and whisk to combine.
3. In a small bowl, whisk the egg yolks, then add the granulated sugar and whisk until the mixture lightens to an off-white and you can no longer see the granules of sugar. Add the milk, and whisk to combine.
4. Pour the egg mixture into a small saucepan and heat over low heat, whisking frequently to ensure that the mixture does not curdle or scorch. Cook until the mixture becomes thick and custardy, like pudding.
5. Pour the egg mixture back into its bowl and whisk constantly until it returns to room temperature.
6. Whisk in the butter in three batches, add the vanilla, and stir until smooth and all ingredients are fully combined.
7. Pipe or spread onto one macaron half and sandwich with another.



Nutella or jam straight out of the jar will put a decadent spin on the macaroon!



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Coconut & Rum Ice Cream

500 ml	cream
125 ml	sugar or honey
4	large egg yolks
250 ml	coconut milk
125 ml	desiccated coconut, lightly toasted
45 ml	dark rum

1. Set a medium bowl in a large container of ice water.
2. In large saucepan over medium heat, combine cream and sugar or honey and cook, stirring occasionally, until mixture reaches 77 ° C on a candy or instant-read thermometer.
3. Meanwhile, beat the egg yolks until light yellow and thickened, about 3 minutes.
4. Very slowly whisk ½ cup of the hot cream into the yolks to temper them, then gradually whisk tempered yolks back into the saucepan.
5. Continue to cook the mixture, stirring continuously. Do not let it come to a boil.
6. Stir in the coconut milk and toasted coconut.
7. Pour the mixture into the bowl set into the ice bath and let it cool for 10 minutes, then cover tightly with plastic wrap and chill until cold, at least 3 hours.
8. Stir in the rum and pour into canister of an ice cream maker or transfer to an air-tight container and freeze.
9. Churn according to manufacturer's directions until thickened and creamy, about the consistency of soft serve ice cream. Chill until firm but not rock hard, about 2 more hours.
10. If not using an ice cream machine, freeze the mixture for at least 4 hours, then whisk to break up any ice crystals. Freeze for a further two hours and whisk again. Freeze until ready to use.
11. Remove the ice cream from the freezer about 30 minutes before you want to serve it.





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Caesar Salad

(6 servings)

2	small heads of Cos lettuce
2	large eggs
100 g	shop-bought croutons
60 g	Parmesan cheese

Dressing

10 ml	crushed garlic
2	anchovy fillets in olive oil, drained
250 ml	mayonnaise
1	large egg yolk
60 ml	freshly grated Parmesan cheese
30 ml	water
30 ml	extra virgin olive oil
15 ml	freshly squeezed lemon juice
10 ml	granulated white sugar
2.5 ml	Worcestershire sauce
2.5 ml	Dijon Mustard
salt & pepper	to taste



1. To make the dressing, transfer all the ingredients to the bowl of a food processor and blend until smooth.
2. Transfer the dressing to a container with a tight fitting lid and store in the fridge for a few hours, overnight or for up to 1 week to give the flavors time to blend together.
3. Tear the lettuce leaves smaller if preferred and combine with the croutons in a large salad bowl.
4. Bring a small saucepan of water to the boil over a high heat.
5. Reduce the heat to medium, add the eggs and boil gently for no more than 2 minutes.
6. Drain and rinse in cold water.
7. Break open the eggs, scoop it out of the shells and stir into the lettuce and crouton mixture.
8. Pour the dressing over the salad, garnish with Parmesan shavings and serve immediately.

Variation:

Add 300 g cooked and shredded chicken for a delicious main course salad

Note:

The use of anchovy fillets are optional.