

## THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES



**Strawberry Champagne Cupcakes** (adapted from *Sky High's* strawberry cake and *Cook's Illustrated's* white cake recipes)

Makes about 36 mini cupcakes or 12 regular cupcakes

2 egg whites, at room temperature  
6 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature  
½ cup (3 ounces by weight) strawberries, pureed  
3 tablespoons champagne  
½ teaspoon vanilla  
1 drop red food coloring  
1 cup + 2 tablespoons (4.5 ounces) cake flour  
¾ cup (5.25 ounces) granulated sugar  
1½ teaspoons baking powder  
½ teaspoon table salt

1. Adjust a rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 350 degrees. Line muffin wells with paper cups. In a large measuring cup, beat the egg whites, strawberry puree, champagne, vanilla, and food coloring.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment (or a large mixing bowl if using a handheld mixer), whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. Add the butter; beat at slow speed until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. With the mixer running, pour in the strawberry mixture and continue to beat on medium speed (or high speed if using a handheld mixer) for 2 minutes, stopping to scrape the bowl once or twice.
3. Divide the batter evenly between the prepared muffin cups. Bake until a toothpick inserted into the center of a cupcake comes out dry, 11-14 minutes for mini cupcakes or 18-24 minutes for regular cupcakes. Transfer the pan(s) to a wire rack to cool for about 5 minutes, then remove the cupcakes from the pan. Let cool completely before frosting.

**Champagne Buttercream** (slightly adapted from *Love and Olive Oil*)

Makes enough to frost about 36 mini cupcakes or 12 regular cupcakes

A few comments on the original recipe note that their champagne reduction came out bitter, which seemed to be a result of using dry (brut) champagne. Stick to a sweeter champagne like demi-sec to avoid this.

1 cup demi-sec champagne  
8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature  
pinch salt  
2½ to 3 cups (10-12 ounces) confectioners' sugar

1. In a small saucepan over medium-high heat, bring the champagne to a simmer. Reduce the heat to medium and simmer until the champagne is reduced to 2 tablespoons, 15-20 minutes. Set aside to cool to room temperature.
2. In a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment (or a large bowl if using a handheld mixer), beat the butter and salt on medium speed until smooth. Reduce the mixer speed to low and slowly add the sugar, then increase the mixer speed to high and beat until the mixture is light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. Reduce the mixer speed to medium and slowly add the reduced champagne, mixing just until combined.