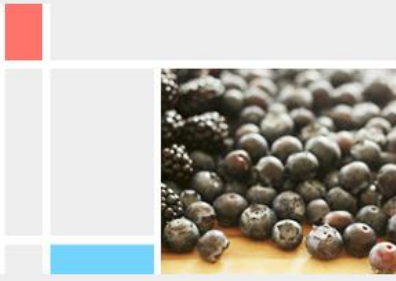


THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES



Eggnog Cupcakes (adapted from Annie's Eats and Vanilla Bean Cupcakes)

Makes about 15 cupcakes

1¼ cups (5 ounces) cake flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
½ cup eggnog, at room temperature
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 tablespoons bourbon or dark rum
5 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
½ teaspoon salt
¾ cup (5.75 ounces) sugar
3 large eggs, at room temperature

For the frosting:

16 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
2 ounces cream cheese, softened
Pinch of salt
2½ cups (10 ounces) confectioners' sugar, sifted
Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
2 tablespoons eggnog
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 teaspoons bourbon

1. Heat the oven to 350°F. Line two cupcake pans with paper liners. In a medium bowl, combine the cake flour and baking powder. In a 2-cup measuring cup, whisk together the eggnog, oil, vanilla, and bourbon.
2. Place the butter and salt in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Beat on medium-high speed for 3 minutes, until light and creamy in color. Gradually add the sugar to the butter mixture. Mix in the eggs one at a time, until incorporated. With the mixer on low speed, add one-third of the flour mixture, followed immediately by half of the eggnog mixture, mixing just until incorporated. Repeat with another third of the flour and the rest of the eggnog, then the last of the flour. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and mix for 15 seconds longer.
3. Divide the batter between the prepared paper liners, filling each about ¾ of the way full. Bake for 18-22 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Allow to cool in the pans for 5-10 minutes, then transfer to a cooling rack to cool completely.
4. To make the frosting: Place the butter, cream cheese, and a pinch of salt in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. Beat on medium-high speed until creamy, about 1 minute. Gradually add the powdered sugar and nutmeg, and mix on medium-high speed until smooth, about 2 minutes, scraping the sides of the bowl as necessary. Add the eggnog and whip on medium-high speed until light and fluffy, 4 minutes. With the mixer on medium-low speed, blend in the bourbon and vanilla. Frost the cupcakes as desired.