

PUMPKIN MUFFINS

When Fall arrives—and admittedly sometimes even before—the flavors of Fall entice me into baking mode. Who can resist warmly spiced pumpkin muffins? When baking, their aroma fills the house and brings everyone down to check when they'll be ready to gobble up. These bake up beautifully light and moist every time they come out of the oven. Bring on the Fall flavors! Makes 12 generous muffins or 1 loaf.

The Ingredients

Muffins

1¾ cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon fine sea salt
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoons ground allspice
½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
½ teaspoon ground cloves
1½ cups granulated sugar
2 large eggs
7 oz (½ of a 15 oz. can) pure pumpkin purée
½ cup + 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
⅓ cup water

Icing

1 cup powdered sugar, sifted
½ tablespoon good vanilla extract
1 tablespoon water OR heavy whipping cream, plus more to adjust consistency as desired

Optional Garnishes

Candied Pecans, Toasted sliced almonds, Chopped roasted pistachios

The Method

The Loaf

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a muffin tin with 12 tulip-style paper muffin cups.

2. In a large bowl, whisk the sugar, eggs, pumpkin purée, oil, and water together until no lumps remain. In a separate bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt and spices. Add the dry ingredients to the liquid and fold just until incorporated. Don't over mix. Pour the mixture into the prepared muffin pan. Fill each cup uniformly using a $2\frac{3}{8}$ -inch wide scoop, leveled off. Bake for 24-26 minutes at 350°F until the tops are peaked, no longer shiny, and spring back when touched near the center. Serve with or without the frosted toppings and garnish, if desired.
3. Bake at 350°F for 24 to 26 minutes until the loaf is set or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean and the top feels firm to the touch. When finished, it will be between 200°F and 210°F. After 212°F, the loaf will begin to dry out. Allow to cool in the pan for 20 minutes before removing to finish cooling on a rack. Allow it to cool completely before applying the icing. Fill each cup uniformly using a $2\frac{3}{8}$ -inch wide scoop, leveled off. Bake for 24-26 minutes at 350°F until the tops are peaked, no longer shiny, and spring back when touched near the center. Serve with or without the frosted toppings and garnish, if desired.

The Icing

4. When the cake is cooled, combine all the icing ingredients and stir until smooth and creamy. The icing should be thick and not runny. Add additional water or cream, if necessary, to reach your preferred consistency. Ice the muffins once cooled and garnish if desired. Store in an airtight container in the fridge if the icing is made with cream, or in the pantry if water was used.

Tips

- Rather have a loaf? No problem! Grease and flour a 9×5-inch loaf pan, or spray the whole inside of the pan with a non-stick cooking spray and line the base and sides of the pan with a fitted piece of parchment paper. Fill and bake at 350°F for 55 to 60 minutes until the loaf is set or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean and the top feels firm to the touch. When finished, it will be between 200°F and 210°F. After reaching 212°F, the loaf will begin to dry out. Allow it to cool completely before applying the icing.
- Like cake, the flavor and texture of a loaf will be richer and more moist after a day or two wrapped tightly and stored in the fridge or freezer. This loaf will keep for 3 to 4 days refrigerated and can be frozen for up to 3 months.





