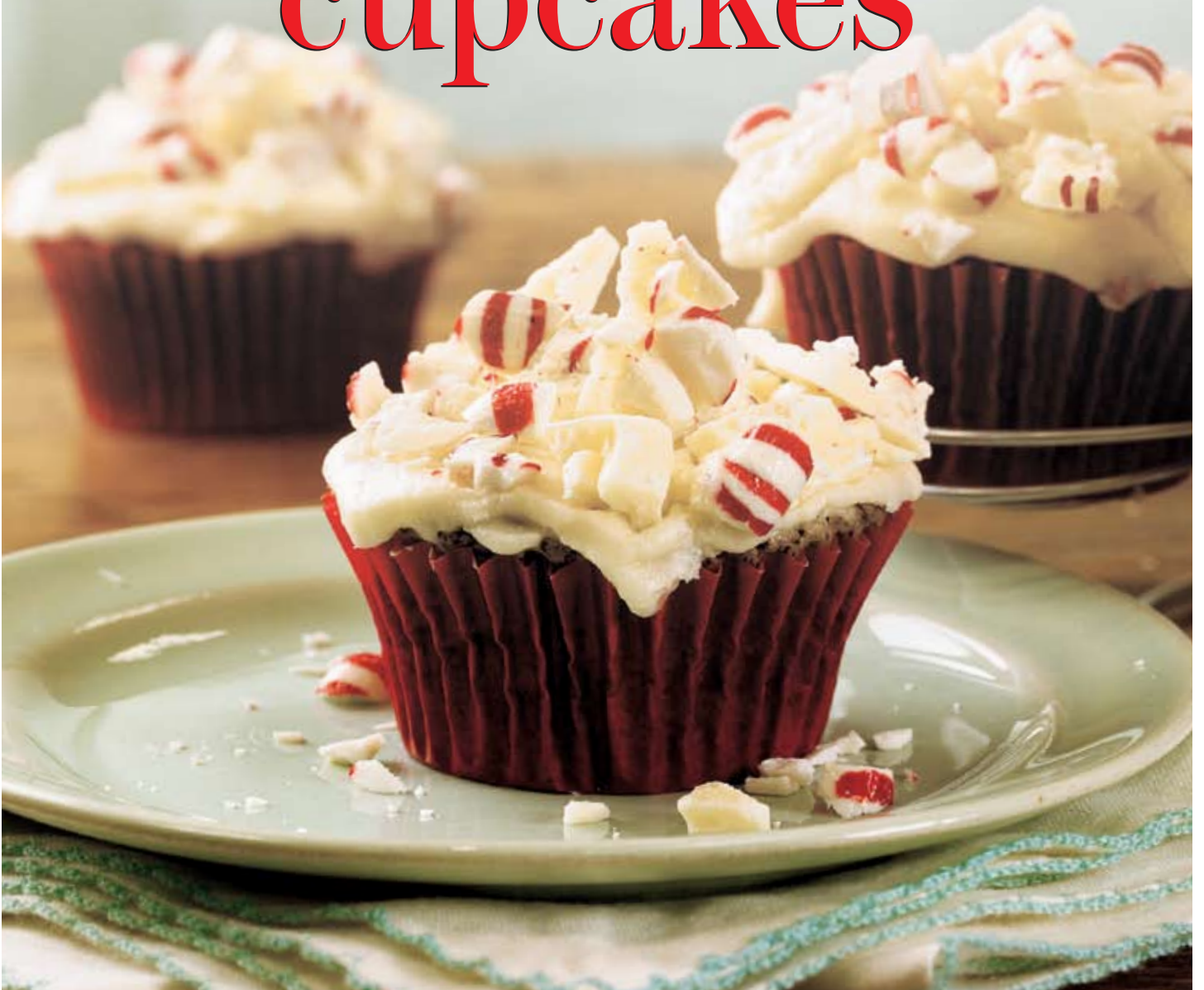


top 12
INCREDIBLE
cupcakes



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cupcakes

1

PARTY CUPCAKES

We call for using a mixer, but you can stir these together by hand with great results. Because the mixer adds more air to the batter, you'll end up with 17 cupcakes when you stir them by hand rather than the 24 you get when you use a mixer.

Prep: 15 minutes • Bake: 25 minutes • Cool: 1 hour, 10 minutes

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|---|--|
| 1 (18.25-oz.) package white cake mix with pudding | ½ tsp. almond extract |
| 1¼ cups buttermilk | Vegetable cooking spray |
| ¼ cup butter, melted | Coconut Buttercream |
| 2 large eggs | Toppings: rainbow candy sprinkles, candy-coated chocolate pieces |
| 2 tsp. vanilla extract | |

1. Beat first 6 ingredients at low speed with an electric mixer just until dry ingredients are moistened. Increase speed to medium, and beat 2 minutes or until batter is smooth, stopping to scrape bowl as needed.
2. Place paper baking cups in muffin pans, and coat with cooking spray; spoon batter evenly into cups, filling each two-thirds full.
3. Bake at 350° for 25 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pans on wire racks 10 minutes; remove cupcakes from pans to wire racks, and cool 1 hour or until completely cool. Spread evenly with Coconut Buttercream, and sprinkle with desired toppings. Store in refrigerator. **Makes 2 dozen.**

COCONUT BUTTERCREAM

Prep: 10 minutes

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|--|-----------------------------------|
| ½ cup butter, softened | 1 (16-oz.) package powdered sugar |
| 1 (3-oz.) package cream cheese, softened | ¼ cup cream of coconut |
| | 1 tsp. vanilla extract |

1. Beat butter and cream cheese at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy. Gradually add powdered sugar, beating at low speed until blended. Increase speed to medium, and slowly add cream of coconut and vanilla, beating until smooth. **Makes 3 cups.**



MARBLED CHOCOLATE CUPCAKES

One bite into these chocolaty treats
reveals a cream cheese surprise!

Prep: 30 minutes • Bake: 25 minutes

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|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1 (18.25-oz.) package devil's
food cake mix without pudding | $\frac{1}{3}$ cup sugar |
| 1 tsp. vanilla extract | 1 large egg |
| 1 (8-oz.) package cream cheese,
softened | 1 cup semisweet chocolate
morsels |

1. Prepare cake mix according to package directions; stir in vanilla.
2. Place paper baking cups in muffin pans. Spoon batter evenly into cups, filling each two-thirds full.
3. Beat cream cheese and sugar in a large mixing bowl at medium speed with an electric mixer until fluffy. Add egg, beating well; stir in chocolate morsels. Spoon about 2 teaspoons cream cheese mixture into center of each cupcake; lightly swirl mixture with a wooden pick.
4. Bake at 350° for 20 to 25 minutes. Remove from pans immediately, and cool on wire racks. Store in refrigerator. **Makes** about 2½ dozen.



DOUBLE CHOCOLATE- ORANGE CUPCAKES

Prep: 20 minutes • Bake: 18 minutes

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|---|----------------------------------|
| 1 cup semisweet chocolate morsels | $\frac{1}{3}$ cup butter, melted |
| 1 (18.25-oz.) package German chocolate cake mix | $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups orange juice |
| 4 large eggs | 1 tsp. vanilla extract |
| | Orange Buttercream |
| | Garnish: orange zest |

1. Microwave chocolate morsels in a 2-cup glass measuring cup at HIGH 1 minute, stirring after 30 seconds. Stir until smooth. Cool slightly.
2. Beat cake mix and next 3 ingredients at low speed with an electric mixer until moistened. Increase speed to medium, and beat 1 to 2 minutes or until well blended and smooth. Add melted chocolate and vanilla, beating until blended.
3. Place paper baking cups in muffin pans. Spoon $\frac{1}{4}$ cup batter evenly into cups.
4. Bake at 375° for 16 to 18 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Let cool in pans on wire racks 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and cool completely on wire racks. Spread with Orange Buttercream. Store in refrigerator. Garnish, if desired. **Makes** about 2½ dozen.

ORANGE BUTTERCREAM

prep: 10 minutes

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| $\frac{3}{4}$ cup butter, softened | 1 (16-oz.) package powdered sugar |
| 2 tsp. grated orange zest | 3 Tbsp. orange juice |

1. Beat butter and orange zest at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy. Gradually add powdered sugar, beating until well blended.
2. Stir in orange juice, adding additional orange juice, if necessary, to reach desired consistency. **Makes** about 2½ cups.



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PEANUT BUTTER SURPRISE CUPCAKES

You can use a coffee scoop, which equals about 2 tablespoons, to measure batter into paper baking cups.

Prep: 20 minutes • Bake: 23 minutes

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup butter, softened	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking soda
2 cups granulated sugar	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt
3 large eggs	1 cup buttermilk
1 cup creamy peanut butter	1 tsp. vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour	30 milk chocolate kisses
$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking powder	Powdered sugar

1. Beat butter at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy. Gradually add granulated sugar, beating until light and fluffy. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. Add peanut butter, beating until smooth.
2. Combine flour, baking powder, soda, and salt; add to peanut butter mixture alternately with buttermilk, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Beat at low speed just until blended after each addition. Stir in vanilla.
3. Place paper baking cups in muffin pans. Spoon 2 tablespoons batter into cups. Place 1 chocolate kiss on its side in center of batter in each cup. Top evenly with remaining batter, covering chocolate kisses.
4. Bake at 375° for 20 to 23 minutes or until golden brown. Let cool in pans on wire racks 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and cool on wire racks. Dust with powdered sugar. Serve warm or at room temperature. **Makes** 2½ dozen.



CANDY BAR CUPCAKES

Prep: 20 minutes • Cook: 5 minutes • Bake: 18 minutes

9 fun-size chocolate-coated caramel and creamy nougat bars	1 tsp. salt
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter or margarine	$1\frac{1}{2}$ cups buttermilk
2 cups sugar	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking soda
1 cup shortening	1 tsp. vanilla extract
3 large eggs	Chocolate-Marshmallow Frosting
$2\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour	Garnishes: chopped chocolate-coated caramel and creamy nougat bars

1. Melt 9 candy bars and butter in a heavy saucepan over low heat about 5 minutes, stirring until smooth. Set aside.
2. Beat sugar and shortening at medium speed with an electric mixer about 3 minutes or until well blended. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating just until blended after each addition. Combine flour and salt. Stir together buttermilk and soda. Gradually add flour mixture to sugar mixture, alternately with buttermilk mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Beat at low speed just until blended after each addition. Stir in melted candy bar mixture and vanilla.
3. Place paper baking cups in muffin pans; spoon batter into cups, filling two-thirds full. Bake at 350° for 18 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Remove cupcakes from pan; cool completely on wire racks. Spread with frosting. Garnish, if desired. Store in refrigerator. **Makes** $2\frac{1}{2}$ dozen.

CHOCOLATE-MARSHMALLOW FROSTING

Prep: 15 minutes • Cook: 5 minutes

3 cups miniature marshmallows	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup evaporated milk
$\frac{3}{4}$ cup butter or margarine, cut up	6 cups powdered sugar
6 oz. unsweetened chocolate, chopped	1 Tbsp. vanilla extract

1. Melt first 4 ingredients in a 2-quart saucepan over medium-low heat, stirring until smooth. Transfer mixture to a large bowl; place into a larger bowl filled with ice and water. Gradually add powdered sugar, beating at low speed with a handheld electric mixer. Increase speed to medium-high, and beat 5 minutes or until frosting is cool, thick, and desired spreading consistency. Stir in vanilla. **Makes** $4\frac{1}{2}$ cups.



BROWN SUGAR-FROSTED CUPCAKES

Prep: 30 minutes • Bake: 20 minutes

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|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 cup shortening | ½ tsp. salt |
| 2 cups granulated sugar | 1 cup milk |
| 4 large eggs | 1 tsp. almond extract |
| 3 cups cake flour | 1 tsp. vanilla extract |
| 2½ tsp. baking powder | Brown Sugar Frosting |

1. Beat shortening at medium speed with an electric mixer until fluffy; gradually add sugar, beating well. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating well after each addition.
2. Combine flour, baking powder, and salt; add to shortening mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Beat at low speed until blended after each addition. Stir in extracts.
3. Place paper baking cups in muffin pans. Spoon batter into cups, filling half full.
4. Bake at 375° for 20 minutes. Remove cupcakes from pans, and cool on wire racks. Spread evenly with Brown Sugar Frosting. Store in refrigerator.

Makes 3 dozen.

BROWN SUGAR FROSTING

Prep: 5 minutes • Cook: 13 minutes

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|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 cup butter or margarine | 4 tsp. cream of tartar |
| 2 cups firmly packed dark brown sugar | 6 cups sifted powdered sugar |
| ½ cup dark corn syrup | ½ cup whipping cream |
| | 4 tsp. vanilla extract |

1. Melt butter in a heavy saucepan over medium-high heat. Whisk in brown sugar, corn syrup, and cream of tartar; bring to a boil. Boil 5 minutes. (Do not stir.) Remove from heat. Gradually add powdered sugar alternately with whipping cream, ending with cream, beating at medium speed with a handheld electric mixer until smooth. Stir in vanilla. Spread on cupcakes immediately.

Makes 4 cups.



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CHOCOLATE-CREAM CHEESE CUPCAKES

Whipped topping makes a convenient and tasty topping for these chocolate confections. Don't forget the mini morsels for an extra hit of chocolate.

Prep: 30 minutes • Bake: 25 minutes

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|--|--|
| 1 (18.25-oz.) package Swiss chocolate cake mix | 1 cup semisweet chocolate mini-morsels |
| 1 (8-oz.) package cream cheese, softened | 1 (8-oz.) container frozen whipped topping, thawed |
| $\frac{1}{3}$ cup sugar | Semisweet chocolate mini-morsels |
| 1 large egg | |

1. Prepare cake mix according to package directions.
2. Place paper baking cups in muffin pans; spoon batter into cups, filling two-thirds full.
3. Beat cream cheese and sugar at medium speed with an electric mixer until fluffy. Add egg, beating well; stir in chocolate morsels. Spoon 1 heaping teaspoon cream cheese mixture into center of batter.
4. Bake at 350° for 25 minutes. Remove from pans, and cool on wire racks. Spread cupcakes with whipped topping, and sprinkle with chocolate mini-morsels. Store in refrigerator. **Makes** 2½ dozen.



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CHOCOLATE-MINT CUPCAKES

Prep: 10 minutes • Bake: 25 minutes • Cool: 1 hour, 10 minutes

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| 1 (18.25-oz.) package German chocolate cake mix | 1 tsp. vanilla extract |
| 1 (16-oz.) container sour cream | Vegetable cooking spray |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter, melted | Chocolate-Mint Buttercream |
| 2 large eggs | Garnish: shaved thin crème de menthe chocolate mints |

1. Beat first 5 ingredients at low speed with an electric mixer just until dry ingredients are moistened. Increase speed to medium, and beat 3 to 4 minutes or until smooth, stopping to scrape bowl as needed.
2. Place paper baking cups in muffin pans, and coat with cooking spray; spoon batter evenly into cups, filling two-thirds full.
3. Bake at 350° for 25 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pans on wire racks 10 minutes; remove cupcakes from pans to wire racks, and cool 1 hour or until completely cool. Spread cupcakes evenly with Chocolate-Mint Buttercream. Store in refrigerator. Garnish, if desired.

Makes 2 dozen.

CHOCOLATE-MINT BUTTERCREAM

Prep: 10 minutes

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|--|---|
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter, softened | 1 tsp. vanilla extract |
| 1 (3-oz.) package cream cheese, softened | 1 cup dark chocolate morsels |
| 1 (16-oz.) package powdered sugar | $\frac{1}{4}$ cup finely chopped thin crème de menthe chocolate mints |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk | |

1. Beat butter and cream cheese at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy. Gradually add powdered sugar, beating at low speed until blended. Increase speed to medium; slowly add milk and vanilla, beating until smooth.
2. Microwave dark chocolate morsels in a microwave-safe bowl at MEDIUM (50% power) 1½ to 2 minutes or until melted and smooth, stirring at 30-second intervals. Gradually add melted chocolate to buttercream; beat until blended and smooth. Stir in chocolate mints. **Makes** 3 cups.



S'MORE CUPCAKES

The campfire treat is reinvented here as cupcakes. Graham crackers make up the cake while chocolate nuggets are slipped inside right after baking. Don't forget to top with the marshmallows!

Prep: 10 minutes • Bake: 18 minutes

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup shortening	1 tsp. salt
$1\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar	$1\frac{1}{4}$ cups milk
3 large eggs	1 tsp. vanilla extract
$1\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour	24 chocolate nuggets
$1\frac{1}{2}$ cups graham cracker crumbs	4 cups miniature marshmallows
2 tsp. baking powder	1 cup chopped pecans

1. Beat shortening at medium speed with an electric mixer until fluffy. Gradually add sugar, beating well. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating after each addition.
2. Combine flour and next 3 ingredients; add to egg mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Beat until blended after each addition. Stir in vanilla.
3. Place paper baking cups in muffin pans, and spoon $\frac{1}{4}$ cup batter into cups. Bake at 350° for 18 minutes or until done. Quickly insert a chocolate nugget into center of each warm cupcake; top each with 4 or 5 marshmallows, gently pressing into melted chocolate. Sprinkle with pecans. **Makes** 2 dozen.



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cupcakes

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RED VELVET CUPCAKES

Prep: 45 minutes • Bake: 30 minutes

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|---|--|
| 1 cup shortening | 3 cups all-purpose flour |
| ½ cup butter, softened | 2 Tbsp. unsweetened cocoa |
| 3 cups sugar | 1 tsp. salt |
| 6 large eggs | 1 cup milk |
| 2 tsp. vanilla extract | Cherry Chunk Frosting |
| 1 (1-oz.) bottle red liquid food coloring | 3½ dozen maraschino cherries with stems (optional) |

1. Beat first 3 ingredients at medium speed with an electric mixer until fluffy. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating just until yellow disappears. Stir in vanilla and food coloring until blended.
2. Combine flour, cocoa, and salt. Add to shortening mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until blended.
3. Place paper baking cups in muffin pans. Spoon batter into cups, filling two-thirds full.
4. Bake at 325° for 30 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Remove from pans, and cool completely on wire racks. Spread evenly with Cherry Chunk Frosting. Top each with a maraschino cherry, if desired. Store in refrigerator. **Makes** 3½ dozen.

CHERRY CHUNK FROSTING

Prep: 15 minutes

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| 1 (8-oz.) package cream cheese, softened | 1 cup maraschino cherries, drained and chopped |
| ½ cup butter, softened | 1 cup chopped pecans, toasted |
| 6 cups powdered sugar | 1 cup sweetened flaked coconut |
1. Beat cream cheese and butter at medium speed with an electric mixer until smooth and creamy. Add powdered sugar, beating until blended. Stir in cherries, pecans, and coconut. **Makes** 4½ cups.



CHOCOLATE-CHOCOLATE CUPCAKES

Prep: 15 minutes • Bake: 30 minutes • Other: 35 minutes

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup unsweetened cocoa	3 large eggs
$\frac{3}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour	1 tsp. vanilla extract
$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking powder	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sour cream
$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt	$1\frac{1}{2}$ cups milk chocolate morsels
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup unsalted butter, softened	Vanilla Frosting
1 cup sugar	

1. Sift together first 4 ingredients in a medium bowl; set aside.
2. Beat butter and sugar at medium speed with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating until well blended after each addition. Stir in vanilla. Add cocoa mixture to butter mixture alternately with sour cream, beginning and ending with cocoa mixture. Beat at low speed until blended after each addition. Stir in chocolate morsels.
3. Place paper baking cups in muffin pans; spoon batter evenly into cups, filling completely full.
4. Bake at 350° for 25 to 30 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pan 5 minutes; transfer to a wire rack, and cool completely. Spread cupcakes evenly with Vanilla Frosting. Store in refrigerator.

Makes 1 dozen.

VANILLA FROSTING

Prep: 10 minutes

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup unsalted butter, softened	1 tsp. vanilla extract
3 cups powdered sugar	2 to 3 Tbsp. milk

1. Beat butter at medium-high speed with an electric mixer until creamy. Gradually add sugar; beat until smooth. Add vanilla and 2 tablespoons milk; beat just until blended. Add additional milk, if necessary, for desired spreading consistency. **Makes** about $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups.



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CHOCOLATE-PEPPERMINT CANDY CUPCAKES

Prep: 30 minutes • Bake: 20 minutes • Other: 10 minutes

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| 1 cup unsalted butter, softened | 1/2 tsp. chocolate extract |
| 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar | 2 cups all-purpose flour |
| 3/4 cup packed light brown sugar | 1 tsp. baking soda |
| 4 large eggs | 1/4 tsp. salt |
| 1 cup semisweet chocolate morsels, melted | 2 cups white chocolate morsels |
| 1 cup buttermilk | 1/2 cup crushed peppermint candy canes |
| 1 tsp. vanilla extract | Vanilla Buttercream |

1. Beat butter and sugars at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating just until blended. Add melted chocolate, beating until blended. Combine buttermilk and extracts in a bowl. Combine flour, soda, and salt; add to butter mixture alternately with buttermilk mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Beat at low speed until blended after each addition.
2. Place paper baking cups in muffin pans. Spoon batter into cups, filling about two-thirds full. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Remove from pans; cool completely on wire racks.
3. Microwave white morsels in a glass bowl at HIGH at 30-second intervals until melted. Stir until smooth; spread on a foil-lined baking sheet. Sprinkle with peppermint candy. Chill until firm. Remove from foil; chop. Spread cupcakes with Vanilla Buttercream; sprinkle with candy mixture. **Makes** 2 dozen.

VANILLA BUTTERCREAM

Prep: 10 minutes

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|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1/2 cup butter, softened | 1/3 cup milk |
| 1 (16-oz.) package powdered sugar | 1 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract |

1. Beat butter at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy; gradually add powdered sugar alternately with milk, beating at low speed until blended after each addition. Stir in vanilla. **Makes** about 2 1/2 cups.

top 12
INCREDIBLE
cupcakes

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