

Chocolate Peanut Butter Pretzel Cupcakes

Cupcakes:

Ingredients:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 7 Tablespoons cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 egg
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sour cream (buttermilk or milk are good substitutions)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$ hot coffee (or hot water)



Instructions:

1. In a mixing bowl combine flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking soda and baking powder. Set aside.
2. In a separate mixing bowl combine with a whisk egg, sour cream, oil and vanilla extract.
3. Add the egg and sour cream mixture to the flour mixture and mix until well combined.
4. Add hot coffee or water a little at a time and mix until batter is smooth.
5. Line cupcake pan with liners. Spoon the batter equally into 14 or a little more than half way.
6. Pre-heat the oven to 350F or 180C.
7. Bake them for 12-17 minutes until they feel spongy to the touch or when a tooth pick is inserted in the center comes out clean.
8. Remove from the oven and let them cool completely before decorating. If you decorate them when they are warm the frosting will melt.

*Makes 14 cupcakes

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Peanut Butter Frosting:

Ingredients:

- 1 stick butter, soft
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup peanut butter (if you are going to pipe the frosting use smooth peanut butter)
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups powdered sugar (confectioners' sugar)
- 2 Tablespoons of milk (if needed)



Instructions:

1. Place in a mixing bowl butter, peanut butter and half of the powdered sugar.
2. Using the paddle attachment of the mixer, combine until smooth. Add remaining powdered sugar and milk if the frosting is too stiff.

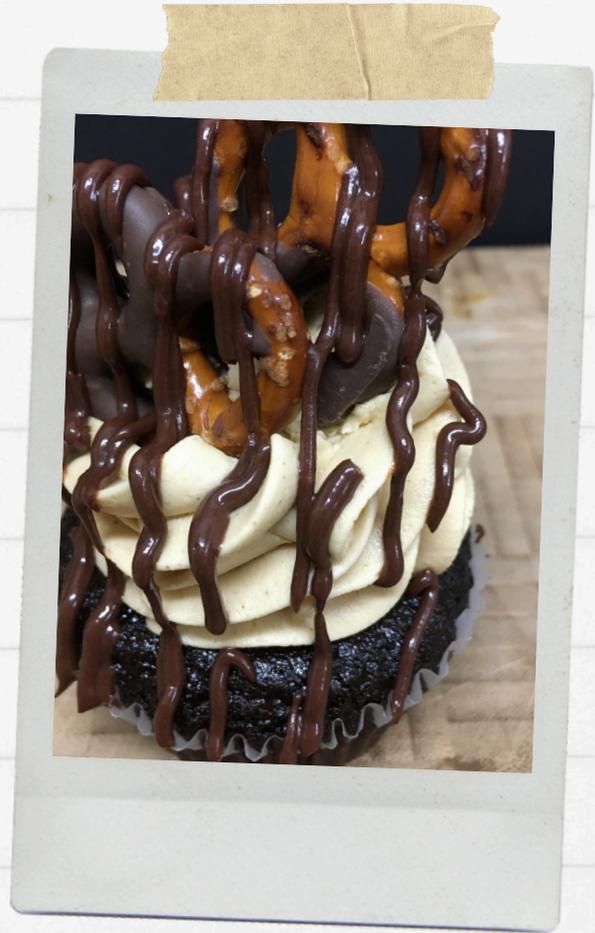
Note: if you don't have a mixer you can use a spoon or spatula. Just make sure the butter is soft.

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Ganache (optional)

Ingredients:

- 6 oz semi-sweet chocolate (bittersweet is fine)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup heavy cream



Instructions:

1. Chop the chocolate into small pieces and place it in a bowl.
2. Heat the cream either in a small sauce pan or in the microwave and add it to the chocolate.
3. Still the mixture until all the chocolate is melted and the mixture is smooth. You can use a whip if necessary.

To finish the cupcakes

1. Place peanut butter frosting on pastry bag with a star tip and pipe on the cooled cupcakes. If you don't have a pastry bag or pastry tip you can use a spoon or knife and spoon some frosting on top of the cupcake.
2. Decorate the cupcakes with either chocolate covered pretzels, plain pretzels or crushed pretzels and drizzle some ganache on top.

*Recipe for these Moondust Cupcakes were a gift from Pamela Batalla.