

ESB Monthly Bake - November

Mini Magic Top Hats



In this November edition of the ESB Monthly Bake, the English Singing Baker creates a little magic of her own with miniature show stopping cakes, Mini Magic Top Hats, that will stun anyone you bake them for and make them think you have powers beyond your own control!

Ingredients and Equipment

Ingredients

For 6 'Top Hats'

For the base sponge

4 oz (100g) butter, softened

4 oz (100g) caster sugar

4 oz (100g) self raising flour

2 medium eggs

Half the zest of a lemon

For the colourful cupcakes

6 oz (175g) butter, softened

6 oz (175g) caster sugar

6 oz (175g) self raising flour

3 medium eggs

1 tsp baking powder

Half the zest of a lemon

Red, Blue and Yellow Food gel

For the icing

1 lb oz (500g) icing sugar

4 1/2 oz (120g) butter, soft

Juice of half a lemon

Teaspoon zest of a lemon

For decoration

A packet of soft white fondant icing

A wooden spoon

Icing sugar, to roll it out

A Sieve

Black food gel

A template to cut around for the base

Sugar paste stars, to decorate

A palette knife

Equipment

A sharp knife

12 hole cupcake tin

A table knife

A Swiss roll tin

Teaspoons

Greaseproof paper

A sandwich bag

Scissors

A spatula

A large mixing bowl

6 small bowls

A rolling pin

A serving plate or tray

Grater, to zest the lemons

How to make the bake

1. Line the Swiss roll tin with greaseproof paper and preheat the oven to 190°C. Then make your own cupcake cases for the cupcake tin by cutting squares about the size of the holes and pressing them in and weighting them with a container the size of the hole. Then trim all the edges so they don't stick out. Or you can use bought cupcake cases!

2. Next make the sponge for the base. Very soft butter is a must in this recipe as it mixes everything together smoothly but if you haven't left your butter out long enough, just blast for 10 - 15 seconds in a microwave till soft but not melting. When you have soft butter, put it into the big mixing bowl and beat with a wooden spoon before adding in all the other ingredients all at once. Give it a big stir and beat to a smooth mixture. Then, spoon into the prepared Swiss roll tin and spread out with a table knife until it is in one even layer. Bake for 15 - 20 minutes until springy to the touch and a light golden brown.

3. While the base sponge is baking, make a start on the coloured cupcakes. Put the butter into the big bowl (you don't need to wash it as it's the same mix!) and beat before adding the sugar. When that mix is light and fluffy, add in the flour and give it a stir till it is in crumbly bits. Finally add the eggs, lemon zest and baking powder to the mix and beat to a smooth consistency.

4. Divide the mixture into 6 small bowls with a large spoon and make each of them a different colour. I made red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple with a mixture of red, blue and yellow but choose whichever colours you like. Add a blob of each colour to start

with as you can always add more but you can't take away! When each of them is mixed, use a teaspoon to put a half teaspoon of mixture into each cupcake case. Smooth it down with the back of the spoon before adding another colour and keep going until you have used each colour in turn - just be careful not to mix them together as they won't keep the different colours separate! Then, put the cupcakes into the oven for 12 - 15 minutes until springy to the touch.

5. While the cupcakes are baking, make the icing by beating the butter, icing sugar, lemon juice and zest in a small bowl with a wooden spoon. Once it has come together, add in the milk to make it smooth and shiny. Once the cupcakes are baked, leave everything to cool in their tins before starting on the assembly.

6. To assemble the top hats, knead the fondant with black food colouring to make it grey or as dark as you can make it. Then cut the base sponge in half vertically and find a template about a centimetre bigger than a cupcake and cut around it on the sponge. You will get about 6 top hats so 6 base sponges is what you can get from the sponge. I used a bowl as it was the right size.

7. Place the base on the serving tray and peel off the paper of two cupcakes and slice off the dome on top to make it sit flat. Place them on top of the base and shave off any bits that are sticking out around the sides. Then put two teaspoons of icing into a sandwich bag, stick the sponges together with icing before covering the whole Top Hat in icing with a palette or table knife. Once it is covered in icing, roll out a circle of fondant and cover the top hat with fondant as smooth as you can. When one is done, continue and repeat the process with the other 5 sponges and cupcakes until they are all covered in fondant. Once they are all covered, you can decorate and I added some paste stars to add the finishing touch. Serve to your guests with a flair and watch their jaws drop as you reveal the magic inside!