

Chocolate Beehive Cupcakes

Poetry & Pies

prep time: 30-35 minutes

bake time: 15-18 minutes

total time: about 55 minutes (*plus about 30 minutes for cupcakes to cool*)

yields: 24 cupcakes (or 48 mini cupcakes)



Ingredients

- 1 $\frac{2}{3}$ cups (335g) granulated sugar
- 1 $\frac{2}{3}$ cups (227g) flour, sifted
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (75g) [unsweetened cocoa powder](#), sifted
- 2 teaspoons (8g) baking powder
- 1 teaspoon (5g) baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (3g) sea salt
- 2 eggs, room temperature
- 1 cup (240g) buttermilk, room temperature*
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (108g) avocado oil (can sub vegetable or canola oil)
- 1 tablespoon (13g) [pure vanilla extract](#)
- 1 cup (240g) hot, light roast coffee (or hot water)
- optional: [black cupcake liners](#) (or [mini liners](#))
- one batch [vanilla American buttercream](#)
- yellow gel food coloring (I used [golden yellow](#) and [lemon yellow](#))
- [candy bees](#)

Instructions

1. Ideally, make the buttercream at least a day in advance. Color with yellow gel food coloring until the ideal color (or very slightly lighter). Cover well and refrigerate at least overnight. Let come to room temperature on the counter and stir well. This will help to deepen the color, avoiding any surprise changes, and also smooths the frosting a bit.
2. Preheat your oven to 325F/165C. Line two [regular cupcake pans](#) (or [mini cupcake pans](#)) with cupcake liners (or spray with baking spray or even grease

with butter and lightly sprinkle with flour—use what you have!). This is also a great time to set your coffee to percolate (unless using hot water or espresso and hot water, which is what I do).

3. Whisk together the sugar, flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in the bowl of your stand mixer or a large mixing bowl, sifting everything but the sugar (unless yours is fine enough to sift--go for it!). Set aside.
4. In a separate medium mixing bowl, whisk the eggs, buttermilk, oil, and vanilla together until well-blended and fully emulsified, about 1 minute.
5. Very, very slowly stream the hot coffee or water into the wet ingredients, whisking vigorously and constantly as you pour to avoid scrambling the eggs. Feel free to do this in segments if it's easier. If you do scramble some of the eggs, you can run the mixture through your fine mesh sieve to remove the cooked egg bits.
6. Using the paddle attachment, turn your stand mixer to low (or use a hand mixer) and slowly pour the wet ingredients into the dry. This should take about 30 seconds or so. The batter will clump up then thin out. Once you've poured all the wet ingredients, immediately turn off the mixer. Scrape down the bottom and sides. Beat on medium for exactly 2 minutes (set a timer).
7. Evenly divide batter between 24 cupcake liners (they should be somewhere between $\frac{2}{3}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ full). I found an ice cream scoop or [large cookie scoop](#) helps with this.
8. Bake for 15-18 minutes (10-12 for mini cupcakes), until a toothpick inserted in a middle cupcake comes out with just a few moist crumbs (ideally not fully clean, as this could mean they're over baked). Check early and rotate halfway if not using convection.
9. Let cool 5-10 minutes in the cupcake pan then remove to a cooling rack to cool completely.
10. Stir frosting and place in a piping bag fitted with a large, round piping tip ([such as 1A](#)). If making mini cupcakes, fit with a smaller round tip, such as 12A.
11. Pipe beehives, starting at the outer edge of the cupcake and working your way in, then for the second layer working your way back out to the edge (but not all the way, to create a dome shape), then back to the inside for the top layer. You can smooth the top layer with an offset spatula if desired.

- a. Note: If you are struggling to pipe the beehive all in one go, create each layer separately, in this case always starting on the outside and working your way in, until you have created at least 3 layers that resemble a beehive.

12. Decorate each cupcake with a sugar bee (and sugar flowers, if desired).

Enjoy! If not serving right away, store in an airtight container until ready to eat. Cupcakes will last for 3-5 days. Avoid refrigeration for more than an hour, as this can cause them to dry out.

**You can make your own buttermilk by adding 1 tablespoon white vinegar with enough room temperature whole milk to equal 1 cup total. Stir and let sit 10 minutes while you prep the rest of the ingredients.*