

VEGAN ALMOND CUPCAKES

makes: 12-15 cupcakes

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon cider vinegar	½ cup canola oil
1 ½ cups plain soymilk	1 ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
2 1/8 cups flour	1 teaspoon almond extract
2 teaspoon baking powder	4 cups powdered sugar
½ teaspoon baking soda	½ cup cocoa powder
½ teaspoon kosher salt	½ cup soymilk
1 1/8 cups sugar	3 tablespoons margarine
1/4 cup sliced almonds	1 teaspoon vanilla
1/4 cup almond paste (not marzipan)	1 teaspoon almond extract

Preheat the oven to 350°. Line 14 muffin cups with paper cupcake liners. Lightly spray liners and top of pan with cooking spray. This will prevent the tops of the cupcakes from sticking to the pan when they rise. Set aside.

Combined apple cider vinegar and soymilk in small bowl. Stir well and set aside (the mixture will curdle).

In a food processor, chop almonds until finely ground. Add almond paste and oil and pulse until well incorporated. Mix in almond and vanilla extracts and pulse once to combine.

- I**n a large mixing bowl, stir together the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Add the curdled soymilk and almond mixtures to the dry ingredients and stir until smooth (try not to overmix it).
- F**ill each muffin cup with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of batter. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the middle of a cupcake comes out clean.
- L**et cool in the pans for 5 minutes, then remove and place on a wire rack. Cool completely before frosting.
- F**or frosting: With electric mixer, beat margarine until fluffy. Add cocoa powder and soymilk and beat until combined. Add powdered sugar 1 cup at a time and continue to beat until all the sugar is incorporated. Add extracts. Beat on high speed for another 3-5 minutes, or until fluffy. Spread generously on cupcakes (there will be plenty leftover - store in the fridge and eat with a spoon!). Sprinkle with leftover sliced almonds (or sprinkles) and top with a maraschino cherry. Store at room temperature in an airtight container (though these cupcakes are notorious for disappearing at an alarming rate, so storage probably won't be an issue).