Banoffee Cupcakes warning – very sticky !!

Ingredients

Cupcakes:

200g unsalted butter, softened

200g caster sugar

Pinch of salt

Seeds of 1 vanilla pod

4 medium eggs

200g self-raising flour

70g plain chocolate (minimum 53% cocoa solids), chopped into small pieces

Sugar Syrup:

150ml water

150g caster sugar

Scraped vanilla pod

Filling:

200g dulce de leche or soft caramel (make your own by boiling a can of sweetened condensed milk submerged in water for 3 hours)

1 large ripe banana

Frosting:

200g cream cheese

200g unsalted butter

500g icing sugar, sifted

50g frozen banana purée (make your own by mashing a fresh banana)

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 175ºC/gas 4. Line a muffin tray with cupcake cases.
2. Put the butter, sugar, salt and vanilla seeds in a mixing bowl and cream together until light and fluffy.
3. Beat the eggs lightly in another bowl and slowly add to the butter mixture while whisking quickly. If the mixture starts to separate or curdle, stop adding the eggs and beat in 2-3 tbsp flour. This will rebind the batter.
4. Once all the egg has been incorporated into the butter mixture, sift in the remaining flour and stir until the batter is just combined. This will ensure the cupcakes stay light and fluffy. Fold the chopped chocolate through the batter. Place batter into cupcake cases until two-thirds full only.
5. Bake in preheated oven for 12-15 minutes until golden brown and springy to the touch.
6. Prepare the sugar syrup while the cupcakes are baking. Place water, sugar and vanilla pod into a saucepan and bring to the boil. Simmer until all the sugar crystals have dissolved. Set aside to cool slightly. Discard the vanilla pod.
7. When the cupcakes are baked, let them rest for about 10 minutes. Using a pastry brush, soak the tops of the cupcakes with the sugar syrup while they are still warm; this allows the syrup to be absorbed faster.
8. When the cupcakes are just warm, remove from the tin and leave to cool completely on a wire rack.
9. Once cool, wrap the cupcakes in cling film and then chill for 1 hour or until the sponge feels firm to the touch. Using a melon baller, scoop out the tops of each cupcake.
10. For the filling, crush the ripe banana and then mix it together with the dulce de leche. Place the banoffee mixture in a piping bag and fill the scooped out holes of the cupcakes.
11. Decorate with the frosting. Put cream cheese in a mixing bowl and beat until smooth and creamy. Place the butter and sugar in another bowl, cream together until pale and fluffy. Add the cream cheese, a bit at a time, to the butter mixture and mix well until the frosting is combined. Add the banana purée. Chill until set. Pipe a swirl of frosting on top of each cupcake.