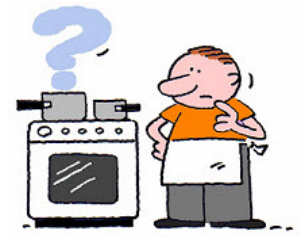


The 'mushroom' cupcake



Ingredients 6-8 cupcakes

Basic cupcake mix	75g
Vanilla extract	few drops
Cocoa powder	dusting
Vanilla buttercream	to cover
Pistachio nuts	garnish
Egg	1
Caster sugar	70g

Mise en place

- Make a stiff meringue mix
- Fill a paper piping bag fitted with a small plain tube with the meringue mix
- Carefully pipe small blobs of meringue mix onto a flat baking tray fitted with non-stick baking paper or a non-stick mat – keep the meringue blobs the size of small button mushrooms
- Fill a separate paper piping bag fitted with a small writing tube with some meringue mix and pipe small lines of meringue onto the baking tray
- Damp the tip of your finger and smooth any peaks on the meringue
- Lightly dust the meringue mix on the tray with cocoa powder
- Place in a pre-heated oven at 100°C and allow to dry for about 2 hours until light and crispy. Remove and allow to cool – they will keep for several days in an airtight container
- Make some vanilla flavoured buttercream
- Chop a few pistachio nuts
- Make a basic cupcake mix with a few drops of vanilla extract for flavour. Bake and allow to cool

Method

- Fill a paper piping bag fitted with a small star tube with the buttercream. Neatly pipe lines over the top of the cupcakes
- Sprinkle the pistachio nuts around the edge
- Lightly dust with cocoa powder
- Use a cocktail stick to carefully make a hole under each mushroom. Pipe a tiny amount of buttercream into the hole and gently fit with a meringue stalk
- Arrange two or three mushrooms on top of each cupcake