



Old Fashioned Banana Cupcakes

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 20 / **Cook Time** 25 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

chop: to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

knife skills: Bear Claw (growl), Pinch, Plank, and Bridge (look out for trolls).

measure: to calculate the specific amount of an ingredient required using a measuring tool (like measuring cups or spoons).

mix: to thoroughly combine two or more ingredients until uniform in texture.

whisk: to beat or stir ingredients vigorously with a fork or whisk to mix, blend, or incorporate air.

zest: to scrape off the outer colored part of a citrus fruit's rind (skin or peel) using a metal tool with small sharp blades, such as a zester, microplane, or the small holes of a grater (avoid the "pith," the white, spongy lining of the rind that can be bitter).

Equipment

- Oven
- Muffin pan
- Paper cupcake liners (or nut-free cooking spray or oil to grease pan)
- Cutting board
- Kid-safe knife
- Large mixing bowl
- Zester (or grater with small zesting plate/side)
- Dry measuring cups
- Liquid measuring cup

- Measuring spoons
- Whisk
- Toothpicks

Ingredients

Old Fashioned Banana Cupcakes

- 3 very ripe bananas (yellow with brown flecks) + 1 all-yellow banana to top cupcakes
- 3/4 C granulated sugar or brown sugar
- 1/2 C vegetable oil **
- 2 extra-large eggs, at room temperature **(for EGG ALLERGY sub 1 extra mashed banana + more—see below)**
- 1/2 C sour cream **(for DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free/nut-free sour cream)**
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract **(for GLUTEN ALLERGY use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor—check label)**
- 1 orange, zested
- 2 C all-purpose flour **(for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour)**
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp kosher salt
- 1 handful chocolate chips, optional **(for CHOCOLATE ALLERGY omit or sub carob chips; for DAIRY/NUT/SOY ALLERGY use Enjoy Life brand chocolate chips)**

Food Allergen Substitutions

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Soy: Substitute canola oil or other nut-free oil for vegetable oil. Use Enjoy Life brand chocolate chips.

Egg: For 2 extra-large eggs, substitute an extra 1 mashed banana + 1/4 C sugar + 1/2 tsp baking soda, and decrease oil in recipe to 1/4 C.

Dairy: Substitute dairy-free/nut-free sour cream. Use Enjoy Life brand chocolate chips.

Gluten/Wheat: Use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor. Substitute gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour.

Nut: Use Enjoy Life brand chocolate chips.

Chocolate: Omit optional chocolate chips or substitute carob chips.

Instructions

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preheat + chop + zest

Preheat your oven to 350 F. Have your kids chop up **3 very ripe bananas** into small pieces and add to a large mixing bowl for the cupcake batter. Then zest the peel of **1 orange**, being careful to grate only the orange part and not the pith (bitter white part). You'll use the zest in Step 3. Set the rest of the orange aside to juice for other recipes.

measure + whisk

Measure **3/4 cup sugar** and add it to the bowl with the chopped bananas. Whisk well until combined.

crack + combine

Crack **2 eggs** into the bowl with the sugar and bananas. Then add **1/2 cup vegetable oil, 1/2 cup sour cream, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**, and the **orange zest**. Mix again until smooth.

measure + mix

Time for the dry ingredients! In a new bowl, measure **2 cups flour, 1 teaspoon baking soda**, and **1/2 teaspoon salt**. Whisk together and then add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients. Mix until just combined. Stir in **1 handful of chocolate chips** if using.

fill + bake

Line a muffin pan with paper liners or grease with oil or butter. Fill each well 2/3 full with batter. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center of a cupcake comes out clean. If you are topping the cupcakes with frosting, you can make it while you wait.

cool + decorate

After removing the cupcakes from the oven, cool completely. Then spread frosting, like **Sour Cream Frosting**, thickly on top of each cupcake and decorate each with a slice from **1 banana**.

Featured Ingredient: Banana!

Hi! I'm Banana!

"I'm such an 'a-peeling' fruit, I'm just going to have to tell you a little about myself! Bananas are very popular. We're long and curved, and we typically have a yellow outer layer (like some raincoats!) called a peel or skin. After peeling a banana, you can eat it whole; slice it into cereal, salads, or desserts; and mash it and put us on toast or add us to pancake or banana bread batter. Be careful not to throw your banana peel on the floor, or someone might slip on it!"

History

The Latin scientific name for banana is "musa sapientum," or "fruit of the wise men."

The first recorded mention of bananas is from the 6th century BCE. They were represented in Egyptian hieroglyphs.

Bananas may have been Earth's first fruit and the first fruit cultivated by people. The first banana farms were in southeast Asia.

The phrase "going bananas" came about because monkeys love bananas!

India produces over 26 percent of the world's bananas. In the United States, Hawaii grows the most bananas.

There are a few cultures, especially Japan's, where the fiber from the banana plant is used to make fabric and sometimes even paper.

The world's record for the longest banana split is 4.97 miles. In March 2017, Innisfail, Australia, residents made it using 40,000 bananas, 660 gallons of ice cream, and 528 gallons of topping. It took hundreds of volunteers 12 hours to prepare the banana split.

People like their bananas! Worldwide we eat more than 100 billion bananas each year! Of those, Americans annually eat about 27 pounds of bananas per person. But we don't eat as many bananas as the Ugandan people. Their average consumption each year is 500 pounds per person!

Anatomy & Etymology

What appears to be a banana tree is actually an herbaceous flowering plant (the world's largest).

A banana plant can grow an inch or more while you sleep at night, eventually growing from 10 to 25 feet high.

Botanically, a banana is a berry.

Since commercially-grown bananas do not contain seeds, you cannot grow a banana from seed unless you can find someone who sells seeds from the wild fruit. Otherwise, new plants are grown from offshoots or suckers of the banana plant.

A single banana fruit is called a finger, and a cluster of fruit is called a hand. There are 10 to 20 fingers on each hand.

About 75 percent of a banana's weight is water.

Because bananas are less dense than water, they are able to float.

Wild banana varieties include bubblegum pink bananas with fuzzy skins, green-and-white striped bananas with orange sherbet-colored flesh, and bananas that taste like strawberries when cooked.

The word "banana" may have come from the West African Wolof word "banaana," through late 16th century Portuguese or Spanish. However, it could have come from the Arab word "banan," meaning finger.

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Bananas ripen best if growers pick them when they are still green.

Don't separate a banana from the bunch if you want it to ripen more quickly.

Putting bananas in a sealed container, like a brown paper bag, will hasten them to ripen, especially if you add another type of fruit to the bag.

You may have noticed that organic bananas often come with plastic wrap around the top stems of a bunch, but you can also wrap yours at home. Tightly wrapped stems will help bananas last three to five days longer.

Try peeling a banana from the bottom up toward the stem to avoid dislodging the stringy vascular tissue running down the length of the fruit inside. Those strings are called "phloem" (pronounced "flom").

Banana peels are actually edible if cooked.

Once you peel a banana and it comes in contact with air, it can begin to turn brown. Sprinkling lemon or pineapple juice on a cut banana will prevent this.

Don't be surprised that the banana peel turns brown or black after being refrigerated—it won't affect the fruit inside. This darkening happens because the cold breaks down the skin's cell walls and causes compounds in it to oxidize.

You can put ripe or overripe bananas in the freezer and then add a frozen banana to your blender when making a smoothie instead of ice. You can also insert a popsicle stick into one end of a banana, freeze the banana, then dip the frozen banana in chocolate melted with a little oil. If desired, roll the coated banana in toppings like nuts, coconut flakes, or sprinkles, then refreeze for a chocolaty, nutritious frozen dessert.

Nutrition

Bananas contain vitamin C, potassium, fiber, and vitamin B6.

Bananas have 31 percent of the daily value of vitamin B6! This vitamin strengthens your nervous and immune systems. It also is needed for your body to make serotonin, a hormone that elevates mood.

About half of all people allergic to latex may also be allergic to bananas.