



Strawberry French Toast Cupcakes

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 10 / **Cook Time** 38 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

bake: to cook food with dry heat, as in an oven.

beat: to vigorously mix ingredients with a whisk, spoon, fork, or mixer.

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

coat: to apply a covering of flour, breadcrumbs, oil, sauce, or batter to food before baking or frying.

soak: to immerse a hard food for a certain amount of time in a liquid to soften it.

Equipment

- Oven
- Muffin pan
- Paper cupcake liners
- Skillet
- Cutting board
- Kid-safe knife
- Large mixing bowl
- Dry measuring cups
- Liquid measuring cup
- Measuring spoons
- Wooden spoon

Ingredients

Strawberry French Toast Cupcakes

- Strawberry filling:
- 1 C fresh strawberries
- 1/4 C strawberry jam
- 1/4 C unsalted butter ******(for DAIRY ALLERGY sub 1/4 C dairy-free/nut-free unsalted butter)******
- Cupcakes:
- 1/4 loaf or 6 to 8 slices soft bread ******(for CELIAC/GLUTEN ALLERGY sub soft gluten-free/nut-free bread)******
- 2 eggs ******(For EGG ALLERGY sub 1 mashed ripe banana)******
- 1/4 C milk ******(For DAIRY ALLERGY sub 1/4 C dairy-free/nut-free milk)******
- 2 T unsalted butter, room temperature ******(for DAIRY ALLERGY sub 2 T dairy-free/nut-free unsalted butter)******
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract ******(for CELIAC/GLUTEN ALLERGY use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor-check label)******
- 1/2 C granulated sugar or honey
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

Food Allergen Substitutions

Strawberry French Toast Cupcakes

Dairy: Substitute dairy-free/nut-free unsalted butter. For 1/4 C milk, substitute 1/4 C dairy-free/nut-free milk.

Egg: For 2 eggs, substitute 1 mashed ripe banana.

Celiac/Gluten/Wheat: Use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor. For 1/4 loaf or 6 to 8 slices soft bread, substitute soft gluten-free/nut-free bread.

Instructions

Strawberry French Toast Cupcakes

chop + coat + cool

Have your kids chop **1 cup of strawberries** into very tiny bits. Add the chopped strawberries to your skillet on medium heat with **1/4 cup strawberry jam** and **1/4 cup butter**. Cook for 5 to 8 minutes,

stirring regularly. The strawberries should be coated in jam and butter, and a lot of their liquid will have cooked off. Remove from the heat and let cool for a bit on the side.

line + tear

Adults preheat your oven to 325 F and have your kids line your muffin pan wells with paper liners. While the strawberries cook, have kids tear, cut, or snip **1/4 loaf or 6 to 8 slices of soft bread** into little pieces (the smaller the better!) to measure 2 cups.

beat + soak

In a large mixing bowl, have kids beat **2 eggs, 1/4 cup milk, 2 tablespoons butter** (room temp), **1 teaspoon vanilla extract, 1/2 cup sugar**, and **1/2 teaspoon cinnamon** together. Next, have kids add the **2 cups of bread cubes** to the mixing bowl and stir to combine. Make sure that the bread is submerged in the egg mixture. Let the bread rest for a few minutes to absorb the liquid. Add **1/2 C of the cooled strawberry filling mixture** and mix well. (Reserve the remaining cooked strawberry mixture for the **Creamy Strawberry Vanilla Smoothies** if making. Or, you can use it as a topping.)

bake + enjoy

Fill the bread mixture 3/4 of the way up each paper-lined cup. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until the eggs are set and the French toast is golden brown. You can frost your French toast cupcakes with **Whipped Strawberry Yogurt Frosting** if desired.

Featured Ingredient: Strawberry!

Hi! I'm Strawberry!

"Hello! I want to introduce myself. I'm Strawberry—and I have my very own month—May! I'm great in desserts, breakfast foods, snacks, salads, and fragrances. I like to be a part of picnics and holiday celebrations. So combine me with blueberries and bananas (or whipped cream, vanilla pudding, or white cake) for a red, white, and blue dessert for Independence Day in the United States or Bastille Day in France."

History

The garden strawberry as we know it was first bred and cultivated in France in the 1750s. It was a cross between a Virginian strawberry and a Chilean strawberry.

The ancient Romans believed strawberries had medicinal powers. So they used them to treat everything from depression to fainting to fever, kidney stones, bad breath, and sore throats.

Native Americans made cornbread with crushed strawberries and cornmeal; this is how strawberries were introduced to Colonists and served as an inspiration for the invention of strawberry shortcake.

In some parts of Europe, people once believed elves could control how much milk cows produced and that the elves loved strawberries. So farmers tied baskets of strawberries to their cows' horns as an offering to

the elves.

California produces about 80 percent of the strawberries in the United States. Strawberries have been grown in California since the early 1900s.

Americans eat an average of three and one-half pounds of fresh strawberries per year. In one study, more than half of seven to nine-year-olds picked strawberries as their favorite fruit. They're nature's candy!

Anatomy

The strawberry isn't a true berry but is called an accessory fruit. Strawberries are the only fruit with seeds outside their skin, about 200 on each berry. And, to be super technical, each seed on a strawberry is considered by botanists to be its own separate fruit!

The strawberry plant is a perennial and can last for a few years, producing fruit each year.

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Some varieties of strawberries are easier to harvest than others. To pick a strawberry from its plant, grasp the stem just above the berry between your pointer finger and thumbnail and pull with a slight twisting motion.

To store fresh strawberries, place them whole and unwashed in one layer in a plastic or glass storage container and put them in the refrigerator. Wait to clean them until you are ready to eat them, as rinsing them quickens their spoiling.

Strawberries can be pickled! Especially when you pick them green or unripe. If your berries are overripe, make jam!

Strawberries can be puréed into smoothies or milkshakes and baked into tarts, pies, cakes, and tortes. Or, roast them and serve over ice cream and berries. You can also dehydrate and mix them into granola or purée raw strawberries and freeze them into yogurt pops. Dip them in chocolate or drizzle them with cream. Strawberries are incredibly versatile—the fruit we wait all year to enjoy once summer weather hits!

Nutrition

Strawberries are a HUGE source of vitamin C, especially when eaten raw! One cup of strawberries contains 113 percent of our daily recommended value. Vitamin C is excellent for the heart, bones, and teeth. When we cut ourselves or break a bone, vitamin C comes to the rescue to help repair our tissues.

Strawberries contain natural fruit sugar, called fructose. However, fructose is better than table sugar (white sugar) because it comes packaged with other vitamins, nutrients, and fiber from the rest of the fruit. Plus, the fiber in fruit helps slow down the effects of sugar in our blood.

