



## Cream-Filled Chocolate Cupcakes

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ 4.9 from 185 reviews

**Author:** Sally **Prep Time:** 40 minutes **Cook Time:** 22 minutes

**Total Time:** 3 hours (includes cooling) **Yield:** 15 cupcakes

Fill these deeply chocolatey cupcakes with fluffy whipped vanilla buttercream and top with a rich 2-ingredient chocolate ganache. See the step-by-step photos above or use the video tutorial below as your guide.

### Ingredients

#### Chocolate Cupcakes

- 1 cup (125g) **all-purpose flour** (spooned & leveled)
- 1/2 cup (42g) unsweetened natural **cocoa powder**
- 1 teaspoon **baking soda**
- 1/2 teaspoon **baking powder**
- 1/2 teaspoon **salt**
- 1/3 cup (80ml) **vegetable oil**
- 1 cup (200g) **granulated sugar**
- 1 large **egg**, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon **pure vanilla extract**
- 1/2 cup (120ml) **buttermilk\***, at room temperature
- 1/2 cup (120ml) **hot coffee** or **hot water**

#### Chocolate Ganache Topping

- 6 ounces (170g) **semi-sweet chocolate**, finely chopped
- 2/3 cup (160ml or 5.3 ounces) **heavy cream**

#### Whipped Vanilla Buttercream Filling

- 1/2 cup (8 Tbsp; 113g) **unsalted butter**, softened to room temperature
- 2 cups (240g) **confectioners' sugar**
- 3 Tablespoons (45ml) **heavy cream**
- 2 teaspoons **pure vanilla extract**
- **salt**, to taste

**Cook Mode** Prevent your screen from going dark

### Instructions

- 1 **Make the cupcakes:** Preheat the oven to 350°F (177°C). Line a 12-cup muffin pan with cupcake liners. This recipe yields about 15 cupcakes, so line a second muffin pan with 3 cupcake liners or bake in batches.
- 2 Whisk the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, baking powder, and salt together in a large bowl. Set aside. Whisk the oil, sugar, egg, vanilla, and buttermilk together until combined. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients, add the hot coffee/water, and whisk until the batter is completely combined. Batter is thin.
- 3 Pour/spoon the batter into the liners, filling only 2/3 full to avoid spilling over the sides. You should have enough batter for 15 cupcakes.

- 4 Bake for 20–22 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
- 5 Allow cupcakes to cool in the pan for 10 minutes, and then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Cupcakes must be completely cooled—and even chilled for 20–30 minutes in the refrigerator if they're particularly sticky on top—before assembling.
- 6 **Make the chocolate ganache:** Place finely chopped chocolate in a medium heatproof bowl. Heat the cream in a small saucepan over medium heat until it begins to gently simmer. (Do not let it come to a rapid boil—that's too hot!) Pour over chocolate, then let it sit for 2–3 minutes to gently soften the chocolate. With a metal spoon or small rubber spatula, very slowly stir until chocolate has melted and mixture is smooth. Ganache is thin. The finer you chopped the chocolate, the quicker it will melt with the cream. If it's not melting, do not microwave it. If needed, see [Troubleshooting Chocolate Ganache](#). Once ganache mixture is smooth, transfer it to the refrigerator and let it chill for at least 30 minutes to thicken before spreading on cooled and filled cupcakes.
- 7 **Make the whipped vanilla buttercream filling:** With a [handheld](#) or [stand mixer](#) fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter on medium speed until creamy, about 2 minutes. Add confectioners' sugar, heavy cream, and vanilla extract. Beat on low speed for 30 seconds, then increase to medium-high speed and beat for 3 full minutes. Add up to 1/4 cup (30g) more confectioners' sugar if frosting is too thin or another 1 Tablespoon (15ml) of cream if frosting is too thick. Add a pinch of salt if frosting is too sweet. (I add a very tiny pinch of salt.) Frosting should be extra fluffy.
- 8 **Fill the cupcakes:** Using a sharp knife, cut a circle into the center of the cooled cupcakes to create a little pocket about 1 inch deep. The piece you removed will be sort of cone-shaped. Spoon or pipe whipped buttercream inside each carved-out cupcake—use however much frosting will fit. (I use either a teaspoon measuring spoon or [Wilton piping tip #12](#) to fill cupcakes. Usually you can fit between 1–2 teaspoons of frosting in each.) Slice/tear off the pointy end of the “cone” piece of cupcake you removed, and gently press the round piece back on top of the filling.
- 9 **Top with ganache:** With a knife or [small icing spatula](#), spread the thickened chocolate ganache on top of each cupcake. Spread on a thick layer, so it sets as a thick fudge-like topping.
- 10 **(Optional) Pipe icing swirl/loops on top:** Fill a piping bag with the remaining vanilla buttercream. Pipe a looping swirl, or any design you prefer, on top of the ganache-covered cupcake. (No need to chill ganache-topped cupcakes before doing this.) I use [Wilton piping tip #6](#) for piping.
- 11 Serve immediately or store covered at room temperature or in the refrigerator for up to 1 day before serving. Cover and store leftover cupcakes in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. I recommend a [cupcake carrier](#) for storing and transporting decorated cupcakes.

## Notes

- 1 **Make Ahead & Freezing Instructions:** Bake the cupcakes 1 day in advance. Keep cupcakes covered tightly at room temperature and fill/frost the day of serving. Whipped buttercream and chocolate ganache can be prepared the day before too. Cover each and refrigerate overnight. The ganache will be nice and thick. If needed to thin out, spoon ganache into heatproof bowl and place over a pot of simmering water. Stir constantly until thinned out. Unfrosted, unfilled cupcakes can be frozen up to 3 months. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator and bring to room temperature before assembling and serving.
- 2 **Special Tools** (affiliate links): [Cupcake Liners](#) | [USA Pan Cupcake Pan](#) or [Wilton Cupcake Pan](#) | [Electric Mixer \(Handheld or Stand Mixer\)](#) | [Small Icing Spatula](#) | [Piping Bag \(Reusable or Disposable\)](#) | [Wilton Piping Tip #6](#) | [Wilton Piping Tip #12](#) | [Cupcake Carrier](#)
- 3 **Cupcakes Sinking:** The cupcakes may look like they're sinking in the center while they're baking, but they should pop back up by the time baking is finished. It doesn't matter all that much if they sink a bit in the center, though, because you're cutting out the middles and filling them with cream.
- 4 **Buttermilk vs. Sour Cream:** I tested these cupcakes both ways. Made with buttermilk, they have the best flavor, but can be a little soft and sticky, so slightly more difficult to cut and fill (I

recommend a quick chill in the refrigerator before cutting and filling, to make them a bit easier to work with). Made with sour cream, they have a sturdier crumb, but the chocolate flavor isn't as strong. You can also try using half of each, if you happen to have both!

- 5 **Buttermilk:** Buttermilk is required for this recipe. You can make your own DIY version of buttermilk if needed. Add 1 teaspoon of white vinegar or lemon juice to a liquid measuring cup. Then add enough whole milk to the same measuring cup until it reaches 1/2 cup. (In a pinch, lower fat or nondairy milks work for this soured milk, but the cupcakes won't taste as moist or rich.) Stir it around and let sit for 5 minutes. The homemade "buttermilk" will be somewhat curdled and ready to use in the recipe.
- 6 **Hot Coffee or Hot Water:** Hot liquid enhances the cocoa powder's flavor. It also encourages it to bloom and dissolve appropriately. I promise these cupcakes don't taste like coffee at all! If you don't drink coffee, you can use hot water. For deeper and richer flavor, though, use coffee (regular or decaf, but make sure it's black with no sugar or cream). You can either brew it in a coffee maker or make [instant coffee](#).
- 7 **Chocolate for Ganache:** Real, quality chocolate is ideal for ganache to set properly. I use the 4-ounce baking bars found in the grocery store baking aisle, such as Ghirardelli or Baker's brands. You'll need 1.5 of the 4-ounce bars to yield 6 ounces. If you can't find those, you can use 170g (about 1 cup) of high-quality semi-sweet chocolate chips.
- 8 **Can I Make This Into a Cake?** Absolutely. Use my [chocolate cake recipe](#) for 2 cake layers, spread the whipped buttercream on one cooled cake, top with 2nd cake, and top entire cake with ganache.
- 9 **More Success Tips:** Be sure to check out my [How to Use Piping Tips](#) post for instructions on how to fill a piping bag, and my [How to Make Chocolate Ganache](#) post for any ganache questions. And you can also read my [10 Tips for Baking the BEST Cupcakes](#).

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