

# Pumpkin Passion Cupcakes



**Makes 12+**

**Prep 15 mins**

**Cooking 25 mins**

**Easy**

## Ingredients

175 ml sunflower oil  
175g light muscovado sugar  
3 large eggs  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
200g coarsely grated pumpkin or butternut squash  
100g sultanas  
grated zest 1 orange  
2 tsp ground cinnamon  
200g self-raising flour  
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

## For the frosting

200g tub full-fat cream cheese  
85g icing sugar  
toasted chopped pecans or hazelnut to decorate

## Alternative meringue frosting

3 egg whites  
180g caster sugar  
200g butter

## Healthy frosting

200g quark  
50g fromage frais  
3 tbsp icing sugar, sifted  
zest of 1 orange

1. Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Line a 12-hole muffin tray with paper cases. Pour the oil into a large bowl and add the sugar, eggs and vanilla. Beat together, then add the grated pumpkin, sultanas and orange zest.
2. Stir in the cinnamon, flour and bicarbonate of soda, the mixture will be quite wet. Spoon into the cases. Bake for 25 mins until firm and springy to the touch and a skewer inserted in the centre of a cupcake comes out clean. Cool completely on a wire rack. At this stage you can freeze the cakes for 4 months.
3. To make the frosting, beat the cream cheese and sugar together until smooth then spread on top of the cupcakes. Leave plain or decorate with chopped toasted pecans or hazelnuts. Store in the fridge, but return to room temperature to serve for the best flavour and texture.
4. For the alternative meringue frosting: whisk the egg whites until stiff. Meanwhile, bring 5 tbsp of water and sugar in a pan to 118-120C - it should be starting to bubble, but not turned into a caramel. While continuing to whisk the eggs by hand or in a mixer, slowly drizzle the sugar into the egg whites and keep beating until the meringue cools down.
5. For the healthy frosting: Stir the quark with a spoon to make it a bit smoother, then fold in the fromage, icing sugar and orange zest and spread over the cakes.