



## Bacon and Burnt Sugar Zucchini Cupcakes

*Courtesy of [laptop2tabletop.wordpress.com](http://laptop2tabletop.wordpress.com)*

*Inspired by a recipe found in Taste of Home*

How do you get kids, or your hubby, to eat zucchini? No need to hide it in chocolate, but tempting naysayers with bacon? Awesome. I was prepping for a taping of Cooks Corner and needed to test this first. I brought a dozen to work and as soon as the clink of the dish hitting the marble island was heard I had my first tasters. "Is that bacon?" "Oh my, what is this?" My first victim was a female colleague who is not a fan of vegetables, especially green ones. "Zucchini? In a cupcake?" The cream cheese frosting helped to ease her fear but the bacon won her over. One bite and she was happy. And so was everyone else. Zucchini does work in a cupcake. With or without bacon.

Makes 24 cupcakes

*What you need:*

### **Cupcake:**

- 2 1/2 c all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp candied ginger, crushed
- 1 tsp fleur de sel (French sea salt; sub with sea salt)
- 3 eggs
- 1 1/2 c sugar
- 1/2 c Devo Olive Oil Eureka Lemon EVOO (or evoo/canola with 1/2 lemon juiced)
- 1/3 c grade b maple syrup
- 1 tsp pure vanilla
- 1 1/2 c shredded zucchini

### **Frosting:**

- 1 c butter, divided
- 1/2 c packed brown sugar
- 1/2 c pure cane sugar
- 1 tsp heavy cream
- 1/2 tsp fleur de sel (French sea salt)
- 6 oz cream cheese, room temperature
- 2-2 1/2 c powdered sugar

### **Maple-candied bacon:**

- 2 tbs grade B maple syrup
- 2 tsp brown sugar
- 8 slices Hurd Farm bacon

*What you do:*

### **Cupcake:**

- Heat oven to 350°.
- Prepare muffin tins with cupcake liners.
- In lg bowl combine flour, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda, ginger, salt and cloves.
- Min mixer bowl fitted with paddle attachment beat eggs, sugar, oil, syrup, lemon juice and extract.
- Gradually add dry ingredients to egg mixture.
- Stir in zucchini.
- Fill wells 2/3 full.
- Bake 20-25 min or until inserted toothpick comes out clean.
- Cool 10 min.
- Transfer to wire rack.

### **Frosting:**

- In med saucepan melt butter and sugars over med heat.
- Bring to a boil, while stirring cook until thickened, about 2-3 min.
- Remove from heat; stir in cream and sea salt.
- Transfer to heatproof bowl, cover and refrigerate about an hour; the consistency should be similar to room-temperature butter. Check often – you do not want it to turn solid.
- In mixer with paddle attachment beat chilled remaining butter and cream cheese until smooth and creamy.
- Add burnt sugar.
- Add powdered sugar, 1/2 c at a time until desired consistency is reached.
- Beat until fluffy and well mixed.

### **Candied Bacon:**

- Heat oven to 325°.
- Mix syrup and brown sugar.
- Line baking sheet with parchment paper
- Lay bacon strips on parchment paper.
- Brush both sides of bacon with syrup mixture.
- Bake for 20 min.
- Check bacon; if not crispy continue cooking, checking often, until desired crispness reached.
- Transfer to wire rack to cool.
- Cut each strip into thin slivers or finely chop.

### **Assembly:**

- Frost cupcakes.
- Garnish with candied bacon.