

SIMNEL CUPCAKES

(adapted from several sources)

100 marzipan
150g butter, softened
75g brown sugar
75g granulated sugar
2 large eggs, whisked
150g full-fat yoghurt
zest of 1 Lemon
170g mixed dried fruits
175g all-purpose flour
2 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp salt

To decorate

200g marzipan
agave nectar to brush

Start by preparing the thin layer of marzipan that goes in the middle of the cupcakes. Divide the 100g in 12 little portions (about 8g each). Flatten them with your hands and stretch as a round that will fit inside your cupcakes. Mix the flour with baking powder and salt, reserve.

Heat the oven to 375F. Place paper liners inside the cupcake pan. Beat together the butter, sugars and lemon zest, until pale and light. Add the 2 eggs, slowly, whisking the batter well after each addition. Add the yoghurt, continue whisking. Add the flour mixture, incorporate gently, then add the dried fruit, folding until homogeneously mixed in.

Place a little cake batter in each cupcake liner, place the thin round of marzipan on top, press gently into the batter. Fill the cupcakes with more batter until 3/4 full. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, until golden and a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out slightly moist, with some crumbs attached. Allow the cupcakes to cool for 5 minutes, then remove to a cooling rack.

When the cupcakes are cold, make the topping: roll out the fondant and cut rounds to cover the top. Make the layer as thin as possible. Use trimmings to make little balls. Attach the layer of marzipan to the cake by brushing a tiny amount of agave nectar on the cupcake, and pressing the marzipan over it. Place the little ball on top, using some agave nectar to help glue it in place. Run the cupcakes under a broiler to give some color to the marzipan. Pay close attention, because it goes from golden to burn a matter of seconds!