

Claire's Spooky Whoopie Pies

from In Our Grandmothers' Kitchens

Ingredients:

for the pies:

1/2 cup (1 stick) sweet butter at room temperature
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1-1/2 teaspoons baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 cups flour
5 tablespoons cocoa
1 cup milk

for the filling:

1 cup (2 sticks) sweet butter at room temperature
confectioner's sugar as necessary to achieve desired consistency (I used about 2-1/2 cups)
2 teaspoons vanilla
milk or cream if necessary to stir

for assembly:

candies and/or sprinkles if desired

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Grease 3 nonstick baking sheets. (You may use silicone or parchment, but I found that these particular cookies stick less on greased sheets.)

In a large bowl cream the butter and sugar until they are creamy. Beat in the egg, the soda and salt, and the vanilla.

In another bowl combine the flour and cocoa. Add this mixture to the butter mixture, alternating with the milk. Combine just until smooth.

Drop tablespoons of the dough onto your cookie sheets 2 inches apart. (I used a little cookie scoop I got from King Arthur Flour to make the cookies as uniform as possible.)

Bake the cookies until they are firm when lightly touched (about 10 minutes).

Remove the cookies from the sheets as quickly as you can and put them on racks to cool completely.

When the cookies are cool make your filling. Beat the butter until it is soft; then add the confectioner's sugar a little at a time. It will be a bit lumpy, but the vanilla should make everything adhere nicely. If it doesn't, stir in a small amount of milk or cream.

Spread a small amount of filling on the bottom of one cookie and top it with another cookie to make a little sandwich. Continue until all of your sandwiches are complete.

For extra Halloween fun, pipe a little filling on top of some of the whoopee pies in a spider web pattern and put a little candy spider in the web. I gave up on this project fairly quickly because I'm hopeless at making things like spider webs. You could also spread a little filling on top of some of the pies. Or just enjoy the chocolaty goodness without any adornment.

Makes about 20 pies.