

The DISH



VICKI RASMUSSEN

FOOD COLUMNIST
vickir@windomnews.com

This week I'll be featuring the food holiday National Muffin Day, which happens this week. Since it's been awhile since I've featured these delicious treats that work for breakfast, snacks or even dessert, I thought I'd share a few yummy ones. I have to admit I don't make muffins very often because I just don't eat a lot of bread/carbs. But who doesn't love the smell of fresh, baked muffins coming right out of the oven? Guess I'll be finding my muffin tins and putting them to use!

Monkey Muffins

2 cups all-purpose flour
2 cups whole wheat flour
1 cup granulated sugar
1½ Tbsp. baking powder
1 tsp. salt
2 cups milk
2 tsp. vanilla extract
2 eggs
1 cup canola oil
2 ripe bananas, mashed
¾ cup sweetened coconut
1 cup chocolate chips, plus more for sprinkling

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line your baking tins.

Combine the first 5 ingredients (flours, baking powder, sugar, salt) set aside. Mix egg, oil, vanilla and milk in mixer bowl with paddle attachment. Add banana, mix slowly to not splash. Add dry mixture, mix until combined. Add chocolate chips.

Scoop about 2 tablespoons of batter into each baking cup. Sprinkle with coconut and more chocolate chips. Bake 20 minutes or when your toothpick test is clean. Cool on wire rack.

Pecan Pie Muffins

1 cup packed light brown sugar
½ cup all-purpose flour
2 cups chopped pecans
2/3 cup butter, softened
2 eggs, beaten

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease mini or regular muffin cups generously. Grease them well or they will stick.

In medium bowl, stir together brown sugar, flour and pecans. In a separate bowl, beat the butter and eggs together. Stir in dry ingredients just until combined.

Spoon batter into muffin cups about two-thirds full. Bake for 12-13 minutes for mini muffins or 15-17 minutes for regular size muffins. Run a knife around the edge of each muffin and pop it out.

Breakfast Muffins

20 oz. bag shredded hash browns
1 Tbsp. olive oil
1 tsp. sea salt
½ tsp. ground black pepper
2 cups Fiesta blend cheese, divided use
12 oz. pkg. bacon, cooked and crumbled into bite-sized pieces
9 extra large eggs, divided use
½ cup red bell pepper, diced
½ cup orange bell pepper, diced
Parsley
½ cup 2% milk or cream

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray 24 muffin tins with cooking spray.

Combine one egg with hash browns, olive oil, 1 cup cheese and half each of the salt and pepper. Divide mixture evenly between 24 muffin tins and press down. Sprinkle each with parsley. Bake at 400 degrees about 10-15 minutes or until potatoes are crispy.

Meanwhile, whisk remaining 8 eggs in a large mixing bowl. Add remaining 1 cup cheese, remaining salt and pepper, cooked bacon, red and orange bell peppers and milk. Stir to combine.

Pour egg-bacon mixture evenly over each potato muffin crust. Sprinkle with additional salt, pepper and parsley if desired. Bake an additional 10-15 minutes or until eggs are cooked through. Allow muffins to cool in muffin tins about 5 minutes before removing. Serve hot or lukewarm.

Cheesy Garlic Bread Muffins

6 Tbsp. butter, melted
5 cloves garlic, pressed or finely minced, divided
½ cup sour cream
4 large eggs
1 tsp. salt
3 cups almond flour
2 tsp. baking powder
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
¼ cup chopped parsley
4 oz. shredded mozzarella
Sea salt for sprinkling

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees and grease a standard size, non-stick muffin tin very well. Set the muffin tin on a large rimmed baking sheet (to catch the drips). Combine the melted butter and 3 cloves of the garlic. Set aside.

In a high-powered blender or food processor, combine the sour cream, eggs, remaining garlic and salt. Process until well combined. Add the almond flour, baking powder, cheese and parsley and process again until smooth.

Divide half of the batter between the prepared muffin cups and use a spoon to make a small well in the center of each. Divide the shredded mozzarella between the muffins, pressing into the wells. Drizzle with about 1 tsp. of the garlic butter mixture. Divide the remaining batter between each muffin cup, make sure to cover the cheese as best you can. Brush the tops with the remaining garlic butter and sprinkle with sea salt.

Bake 25 minutes or so, until tops are golden brown and just firm to the touch. These will drip a lot of oil as they bake and it may spill over the sides a bit (hence the

baking sheet underneath to save your oven). Remove and let cool 10 minutes before serving. They are fantastic still warm from the oven with the cheese still gooey. They are great cooled, too — and warm up nicely.

Caramel Apple Buttermilk Muffins

STREUSEL TOPPING:

1 Tbsp. cold butter
1/3 cup firmly packed brown sugar
½ tsp. ground cinnamon
½ cup finely chopped walnuts

MUFFINS:

½ cup vegetable oil
1-1/3 cup packed brown sugar
1 egg
2 tsp. vanilla extract
1 cup buttermilk
2½ cups all-purpose flour — you may need a bit more, if the batter is too wet
¼ tsp. salt
2½ tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. baking soda
1¼ cups coarsely chopped peeled* apple
CAMEL ICING:
2 Tbsp. butter
¼ cup brown sugar
2 Tbsp. milk
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 cup powdered sugar

In a bowl, combine all the streusel topping ingredients. With your fingers, combine until you have a crumbly mixture. Set aside.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees and line 16 muffin cups with paper liners.

In a bowl, mix together the dry ingredients (flour, salt, baking powder and baking soda); set aside. In another bowl, combine the oil, brown sugar and egg. Once combined, stir in the buttermilk and vanilla extract.

Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and mix well. Gently mix in the apple*. If the batter seems to thin, add a tiny bit more flour. The batter should be fairly stiff. Spoon the batter into the muffin cups dividing it equally. Divide the streusel topping equally among the muffins.

Lower the temperature to 350 degrees and bake for 20-25 minutes. When the muffins are done, they will spring back when lightly pressed. Otherwise, test the muffins by inserting a toothpick. Let the muffins cool in the pan for 10 minutes and then remove them and let cool for 15-20 minutes on a wire rack before drizzling with caramel icing.

While muffins are baking, prepare drizzle mixture. Combine brown sugar, butter and milk in a medium size microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on high for 30 seconds, stir well and return to microwave for 15 seconds. Add vanilla. While stirring, add powdered sugar and mix until smooth and creamy. Mixture should drizzle easily, but should not be super "runny." Add a bit more milk or powdered sugar to adjust thickness. Drizzle over cooled muffins.

Recipe Notes: * — Leave about ½ cup of the apple unpeeled and reserve it. Stick these pieces into the batter after filling the muffin tins. It give the muffins a pretty look.