



Canada Day potluck barbecues

Avoid the boring, go for the unusual

Happy Canada Day! Today's recipe for stuffed cupcakes is great any time of the year—a bit sweet for most adults, but the kids will love them! You can do them up for your special occasion as we've shown here in the photo (my kids made these ones) or you can just cover them with whipped cream and stick an Oreo cookie on top for decoration.

Canada Day is a great day for potluck barbecues. So, what are you going to bring? I find at potluck events that people are stuck for new and innovative ideas—they often bring the same old thing. Here are a few ideas that might help you:

Devilled eggs— old fashioned, yes, but delicious and hugely popular? YES!

Bruschetta— everyone loves bruschetta. Mix up some of the tomato topping and take it along in one dish. Then cut up a baguette, butter each slice or brush with olive oil and then bring it along. When you get to your destination, you can pop the bread slices on the barbecue and poof, instant hors d'oeuvres!

Pearl bocconcini, fresh basil leaf and grape tomato on a toothpick in a pool of balsamic vinegar— yummy and healthy hors d'oeuvres.

Puff pastry straws— roll out puff pastry and cut into thin strips, sprinkle with your favourite cheese and then bake at 400 degrees for approximately 10-15 minutes until golden brown and puffed. Serve hot, warm or cold.

Fruit kebobs— skewer up chunks of

your favourite fruit. Add a marshmallow on there somewhere if kids will be present, then put a dish of chocolate sauce or fruit flavoured yogurt on the tray ... easy, healthy and yummy!

Baked potato bar— bring along pre-baked potatoes so they only need to be warmed, and bring along a variety of toppings, all ready to go, such as sour cream, chives, bacon, cheese, cooked broccoli, chili, pesto sauce, butter, sliced green onions and more!

Tortilla pinwheels— spread your favourite filling on a soft flour tortilla,

then roll it up, and refrigerate. Bring to the party and slice into pinwheels once you arrive. Cream cheese mixed with pesto sauce and roasted red pepper slices down the middle or sour cream and grated Asiago cheese with diced black olives and shredded lettuce or use your imagination!

Baked beans— what a delicious complement to anything on the grill!

Have fun and keep cooking!

(Lori and Gerry can be reached at whatscookin@independentfreepress.com)

Lori Gysel & Gerry Kentner



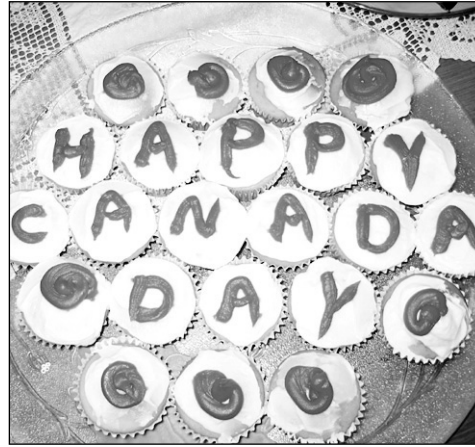
Stuffed Canada Day Cupcakes

Makes about 24 cupcakes
Ingredients

- 1 pkg chocolate cake mix
- 1/2 cup cream cheese, softened
- 2 tbsp raspberry or strawberry jam
- 1 egg
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 24 Oreo cookies
- coloured icings (or you can ice with Cool Whip if you prefer)

Method

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
Prepare cake mix according to package instructions and set aside.
In a small mixing bowl, whisk together



the softened cream cheese, jam, 1 egg, 1 tbsp sugar.

Scoop cake batter into paper lined muffin tins until each paper is a little less than half full of the batter.

Top the batter with about one half a tbsp of the cream cheese mixture.

Top the cream cheese mixture with 1 Oreo cookie. Cover the cookies with the remaining cake batter.

Bake approximately 15-20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the centre of a cupcake comes out clean. Cool 5 minutes and then transfer the cupcakes to a wire cooling rack.

Once cupcakes are cool, ice them with cool whip or icing, whichever you prefer, then you can decorate them up for Canada Day.

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