

RECIPE

Tulips and romance for my Valentine...

I have never been the woo-me-with-roses-and-jewellery sort, but I do love seeing the effort people put into make this day special for their partners.

My brother, my opposite in so many ways, would go to some serious lengths in making Valentine's Day count for his wife. A heart-shaped cork sheet box filled with crafted chocolate inside and covered with red roses? Oh yes! He is one for the books.



With managing a private cake studio comes many personalised requests of edible declarations of love, and this year, I decided to partner up with friends to bring my clients 'My Big Box of Love'!

The Flourist and Stellar join hands to bring a box that is a little bit crafty and a bit sweet, perfect for surprising your lover with this thoughtful mash up delivered to his/her doorstep with a personalised note by none other than Cupid's peon, 'Go! Fetch'!

Our box includes two cupcakes, two macarons, a bag of M&Ms, a fabric notebook, a hand poured scented candle, and a puzzle card that says "You're the apple of my eye!". Take it a step further and add a flower bouquet to this mix.

To pre-order 'My Big Box of Love', contact GO! Fetch, Stellar or The Flourist on either Facebook or Instagram.

If that is not enough, and you feel like it needs your personal touch, then here are some desserts that are sure to catch his/her eye.

Happy Baking!

YOU GOT ME HEAD OVER HEELS BABY!

Lemon vanilla cake

Ingredients

1½ flour, sifted
1½ baking powder
½ cup butter, 1 cup sugar
2 eggs at room temperature
½ tsp vanilla extract, ½ cup whole milk
½ tsp apple cider vinegar
Grated rind of 1 lemon
Preheat oven to 180° C. Grease and line three 6" pans.

Method

Measure the milk and add the vinegar and leave aside for 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, beat the butter and the sugar on a stand mixer or a handheld electric whisk. Add eggs one by one and mix well. Add the vanilla extract. Slowly add the milk mixture to the egg mixture. Sieve the flour twice and add the baking powder. Add this to the egg and milk mix bit by bit until it is mixed together. Add the grated lemon rind. Divide and pour into three pans and bake for 20-25 minutes until an inserted skewer comes out clean.

For the cream cheese filling —

8 oz cream cheese
440g icing sugar
52g butter

Bring cream cheese to room temperature and whisk on stand mixer with the paddle handle, or with a handheld electric whisk. Add the icing sugar and sugar to finish.

For the butter cream —

8oz butter at room temperature
2 cups icing sugar
1 tbsp vanilla extract
1-2 tbsp whole milk

Whisk butter and icing sugar together. Add the vanilla. Add the milk bit by bit. Incorporate well and use as desired.

For the décor —

1 Barbie or Ken doll
Tulips or whichever flower is in season

Slice cake layers in half. Sandwich layers with cream cheese frosting. The cake can be made very tall using all six layers or a decent height using three layers. Do a crumb coat with the buttercream. Chill for 20 minutes and do another buttercream coat.

Take off the legs of the Barbie or Ken doll and place them in the middle of the cake firmly. Pipe around the doll and do the décor as desired. Chill and it is ready to be served to your sweetheart.

Note —

Break up cake layers and mash up with the buttercream and shape them into ovals or use a silicone mold. Chill until the red mirror glaze is ready.

RED MIRROR GLAZE

Ingredients

100g water
75g sugar, 75g cream
100g white chocolate
50g glucose syrup
8.5g gelatine, bloomed*
Red food colour

Method

Bring the water, sugar, cream, food colour, glucose syrup and white chocolate to boil in a saucepan. Cook for five minutes until melted and thickened and cool for minute. Bloom the gelatine by adding 2 tbsp of lukewarm water and set aside for 5 minutes. Add the bloomed gelatine and sieve.

To assemble, place the chilled cakes on a wire rack with a tray underneath. Pour the mirror glaze on each and let it set. Use a knife to remove them and place on boards/trays. Decorate with flowers, crumb, dehydrated fruit and coconut shards.

MACARON NEST

Makes approximately 60 macaron shells

Ingredients

100g aged egg whites*
6 tbsp white sugar, 100g almond meal
200g icing sugar
Gel food colour of choice

Method

Whisk egg whites on a stand mixer with the whisk paddle or with a handheld electric whisk. Add the sugar, one tablespoon at a time, and beat until it reaches stiff peaks.

Measure out the almond meal and the icing sugar and grind them together in a blender until well combined. Add this dry mix to the stiff egg whites. Add the gel food colour. Slowly starting folding in the dry with the whites until you reach a ribbon stage - basically where the mixture is not runny but not too stiff either. Should take 50-60 folds.

Pour mixture into a piping bag and pipe out macarons — macaron sheets are also available now! Dry the shells in a cool, dry room for 4-6 hours until hard to the touch. Turn on the oven to 135 C. Bake each batch for 17-18 minutes. When cooled store in ziplock bags and pop in the freezer. They are good to go for the next one month!

Macarons need to be piped and filled on the day of your event so just bring out the ones you need, match shells for the same sizes and pipe in a dollop of buttercream on one shell and finish with its partnered shell!

Take any old box and fill with confetti paper or shredded paper. Place macarons on top of each other and make a nest!

*Separate egg white and pour in a day container and leave in fridge to 'age' for over 24 hours before using them for this recipe!

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

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