THINK SMALL
TIP 5

These batters are goofproof, so feel free to experiment with spices or extracts for other flavor combos.

Chocolate espresso cakes

MAKES 12 | 1¾ HOURS

For this recipe, we used ¾-cup paper baking molds for panettone *(by Novacart; $0.25 each; surlatable.com)*.

1½ cups sugar
1 cup buttermilk
½ cup brewed coffee, cooled
¾ cup vegetable oil
2 large eggs, at room temperature
½ tsp. salt
1 tsp. vanilla extract
2 cups flour
About ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
¼ cup espresso powder
2 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. baking powder
6 oz. semisweet chocolate chunks
4 oz. bittersweet chocolate, chopped
½ cup whipping cream
Coffee beans for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 350°. In a bowl with a mixer, beat sugar, buttermilk, coffee, oil, eggs, salt, and vanilla on medium speed until well blended.

2. Whisk together flour, ½ cup cocoa powder, espresso powder, baking soda, and baking powder in a bowl to blend. Gradually add to wet mixture; beat on medium speed until smooth, scraping down sides as necessary. Stir in semisweet chocolate chunks.

3. Set baking molds on a rimmed baking pan and fill each about two-thirds full. Bake until a toothpick inserted in centers (avoid chocolate chunks) comes out clean, about 27 minutes. Cool cakes completely on a rack.

4. Melt bittersweet chocolate with cream in a small saucepan over very low heat and stir with a rubber spatula until smooth and blended. Remove from heat and let cool until thick but still spreadable, about 40 minutes. Spread on cakes. Top each cake with a few coffee beans and dust with cocoa. Let frosting firm up completely before serving, at least 30 minutes.

PER CAKE 480 CAL., 50% (241 CAL.) FROM FAT; 6.2 G PROTEIN; 27 G FAT (8.6 G SAT.); 59 G CARBO (2.8 G FIBER); 385 MG SODIUM; 50 MG CHOL.

Limoncello pine nut upside down cakes

MAKES 12 | ABOUT 1¼ HOURS

You'll need 12 ramekins (6-oz. capacity).

Cooking-oil spray
½ cup packed light brown sugar
1 cup plus 6 tbsp. granulated sugar, divided
12 thin lemon slices (from about 1½ lemons), seeded
6 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
Zest of 1 lemon
2 tbsp. lemon juice
½ tsp. vanilla extract
¼ tsp. salt
2 eggs, at room temperature
¼ cup limoncello (lemon liqueur)
1¼ cups flour
¼ cup cornmeal
1 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. baking soda
6 tbsp. toasted pine nuts

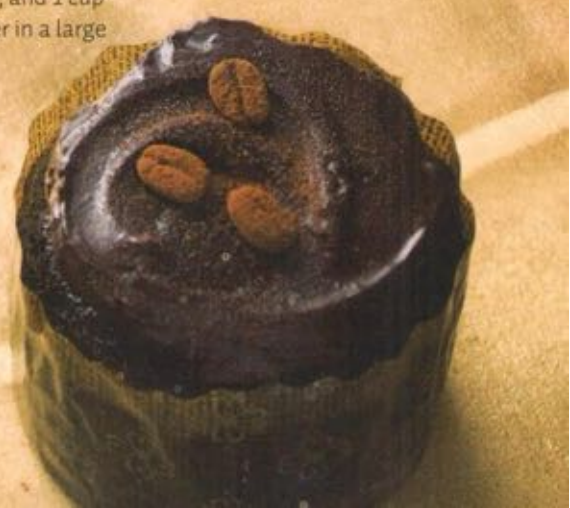
1. Preheat oven to 350°. Spray ramekins with cooking spray. Cut 12 parchment paper circles to fit ramekins; set 1 in each.

2. Bring brown sugar, ½ cup granulated sugar, and 1 cup water to a simmer in a large frying pan and cook until reduced slightly and sugar has dissolved, about 5 minutes. Turn off heat and submerge lemon slices in syrup. Let sit, turning occasionally, until rind and pith have begun to turn translucent, 20 to 30 minutes.

3. Beat oil, lemon zest and juice, vanilla, salt, eggs, remaining sugar, and limoncello in a bowl with a mixer on medium speed until well blended.

4. Whisk together flour, cornmeal, baking powder, and baking soda in a medium bowl. Gradually add to wet mixture and beat on medium speed until just blended. Stir in pine nuts.

5. Pour 1 tbsp. syrup from lemon slices into each ramekin. Using tongs, remove lemon slices from syrup and put one in each ramekin; reserve remaining syrup. Evenly divide batter among ramekins and set on a rimmed baking pan.

6. Bake until a toothpick inserted in centers comes out clean, about 25 minutes. Let cool on a rack 10 minutes, then run a small, thin knife or spatula between cakes and ramekin edges and invert cakes onto plates or a platter. Remove parchment from cakes and brush with more syrup if you like.

PER CAKE 294 CAL., 32% (95 CAL.) FROM FAT; 3.3 G PROTEIN; 11 G FAT (1.5 G SAT.); 48 G CARBO (0.9 G FIBER); 157 MG SODIUM; 35 MG CHOL. ■