

# Cupcake Easter Baskets

*Compliments of Chef Richard's Kitchen*

12 – 20 Cupcakes

## Cupcake:

1 store-bought cake mix (preferably white or yellow, but it's strictly your choice)

## Frosting:

$\frac{3}{4}$  C butter, softened (1  $\frac{1}{2}$  sticks)  
6 oz cream cheese, softened  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
3 C confectioners sugar

## Toppings:

1 tsp water  
3 – 4 drops green food coloring  
1  $\frac{1}{2}$  C sweetened shredded coconut  
Licorice twists (For handles. I used SweetTarts ropes.)  
Chocolate hard coated candy eggs  
(I used Cadbury mini-eggs)



Place butter sticks and cream cheese at room temperature to allow them to soften.

Preheat oven according to mix manufacturer's instructions. (Usually 350° F)

Prepare cake mix as per cooking instructions. They usually call for 1 C water,  $\frac{1}{3}$  C oil and 3 eggs. Mix well with an electric mixer or even by hand. Place cupcake wrappers in muffin pan. Put about 3 Tbsp cake batter in each. Do not overfill. Place cupcakes in oven and bake for about 13 – 15 minutes. Use the toothpick test to be sure cupcakes are done. Insert a toothpick into cupcake. If it comes out clean, the cupcake is done. If there is any of the batter clinging to the toothpick, return to oven for a few more minutes. Do not rely on time. When done, remove cupcakes from oven and allow to cool.

In small glass cup, mix 1 tsp water and 3 – 4 drops of green food coloring. Place shredded coconut in a glass bowl. Add the food coloring mixture and stir until coconut is colored. Set aside.

Place the cream cheese and butter in bowl and mix thoroughly. Add vanilla and 1 C of the sugar. Mix until incorporated. Add another 1 C sugar and mix again. Add last 1C sugar and beat until frosting has a fine texture and is creamy.

Place frosting on top of each cupcake. Sprinkle some of the green coconut shreds and 2 – 3 eggs on top. Bend the candy sticks and press them into the cupcake on opposite sides. You might want to use a kebab stick to make the holes first. If the candy sticks seem dry or hard, place the center of them in boiling water for a few seconds until they become pliable. Then bend and place into cupcake. If the sticks are too big in diameter, use a sharp knife to cut them in half lengthwise.