SPICED APPLE CUPCAKES WITH CINNAMON-CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

By: Simply Creative Chef Rob Scott

Ingredients: Yields 12 cupcakes

For the Cupcakes:
1 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
¼ teaspoon ground ginger
¼ cup unsalted butter, at room temperature
1 cup granulated sugar
1 egg, at room temperature
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
¼ cup & 2 tablespoons buttermilk, at room temperature
1 ½ cups shredded Gala apples, about 2 medium apples peeled

For the Cinnamon-Cream Cheese Frosting:
1 cup unsalted butter, at room temperature
8 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
2 ½ teaspoons vanilla extract
Pinch of salt
1 ½ cups powdered sugar
1 ½ teaspoons ground cinnamon

Directions:

- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F
- Line a standard muffin pan with paper liners
- In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, and ginger and set aside
- Using an electric mixer on medium speed, beat the butter until soft and creamy, about 2 minutes
- Add the granulated sugar and beat until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes, stopping to scrape the bowl as needed
- Add the egg and vanilla extract and beat until completely combined, about 1 minute
- Reduce the mixer speed to low and beat in half of the flour mixture until mostly combined, then pour in the buttermilk, then add the remaining flour mixture

- Mix until just barely combined
- Use a rubber spatula to scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl and fold in the shredded apple
- Divide the batter between the 12 muffin cups and bake until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, about 20-25 minutes
- Remove from the oven and cool for 5 minutes, then remove the cupcakes from the pan and place on a wire rack to cool completely
- Make the frosting: with an electric mixer on medium-high speed, beat the butter until fluffy, 2-3 minutes
- Add the cream cheese, vanilla, and salt and continue to beat for an additional 2 minutes, scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed
- Add the ground cinnamon, mix until it is incorporated, then increase the mixer speed to medium-high and beat until light and fluffy, 1-2 minutes
- Frost the tops of the cupcakes with a pastry bag or offset spatula
- The cupcakes can stay at room temperature for a few hours, but should be refrigerated in an airtight container for longer-term storage up to 4 days
- bring the cupcakes to room temperature before serving