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Afterschool Treats: Ho Hos Not Just for Holidays!

By Susie Iventosch



Homemade mascarpone-filled Ho Hos Photos Susie Iventosch

After the bankruptcy of Hostess last November, many thought that Ho Hos were to become a delicacy of the past. But, thanks to a joint venture between Apollo Global Management and C. Dean Metropoulous & Co., several popular Hostess treats were restocked on grocers' shelves in July. While I was more of a Snowball fan, being a coconut-marshmallow kind of kid, it never hurt my feelings when my mom carefully tucked a Ho Ho in my lunch bag or had a box of them on the counter for after-school treats.

Because I love to bake, we deprived our kids of Ho Hos, which never made it into their school lunches. In fact, I would not really have ever considered eating one again, until one day at a bakery I saw homemade Ho Hos made with mascarpone filling. Now, that really caught my attention, so I purchased one and devoured it on the way home! This experience gave me the great idea of making them myself, only using the tiramisu mascarpone made with coffee rather than plain mascarpone.

Your kids will really love it when they not only find a Ho Ho in their lunch pail, but one made with loving care by mom (or dad)! Or, maybe they will trade or sell them to their friends, as I later discovered that my older son had a habit of doing! Either way, someone will have a very tasty lunch treat!

Homemade Mascarpone-Filled Ho Hos

By Susie Iventosch

(Makes 16)

Chocolate Cake

Note: I used a flourless chocolate cake that I found on Epicurious for the cake part, but you can use any cake that works for a chocolate roll.

INGREDIENTS

6 ounces bittersweet chocolate chips
 3 tablespoons water
 6 large eggs, separated and at room temperature
 2/3 cup granulated sugar, divided in half
 1/4 teaspoon salt

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease an 11x17 jelly roll pan and then line with parchment. Also grease, or spray the parchment paper to make lifting the cake easier.

Melt chocolate and water. Set aside just until cooled. Meanwhile, beat egg whites until soft peaks form. Add 1/3 cup sugar and continue to beat until it holds stiff peaks. Set aside.

In a separate bowl, beat egg yolks with sugar and salt until thick and lemon colored. Fold cooled chocolate into egg yolks until well-blended. Then gently fold 1/3 of egg whites at a time into chocolate mixture until well-blended.

Pour batter into prepared pan and bake for approximately 15 minutes, or until cake is slightly puffed and top is dry to the touch. Remove from oven and place two slightly damp paper towels on top of cake for five minutes. Remove towels, loosen edges with a knife and allow cake to cool completely.

When cool, cut cake into rectangles (about 2 3/4 inches by 4 1/4 inch) and with a flat spatula lift cake rectangles from parchment paper. One at a time, lay each piece on a flat surface and spread filling over top. Starting at a narrow end, roll into a little log. If the cake begins to crumble a bit, don't worry, just pat into filling and keep on rolling.

Cover each little cake with chocolate ganache and refrigerate for at least two hours before serving. This allows the ganache to harden and the rolls to become a little more firm.

Serve with a sifting of cocoa powder and a dollop of whipped cream.

Mascarpone filling

8 ounces Tiramisu Mascarpone, softened to room temperature (BelGioioso makes this and it can be found in the specialty cheese section usually)

1 cup heavy cream

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

2 tablespoons powdered sugar

2 tablespoons cocoa powder

Beat heavy cream with electric beaters until stiff. Fold in vanilla. In another bowl, blend mascarpone with powdered sugar and cocoa powder with a wooden spoon and fold in whipped cream mixture until blended.

Ganache

12 ounces bittersweet chocolate

1/2-3/4 cup heavy cream

In a small saucepot melt chocolate. Blend in cream until smooth and pourable.

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