

GRADUATION GUIDE

WHAT'S INSIDE

**RECIPES FOR AT-HOME
GRAD PARTIES**

**FREE CLASS OF 2020
DOWNLOADABLE BANNER**

DIY DIPLOMA HAT CUPCAKES

CRANBERRY PISTACHIO BISCOTTI BITES

- 3/4 cup white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2/4 cup olive oil
- 2 tsp orange zest
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 cups all purpose flour
- 1/2 cup dried sweetened cranberries
- 1/2 cup chopped pistachios
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt

PLUS:

- 1 egg white
- 2 tbsp white sugar

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In a large bowl, beat sugar and eggs until light and fluffy. Add olive oil, orange zest and vanilla extract.
3. In another bowl, combine flour, cranberries, pistachios, baking soda and salt. Slowly incorporate into sugar mixture.
4. Divide dough into quarters, and on a lightly floured surface, roll each quarter into a log about 15 inches long.
5. Place logs on parchment lined baking sheets, and brush with egg white. Lightly sprinkle with sugar, and bake for 20 minutes.
6. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes.
7. Transfer to cutting board, and using a serrated knife, cut diagonally into 1/2 inch thick slices.
8. Stand slices upright on the same pans, and bake until golden, about 15 minutes more.
9. Transfer to racks and let cool.

NOJITOS (ALCOHOL-FREE MOJITOS)

***VEGAN/GF**

- 5 limes, juiced
 - 4 tbsp white sugar
 - 1 handful fresh mint
 - 4 cups of soda water, cold
1. Mix the lime juice with the sugar, and stir until smooth.
 2. Wash the mint, separate the leaves from the stems, and roll the leaves tightly. Using a sharp knife, cut thin strips, and stir into the lime juice.
 3. Pour over soda water, and serve over ice.

CHILLED CILANTRO SOUP SHOOTERS

***VEGAN/GF**

- 1/4 jalapeno, seeded and finely diced
 - 1 zucchini, diced
 - 2 russet potatoes, peeled and diced
 - 1 litre vegetable stock
 - 1 small white onion or leek, finely diced
 - 4 green onions, finely diced
 - 3 cloves garlic, shredded
 - 2 tbsp olive oil
 - 3 bunches cilantro, roots removed
 - 1/3 cup soy yogurt, optional
 - Salt and pepper to taste
1. In a pot, heat oil over medium heat. Cook the jalapeno, onion, garlic, and green onions until soft and tender. Add zucchini and potatoes, and cook for 2 minutes. Add vegetable stock and bring to a boil.
 2. Turn heat down to a simmer, and let simmer for 30 minutes or until vegetables are very soft.
 3. Add cilantro (saving a small handful for garnishing later), and using an immersion blender, puree the broth. (If you don't have an immersion blender, you can let it cool and use a regular blender or food processor. Be careful to leave space for the steam to escape!).

CHILLED CILANTRO SOUP SHOOTERS CONT'D

4. Chill, and add salt and pepper to taste. If using soy yogurt, swirl in right before serving for an elevated look.
5. Serve in tall glasses, with cilantro garnish. Makes about 1L of soup.

CHICKEN LETTUCE CUPS

***GF**

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 red onion, finely diced
- 2 carrots, shredded
- 6 cloves garlic, shredded
- 1 tbsp ginger, shredded
- 1 jalapeno, finely minced
- 1 tsp honey
- 2 tbsp hoisin
- 3 tbsp light soy sauce
- 1 1/2 cups white vinegar
- 450 g ground chicken
- 2 heads Boston lettuce, washed and leaves separated

Green onions to taste, finely chopped
Cilantro, to taste, finely chopped

1. Mix honey, hoisin, soy sauce, and vinegar in a small bowl and set aside.
2. Heat half oil in a frying pan over medium high heat. Cook onions and carrots until starting to soften, about 2 minutes. Add garlic, ginger, and peppers, and stir.
3. Push vegetables to the side of the pan, and add remaining oil and chicken. As you cook the chicken, break up with a spoon until crumbled and well-cooked, about 4 minutes.
4. Mix together with the vegetables, and sauce mixture, and cook until well combined. Remove from heat, and divide mixture into lettuce cups. Add green onions and cilantro as garnish, and serve warm.

AVOCADO PESTO CROSTINI

***VEGETARIAN**

Pesto:

- 1 very ripe avocado
- 2 big handfuls fresh basil
- 1/2 cup pine nuts
- 1/4 cup grana padano cheese
- 1 clove garlic
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- Hot pepper flakes to taste
- Hot vegetable broth, about 1/3 cup

- 1 baguette
- 6 sundried tomatoes, sliced thinly
- Salt, to taste
- Olive oil, to taste
- 1 cup Mozzarella cheese, optional

1. Put first 6 ingredients together in a blender or food processor. Blend on high for about a minute. Slowly add hot vegetable broth, 2 tbsp at a time, and continue to blend until a smooth consistency is reached.
2. Slice baguette in 1/2 inch diagonal pieces. Brush with olive oil, and sprinkle with salt. Place on baking pan, and broil until brown, about 2 minutes per side.
3. Remove from oven, and spread pesto evenly over crostini. Cover with mozzarella cheese, if using, and 1 slice of sundried tomato. Put back into oven on broil until cheese is bubbling and brown, about 3 minutes. Remove from oven and serve hot.

TIP: Every oven is different, especially when using broil. Pay close attention to what your food looks like, and less attention on the time! Make in the bbq for a smokier variety.

GRADUATION CUPCAKES

- 2 cups cake flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
- 3/4 cup salted butter, softened
- 1 1/2 cups white sugar
- 3 eggs
- 3 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup half and half cream
- 3/4 cup sour cream

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Combine the flour and baking soda. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl, combine the butter and sugar. Beat until light and fluffy. (A mixer can be used to speed up the process)
4. Beat in the eggs, then slowly add the vanilla, milk and sour cream. Sift the flour mixture into the large bowl, using a spatula to fold it in gently.
5. Line a muffin tin with paper muffin cups. Fill the muffin cups about two-thirds of the way with batter.
6. Bake for about 20 minutes, rotating at the ten minute mark.
7. When the tops of the cupcakes are a golden brown, and a toothpick inserted comes out cleanly, the cupcakes can be taken out of the oven and left on a wire rack to cool. Allow to cool completely before icing.

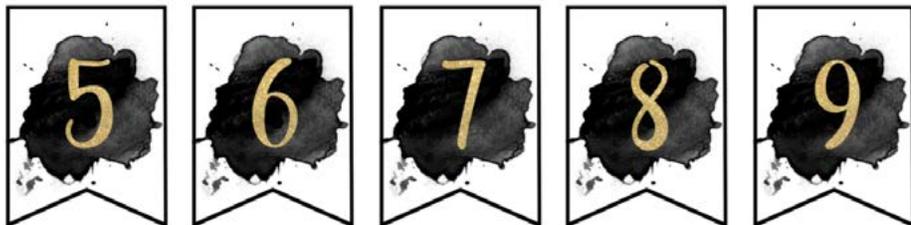
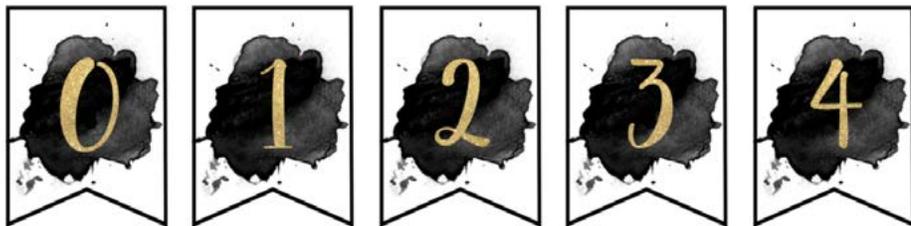
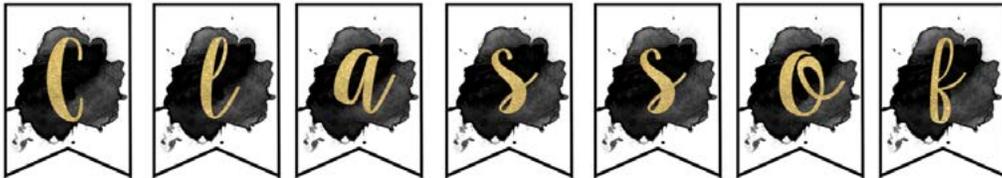
STRAWBERRY BUTTERCREAM ICING

- 1 lb fresh or frozen strawberries
- 3/4 cup butter, softened
- 2 tbsp vanilla extract
- 2 1/2 to 3 cups powdered sugar

1. Wash and cut your strawberries into small chunks.
2. Place them in a saucepan over medium-low heat, and cook until they are soft. Add a tbsp of water if the pan gets too dry. Continue to cook until the strawberries have become a thick liquid.
3. Remove from heat, and sift into a bowl, pushing the strawberry chunks through the sifter.
4. Add butter and vanilla extract, and mix thoroughly.
5. Sift in powdered sugar, one cup at a time, mixing well until icing reaches desired consistency. Allow to fully cook, then stir one final time before icing your cupcakes.



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DIY GRADUATION CUPCAKE TOPPERS WITH THE COCOA CAKERY

STEP 1

You will need:

A square of chocolate

A mini Reese's piece

A piece of licorice

Scissors

A lighter

A cupcake with icing

STEP 2

For a few seconds, hold the lit lighter to the narrower end of the Reese's cup and quickly place it in the middle of the piece of chocolate. So that the chocolate pieces melt to each other. Leave it to set for a few moments before moving it.

STEP 3

Create a tassel with licorice, by cutting down a long piece to approximately 1.5", trim it in half and at a diagonal so that you have a larger piece at the end. Using scissors carefully snip into the larger end to create the tassel. Using a little melted chocolate, attach to the top of the cap. Congratulations your cupcake is now ready to celebrate!



ABOUT THE COCOA CAKERY

With a background in Visual Arts, and a degree in Fine Arts from York University, Christina McKenzie never thought of a career in cakes or baking. But after the birth of her oldest child, and the wonders of watching TV during the day on mat leave, she fell head over heels for the cake world. She tried her hand at it with blind confidence and a lot of YouTube videos. She's built her business on her love of designing beautiful things that are meant to be eaten and remembered for their detail and taste. Her first love is to create cakes that trick the eye, a favourite food or item, and most recently has started taking sugar flowers more seriously. She teaches from her home studio and around the GTA, sharing her love of cake and cookie making. She was also a recent competitor on The Big Bake, a FoodNetwork production. Follow [The Cocoa Cakery](#) on social to see some of her latest sweet creations.