

Mr Nelson's Spicy Muffins

My dear wife taught me to produce these muffins and I regularly produce them for musical evenings with my friends. The quantities below will make 12 good muffins.

Wet stuff

- 2 apples I use either Cox or Braburn approx 200g peeled and very finely diced (I have a machine that chops the apple into very fine chunks). Other varieties will also work.
- 150ml milk – I use semi-skimmed.
- 90ml vegetable oil (not olive oil) I have seen other recipes where melted butter is substituted for the oil.
- 1 large egg beaten

Prepare by beating the egg and adding the milk and the oil and finally stirring in the apple. Once this is all amalgamated put on one side until the dry stuff is ready.

Dry stuff

- 260g plain flour
- 3 tsp baking powder
- 2 tsp mixed spice (I have occasionally increased that to 2.5 tsp)
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 100g granulated sugar

Prepare the dry stuff in a large bowl. I have a sieve in the top of the bowl and add the flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and the mixed spice to the sieve and stir it with a spoon until it has all been through the sieve into the bowl. This makes sure that all the stuff is thoroughly mixed.

Other ingredients

- 110g dried fruit (I often mix raisins, sultanas and walnuts in the ratio 2/3rd dried fruit to 1/3rd nuts.
- Approx 60g of the larger broken walnut pieces as a topping.

Bringing it all together

I have my oven heated to 180°C (fan) or 200°C (conventional) before I bring the dry and wet together as stirring should be quick, thorough and not too much time spent before the muffins are put in the oven – spend too much time and the muffins could be a bit stodgy. I also prepare the 12 hole baking tin with muffin cases ready for filling.

Pour the wet into the dry and stir together with a spoon adding the other ingredients (the dried fruit etc.) as soon as the mixture is together and give it a quick final stir to distribute the fruit. I use a spoon to transfer the mixture to the muffin cases and a fork to control the drop. I fill the cases at least 3/4 full but I try to divide the mixture evenly. The final operation before putting the tray in the oven is to put some broken walnut pieces as a topping on the muffins and pushing them lightly into the top.

I bake the muffins for 25mins and generally this is perfect for my oven but other ovens may need different times.