**Rainbow cupcakes with Buttercream Frosting and Marzipan Bees**

*Ingredients*
1 white cake mix  
Egg whites  
Apple sauce  
Water  
Food Coloring

*Instructions*
1. Following the box instructions, make the cake batter, substituting applesauce for the oil and egg whites for the whole eggs.  
2. Divide the batter into 6 quart size ziplock bags and use gel food coloring to color each bag a different color (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple).  
3. Line 18 standard size muffin cups with liners.  
4. cut a corner of each bag and pipe a tiny amount of each color into each liner, being careful not to over-fill them. Use a tooth pick to swirl the color, if desired.  
5. Bake according to package directions.

**Swiss Meringue Buttercream**  
Makes 5 cups

*Ingredients*
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar  
5 large egg whites, room temperature  
Pinch of salt  
1 pound (4 sticks) unsalted butter, softened, and cut into pieces  
1 ½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract

*Instructions*
1. Place sugar, whites and salt in a heatproof mixer bowl set over a pot of simmering water. Whisk until the sugar dissolves and the mixture registers 160 on a candy thermometer.  
2. Attach bowl to mixer. Whisk on medium speed for 5 minutes. Increase speed to medium-high and whisk until stiff, glossy peaks form, about 6 minutes. Reduce speed to medium, and add butter, 1 piece at a time, whisking well after each addition. Whisk in vanilla. Use immediately, or cover, and refrigerate for up to 3 days. (Bring to room temperature and beat on low speed until smooth before using.)

Courtesy of Martha Stewart Living Magazine, Feb 2009

**Marzipan Bumblebee on Piped Flower**

*Tools & Materials*
2 ounces marzipan per bee  
Yellow and black gel-paste food coloring  
Unblanched almond slices  
Cupcakes
Swiss Meringue Buttercream, tinted the color of your choice
Pastry bag
Small petal pastry tip

Instructions
1. Tint half the marzipan yellow and the other half black, kneading each separately until color is uniform. Roll each into a 1/8-inch-thick log. Cut each log crosswise into 1/8-inch thick pieces. Starting with a black piece and alternating colors, stack 4 pieces, pressing together gently.
2. For head, roll a black piece into a ball and press onto yellow end of stack. For eyes, pinch off 2 tiny yellow pieces, roll into balls, and press onto head. For stinger, shape end into a slight point. For wings, press 1 almond slice into each side of body.
3. Spread a thin layer of buttercream on 1 cupcake. Pipe petals in a circular pattern around edge with buttercream. Pipe another circle inside first, overlapping slightly. Repeat until cupcake is covered. Gently press a bee on frosting.

Courtesy of Martha Stewart Living Magazine, Feb 2009

Basic Buttercream: Alternative frosting
Makes about 4 cups

Ingredients
12 oz (3 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
1 pound confectioners’ sugar, sifted
½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Instructions
1. Beat butter with a mixer on medium high speed until pale and creamy, about 2 minutes. Reduce speed to medium.
2. Add sugar, ½ cup at a time, beating after each addition, about 5 minutes (after every 2 additions, increase speed to high, and beat for 10 seconds, then reduce speed to medium-high). Add vanilla and beat until butter cream is smooth.
3. Use immediately, or cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days. (Bring to room temperature, and beat on low speed until smooth before using.)

Courtesy of Martha Stewart Living Magazine, Feb 2009