

Cocktails with fizz · 25 must-eat dishes
Our foodie gift guide · Winter beers here
Appetizers for cheaters

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Fabulous
vegan
baker girls

Portland's new wave of
pastry geniuses makes sweet magic p50
(and we have the recipes
to prove it p58)

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SCENE

CUPCAKES

BY GRANT BUTLER

From Thanksgiving to New Year's, the holiday season is filled with parties where sweet treats are a must. If you're looking to break out of a bar cookie rut, step up to cupcakes. Order them in bulk for a dessert smorgasbord — or just pick up one for yourself while you're out shopping. Sometimes the best gifts are the ones we give ourselves.

Devil's Food at Bakery Bar

This rising star bakery in inner South-east takes a straight-ahead approach with its Devil's Food cake, which has dark chocolate intensity with subtle hints of espresso. What takes the cupcake to another level is the ultra-light espresso frosting, which rises more than an inch above it all, offering a textural counterpoint to the density of the cake.

1028 S.E. Water Ave., 503-544-8110;
bakerybar.com

Mexican chocolate at Crema Bakery

The chocolate cake may be a bit dense, but the three inches of Mexican chocolate frosting that's piled on top makes it one of the most visually stunning cupcakes around. It's likely to topple over after you take a forkful or two, but gravity doesn't diminish the complexity of the cinnamon overtones that run throughout.

2728 S.E. Ankeny St., 503-234-0206;
cremabakery.com

Downtown Cupcake Brown at Cupcake Jones

For the chocoholic who just can't get enough, there's this moist Devil's Food cupcake that's filled with a sour cream chocolate ganache and topped with fudge icing and dressed up with chocolate shavings. Each bite redefines "intense."

307 N.W. 10th Ave., 503-222-4404;
cupcakejones.net

Pumpkin-spice at Saint Cupcake

Nothing says autumn more than pumpkin, and this cupcake bakery captures its essence with a pumpkin spice cupcake that is loaded with nutmeg and cinnamon, then topped with vanilla cream cheese frosting that's airy and light. Forget pumpkin pie and make these the caper for your holiday feast.

427 N.W. 17th Ave., 503-473-8760;

saintcupcake.com

Also 2307 S.E. Belmont St.,

503-235-0079



Bakery Bar