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## Sweet chocolate cupcakes go upscale

*JUDITH HARRIS SOLOMON*  
*Special to The Detroit News*

For your next special occasion, instead of cake, think cupcakes.

"They allow you to have a plate full of various flavors rather than just one," says guest panelist Irving Tobocman. "And you can have half of one and half of another."

For this tasting, we decided to sample the newest generation of cupcakes, the ones called either "stuffed" or "filled" cupcakes. This type is frosted on top with butter cream frosting and also is filled in the center of the cake, usually with the same butter cream frosting but sometimes with either chocolate ganache or chocolate mousse.

"This style of cupcake is like an upscale dessert," says panelist Christina Suchyta. "But they're still fun like the cupcakes from my childhood."

David Lawrence thinks of filled cupcakes as problem solvers. "With traditional cupcakes, after tasting the frosting off the top, you're left without any frosting in the middle. Here you get cake and butter cream in every wonderful bite."

We tasted filled chocolate cupcakes from six different local bakeries. In the end, the panel was very sweet on the sample from Holiday Market in Royal Oak.

### Tasting results

In a blind tasting, The Detroit News Taste Panel rated the following filled chocolate cupcakes on taste, texture and appearance on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent).

#### **1. Death By Chocolate Filled Cupcakes** (Holiday Market: 1203 S. Main St., Royal Oak, 248-541-1414)

**Average score:** 4.7

**Price:** \$1.49 per cupcake

**Comments:** The best of them all. It's the perfect cupcake. Great! Fabulous! Tastes as rich and special as it looks. This one has the best chocolate punch. I love the glossy chocolate glaze on the top of the frosting. Nice texture ... not too moist and not too dry. Rich and super chocolaty icing.

#### **2. Papa Joe's Gourmet Market Filled Chocolate Cupcake** (Papa Joe's: Birmingham and Rochester Hills)

**Average score:** 4.5

**Price:** \$2.50 per cupcake

**Comments:** An extraordinary cupcake. Beautiful. The filling is full of flavor and it contrasts sharply with the rich chocolate flavor of the cake. Super creamy chocolate mouse filling. Decadent chocolate filling. Not too sweet ... just right.

**3. Sweet & Savory Chocolate Filled Cupcake** (Sweet & Savory Bake Shop: 9 S. Washington, Oxford, 248-628-4210)

**Price:** \$2.25

**Comments:** Pretty! Complex and delicious. Rich cake. Sharp chocolate taste and sweet airy icing. Nice flavor. Tasty. I like the yummy dark chocolate ganache filling. This has multiple chocolate tastes. Velvety frosting. Cake is a bit dry.

**4. Just Baked Stuffed Gourmet Chocolate Cupcake** (Just Baked: Multiple locations)

**Average score:** 4.0

**Price:** \$2.95 per cupcake

**Comments:** The cake is very good; the filling is light, chocolaty and absolutely delicious. Beautiful tan frosting with chocolate sprinkles. The frosting melts in your mouth. The stuffing goes deep into the cake. Full chocolate flavor with perfectly fluffy butter cream. The cake is a bit dry.

**5. Party Cakes Chocolate Filled Cupcake** (Party Cakes: 2670 Coolidge, Berkley, 248-541-2253)

**Average score:** 3.9

**Price:** \$2 per cupcake

**Comments:** Delicious, moist, light and airy. Very moist. Incredibly creamy icing. These look homemade. Nice but different chocolate flavors for both the butter cream frosting and the ganache/ mousse filling.

**6. Cupcake Station Chocolate Filled Cupcake** (Cupcake Station: Birmingham and Ann Arbor)

**Average score:** 3.7

**Price:** \$2.75 per cupcake

**Comments:** The cake is a bit doughy. The cupcake doesn't taste cooked all the way through but the chocolate butter cream frosting has a wow factor ... it's very good. The frosting is delicious but the cake kills it for me.

*Judith Harris Solomon is a Metro Detroit free-lance writer. If you would like to be a guest panelist, contact her at [judyfreelance@aol.com](mailto:judyfreelance@aol.com)">[judyfreelance@aol.com](mailto:judyfreelance@aol.com).*

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