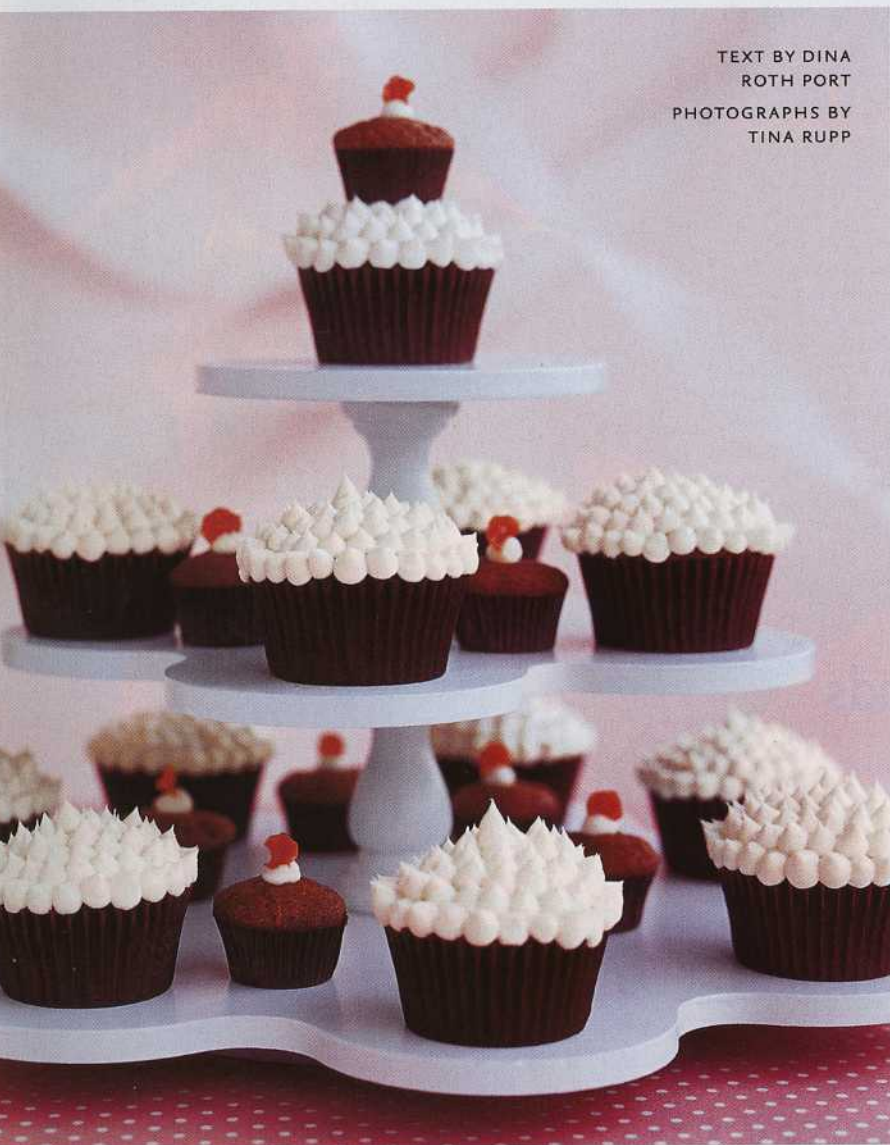


first birthday cakes

babies can have **delicious** cake and still eat healthfully too with recipes that will also delight **mom**.

TEXT BY DINA
ROTH PORT
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
TINA RUPP



ONE BATTER, TWO CAKES Carrot cupcakes for tots are flanked by grown-up-size ones that have been dressed up with maple cream-cheese frosting. Babies get just a dab of the creamy stuff, plus a soft slice of candied carrot, easily made by simmering thinly sliced carrots in pure maple syrup.

BABIES ADORE SWEET THINGS, particularly those they're most familiar with: apples, bananas, carrots. Why not bake these favorites into birthday cakes, for wholesome treats designed to capture toddlers' hearts (and appetites)?

We did a little experimenting and created three recipes for baby cakes that are rich and moist, sure to entice children and adults alike (which is useful, since often there are as many parents as children at a first-birthday party). Each recipe is intended to make two versions of the same cake: one for tots, free of refined sugar, and another for older kids and grown-ups, topped with frosting or chocolate glaze.

The batters, sweetened with maple syrup or fruit, contain no dairy products, which can be hard on babies' digestive systems. To reduce the risk of allergic reaction, they are also made without egg white. So parents can relax as everyone enjoys this memorable homemade touch at their baby's first birthday celebration.

When serving, you can play with the arrangement, as we have,

delighting your guests with a creative display of big and small cakes. Just make sure someone takes plenty of pictures before you dismantle it, and serve the babies first, before they begin reaching for the chocolate or the frosting. For that, a lifetime of other birthdays awaits—bigger in scale, perhaps, but never again that magical first.

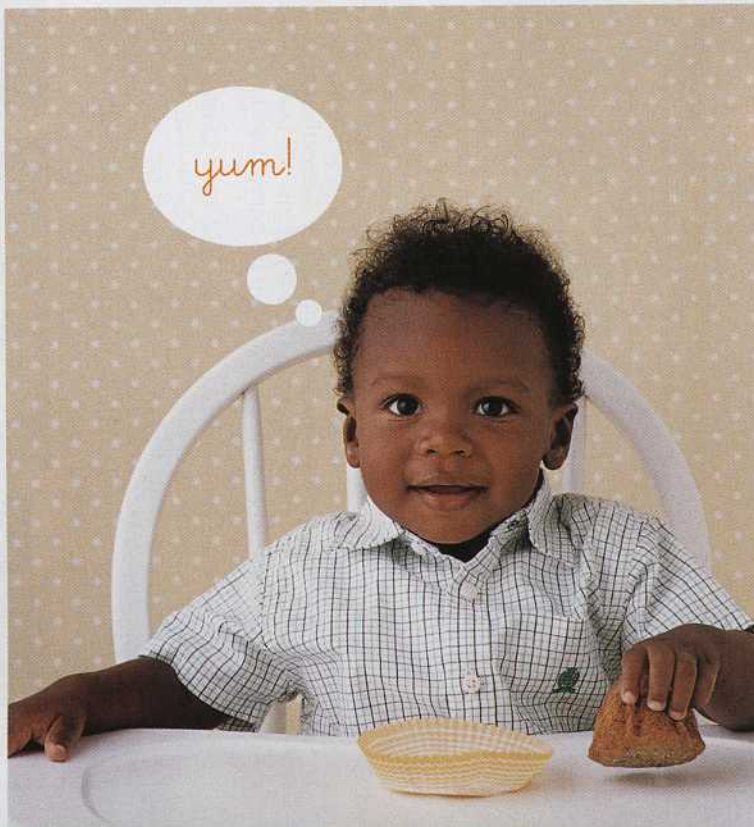


JUST MY SIZE

Top: Lola, age 1, reaches for a carrot cupcake that's perfect for little hands and tummies. Left and above: Kids will love the petit four–like squares of this eggless applesauce cake, with apricot purée spread between the layers. The children's cakes, cut from the big cake before it's frosted, are topped with blanched apple slices and additional purée. The adults' cake is covered in buttercream, with the numeral "1" piped in sunny apricot-purée dots.

BABY BANANAS

Served in pretty cupcake liners, mini Bundt cakes over banana slices are easy for babies to grab and eat. A hidden health bonus: The cake is made with whole-wheat flour. For adults, the big cake is coated with a chocolate glaze and served with sweetened whipped sour cream. Below: One-year-old Silas checks out a portion. Which first—banana or cake? SEE THE RECIPES SECTION; SEE THE GUIDE FOR SOURCES



tip: offer leftover mini cakes to baby for breakfast, or bring them to the playground for a nourishing snack.