Black Forest Cupcakes

2 cups flour

2 1/4 cups sugar

2/3 cup plus 4 Tablespoons cocoa

1 teaspoon baking soda

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 cup butter, melted

4 eggs

2 teaspoons vanilla

1 cup hot water

Filling

10 ounce bag frozen dark pitted cherries

4 Tablespoons sugar

Cherry Buttercream

10 egg whites

2 1/2 cups sugar

1 1/2 teaspoons cream of tartar

40-48 Tablespoons butter

Combine flour, sugar, cocoa, baking soda and salt in a bowl.

In another bowl, combine butter, eggs and vanilla.

Beat dry and wet ingredients together for 1 minute.

Add hot water and beat until just combined.

Scoop into paper lined jumbo cupcake pans and bake 24 minutes at 350.

For filling

Stir together cherries and sugar in medium saucepan.

Cook over medium heat until thick and syrupy.

Transfer to a bowl and cool to room temperature.

Reserve 12 cherries for garnish and cherry juice for buttercream.

For Buttercream

Whisk together egg whites, sugar and cream of tartar in bowl of standing mixer.

Cook over double boiler until foamy and warm to the touch.

Transfer bowl to mixer and whisk on high until stiff peaks form.

Switch to flat beater and beat in butter, 1 Tablespoon at a time.

Add reserved cherry juice to flavor buttercream.

Assembly

Cut a hole in the center of each cupcake.

Fill each hole with cooled cherry mixture.

Pipe buttercream on top of each cupcake.

Garnish with extra cherry.