

Delicious and Sweet Holiday Treats

Classic Chocolate Fudge

Let's begin with a classic that everyone loves: chocolate fudge. In theory, this will last for two weeks in your fridge! (We know, we know – we thought that was funny too.)

Serves 20 | Prep. time 15 min. | Cooking time 1 hour

Ingredients

- 3 cups granulated sugar
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- Pinch salt
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups whole milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons vanilla
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped pecans or walnuts

Directions

1. Line an 8x8 baking pan with foil and coat the foil with cooking spray.
2. Lightly oil the sides of a medium, thick-bottomed saucepan. In it, combine the sugar, cocoa, salt, and milk.
3. Place the pot over medium heat and cook, stirring with a wooden spoon, until the mixture comes to a boil. Ensure that no sugar crystals are stuck to the sides of the pot.
4. Reduce the heat to low and clip a candy thermometer to the side of the pot, arranging it so the bulb does not touch the bottom of the pot.
5. Cook without stirring until the mixture reaches 234°F.
6. Remove the pot from the heat and add the butter and vanilla but DO NOT STIR.
7. Set the pot aside to cool to 110°F, add nuts if using, and then mix vigorously with a wooden spoon. After 5–10 minutes you will notice the mixture is thickening and losing some of its shine.
8. Quickly pour the fudge into the prepared pan. Let it cool completely and cut into squares.

English Butter Toffee

This is a perfect recipe for gift-giving because it makes such a large batch. You can customize it by adding your favorite nuts; almonds, pecans, walnuts, Brazil nuts, and pistachios are all delicious. You can also alternate between milk, dark, and white chocolate on top!

Serves 30 | Prep. time 5 min. | Cooking time 15 min.

Ingredients

- 2 butter
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- 2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 cup finely chopped nuts
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sea salt, for sprinkling

Directions

1. Cover a baking sheet with foil and coat the foil with cooking spray.
2. In a heavy-bottomed saucepan, melt the butter and stir in the sugar and salt. Bring the mixture to a boil and cook until it reaches 285°F, stirring occasionally.
3. Pour the toffee onto the prepared baking pan and spread it out.
4. Sprinkle chocolate chips on top and let them sit for a minute or two to soften. Spread the melted chocolate with a spatula, and sprinkle the nuts and salt on top.
5. Refrigerate until set, and then break into serving pieces.

Spiced Fruit Jelly Drops

Always a favorite in our family, these jelly candies are the perfect gift with just a hint of spices.

Serves 48 | Prep. time 30 min | Cooking time 30 min | Chill time 2 hours

Ingredients

- 1 cup cranberry juice
- 1 cup pulp free orange juice
- 4 envelopes unflavored gelatin
- 5-6 drops clove candy flavoring oil
- 3 ½ cups sugar
- Mint leaves for garnish, optional

Directions

1. In a large saucepan combine the cranberry juice and the four envelopes of gelatin. Stir briefly and set aside to dissolve for several minutes.
2. In a separate saucepan bring the orange juice to a low boil over medium to medium high heat.
3. Pour the orange juice into the saucepan with the cranberry and gelatin mixture and stir.
4. Next, add in the clove flavoring oil and 3 cups of sugar. Bring the liquid to a boil, reduce the heat to low and simmer for approximately 20 minutes, stirring frequently.
5. Line an 8x8 inch baking pan with plastic wrap so that all of the interior surfaces are covered.
6. Remove the saucepan from the heat and pour the contents into the plastic wrap lined baking pan.
7. Place the pan in the refrigerator to chill for at least 4 hours.
8. Remove the pan from the refrigerator and dust the top with part of the remaining sugar.
9. Using the plastic wrap for leverage, lift the jelly out of the pan and flip it over onto a countertop, sugar side down.
10. Remove the plastic wrap and sprinkle some more sugar over the surface.
11. Cut the jelly into squares or use a small cookie cutter if you prefer shapes.
12. Once the jellies are cut, toss them in a little more sugar to completely coat all of the sides.
13. Garnish with fresh mint leaves before serving or gifting, if desired.

Snickerdoodle Truffles

If you enjoy snickerdoodle cookies, why not try these melt-in-your-mouth snickerdoodle truffles. You won't regret it. Best of all, there is no cooking involved!

Serves 36 | Prep. time 30 min. | Chill time 2 hours

Ingredients

- ½ cup cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup butter, softened
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup light brown sugar
- 1 cup almond flour
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 2 cups white chocolate pieces
- 1 tablespoon dark brown sugar

Directions

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a bowl combine the cream cheese, butter, sugar, light brown sugar, almond flour, vanilla extract, salt and 1 teaspoon of cinnamon. Mix until creamy.
3. Use a small scoop or spoon to scoop out small rounded mounds onto the parchment lined baking sheet.
4. Place the truffles in the freezer for at least 2 hours.
5. In a double boiler, melt together the remaining cinnamon, white chocolate pieces, and dark brown sugar.
6. Dip each of the truffles quickly into the melted white chocolate. Tap gently to remove any excess and transfer the truffles back onto the baking sheet.
7. Keep refrigerated until ready to serve or gift.

Old South Pralines

Sweet and crunchy. The perfect snack for a lazy day in your pajamas. The kids love to make this with me and the house smells oh so sweet! Everyone who taste these sweet pecan pralines will ask for the recipe.

Serves 24 | Prep. time 15 min. | Cooking time 10 min.

Ingredients

- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1½ cups white sugar
- ½ cup salted butter
- ½ cup milk or heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon maple extract
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1½ cups pecans, chopped

Directions

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a large saucepan, combine all of the ingredients and heat over medium-high heat, stirring frequently until boiling.
3. Let boil for several minutes, stirring continuously, until the temperature registers 240°F on a candy thermometer.
4. Remove from heat and continue stirring until the mixture begins to thicken and take on a bit of a grainy texture.
5. Drop by spoonfuls onto the parchment-lined baking sheets and let cool completely.

Cranberry White Bark

Sometime the simplest are the tastiest and this is exactly what you get with this easy to prepare 4-ingredient white chocolate bark.

Makes 1 pound | Prep. time 10 min. | Cooking time 10 min. | Chill time 2 hours

Ingredients

- ½ cup mixed nuts, chopped
- 2 cups white chocolate chips
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- 5 ounces chopped white candy coating

Directions

1. In a microwave bowl, melt the white chocolate chips and the white candy coating in increment of 30 seconds, stir each time, until it is smooth.
2. Blend in half of the cranberries and ¾ cup of the nuts into chocolate mixture. Spread it onto a sheet of waxed paper placed on a baking sheet.
3. Sprinkle with the rest of the pistachios and the cranberries. Chill until it becomes firm and break into pieces, about 2 hours.

Glazed Italian Christmas Cookies

Yields 60 cookies

Ingredients

- ½ cup butter
- 2 cups white sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 3 tablespoons baking powder
- 2 tablespoons pure vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons pure almond extract
- 4 cups flour

Frosting

- 2 cup icing sugar
- ½ cup milk
- 1 teaspoon almond pure extract
- Food coloring, if desired
- Sugar sprinkle for decoration, if desired

Directions

1. With an electric mixer, cream the butter and the sugar until smooth.
2. Add the eggs one by one, beating at medium speed.
3. Add the baking powder and vanilla and almond extract.
4. Gradually add the flour one cup at a time. Mix until you have a ball of firm dough.
5. Split the dough in two, and form two balls. Wrap in plastic wrap, and chill dough in the refrigerator for 2 hours.
6. Preheat the oven to 375°F, and place the oven rack in the middle position.
7. Place one of the dough balls on a lightly floured surface. Roll out the dough to ¼" thick. Cut the cookies out using Christmas-shaped cookie cutters. Keep the second dough balls in the refrigerator until you are ready to use it.
8. Place the cutout cookies on ungreased cookie sheets lined with parchment paper.
9. Place in the preheated oven, and bake for 8-10 minutes, until the edges of the cookies start to brown.
10. Remove from the oven, and let the cookies rest for 10 minutes before placing on a wire rack. Let cool down completely before glazing them.
11. While the cookies are cooling down, you can prepare the glaze. In a small bowl, place the icing sugar. Add the almond extract and just enough milk to make a nice frosting consistency.
12. To glaze, dip the top of the cooled-down cookies into the glaze. Decorate with pearls or colored sugar or sprinkles. Let dry completely before serving.

***These recipes and more are found in Louise Davidson's *Celebrate Christmas: 75 Sweet Treats Recipes for the Holidays*. To get your copy, click on the cover below or click [here](#).

