

English Toffee

Makes 1-1/2 pounds

Toffee:

1-3/4 cup sugar
1/8 teaspoon cream of tartar
1 cup cream
1/2 cup butter
1 teaspoon vanilla or rum

Nut Topping:

1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup butter
1-1/2 tablespoonwater
1/2 - 3/4 cup finely chopped pecans
2 ounces melted semisweet
chocolate
2 tablespoons finely chopped pecans

Toffee: Combine in large heavy saucepan sugar, cream of tartar and cream. Stir over high heat until sugar dissolved. Stir and boil for 3 minutes; add butter. Cook and stir syrup to soft-crack stage, about 270-degrees. It will be light-colored and thick. Remove from heat and add vanilla or rum. Pour candy into a buttered pan. Cool.

Nut Topping: In heavy skillet, heat sugar, butter and water. Cook rapidly and stir constantly about 10 minutes or until mixture reaches hard-crack stage, 300-degrees. Spread chopped nuts over toffee. Turn the candy quickly over the nuts and toffee. When almost cool, brush with chocolate and dust with remaining nuts.

Peanut Brittle

Makes 2 pounds

Note: For more porous brittle, combine 1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar with sugar. Sprinkle 1/2 teaspoon baking soda over the hot syrup just before pouring.

1 cup water

2 cup sugar

1 cup corn syrup

2 cups unsalted chopped nuts (roasted or raw)

(1 teaspoon salt)

1-3 tablespoons butter

1/4 teaspoon baking soda

(1 teaspoon vanilla)

Boil water. Remove from heat and stir in sugar. Stir in corn syrup. Cook to hardball stage, 250-degrees. If using raw nuts, add them and salt. Cook to

almost hard-crack stage, 296-degrees, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat. Stir in lightly: butter, baking soda and vanilla (and roasted nuts). Pour onto well-buttered slab at once, scraping out bottom of pan. Spread mixture rapidly with spatula. Wearing gloves stretch and pull brittle until thin. Cool and store in tightly covered tin.

***Peanut Butter Cups**

Makes 12 cups

12 large paper baking cups

1 - 11.5-ounce bag milk chocolate chips

2 tablespoons shortening

1 cup fresh ground peanut butter, no sugar added

1 ½ to 2 tablespoons butter, softened

¾ cup powdered sugar

1/3 cup graham cracker crumbs

Melt chocolate and shortening over water bath (a must), stirring occasionally until melted and smooth, about 3 to 5 minutes. Loosen top paper cup from stack, but leave in stack for greater stability while being coated. With small paint brush, coat inside top cup evenly with melted chocolate, bringing almost to top of cup, but not over edge. Gently set cup inside muffin tin. Repeat with remaining cups,; refrigerate.

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine graham cracker crumbs, powdered sugar, peanut butter and butter. Mix on medium speed until filling is well combined, breaks into large chunks, and resembles cookie dough, about 3 minutes. Press into chocolate cups.

Reheat chocolate. Using a teaspoon, spoon in enough chocolate to coat the top of each cup, spreading it with the bottom of the spoon. (If chocolate is too thick, mix in butter, not water.) Refrigerate up to 3 weeks or freeze for up to 2 months.

When ready to serve, peel off paper cup and let come to room temperature.