

in the kitchen

PITTSBURGH'S HOME FOR KITCHENWARES

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Handmade English Toffee

Makes about 75 small irregular pieces

This nutty toffee has a buttery flavor with a rich caramel taste and crunchy, texture - perfect for gifting and sharing this holiday season! With just a ingredients and some kitchen alchemy, delicious toffee is easy to make with the assist of a candy thermometer. The other secret to great toffee is proper toasting of the nuts. IN THIS ISSUE, we'll walk you through the all the steps needed for immediate success!

Ingredients:

1-1/2 cups almonds, finely chopped (or pecans or walnuts if you prefer)
2 cups butter, unsalted (4 sticks)
2 cups sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup warm water
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
1 cup semi-sweet (or bittersweet) chocolate chips
Sea salt for sprinkling on top (optional)

Directions:

1. Prepare a sheet pan 17" x 12" by lightly buttering, or lining with a piece of parchment paper also lightly greased. (This pan size will make 1/4-inch thick toffee pieces. Use a larger pan for thinner toffee, or a smaller pan for thicker toffee.)
2. Toast the almonds lightly in a low oven, 350°F, by spreading on a sheet pan and roasting for 5-7 minutes or until fragrant and just beginning to turn a golden color. Watch carefully during toasting. Transfer the toasted almonds to a bowl to cool. Set aside.
3. In a large saucepan or Dutch oven, combine the butter, sugar, salt, water, and vanilla. Over medium heat, warm the ingredients, stirring continuously until the butter is melted and the sugar dissolved.
4. Over medium-low heat, allow the mixture to cook to 300°F, hard-crack stage. Stir occasionally during the process. This will take 20-35 minutes. (If you do not have a candy thermometer, test for the hard crack sugar stage by placing a small amount of the butter-sugar syrup in cold water. If it quickly forms hard, breakable strands, it's at hard crack stage. If the mixture remains soft and pliable, it is at soft ball, or soft crack stage and has not reached the required temperature.)
5. Stir in 3/4 cup of the toasted almonds (reserving the remaining 3/4 cup for the top). Immediately, pour the mixture into the prepared sheet pan, spreading evenly. Allow to cool slightly, about 5 minutes.
6. Sprinkle the chocolate chips on top of the toffee. After about another 5 minutes, spread the now warm chips over the top with an offset spatula or the back of a spoon. Immediately sprinkle the remaining toasted almonds on top of the melted chocolate and press in lightly.
7. Allow the cooling to continue for another 2 hours, then break the sheet of toffee into bite-sized pieces. Store in a cool, dry, airtight container, or package in gift bags and share with others!