



Chocolate, with Gail Hintze

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CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES

Chop finely: 1 lb. good-quality semisweet chocolate

Heat gently in saucepan until bubbles form around the edge of the pan:

¾ C heavy cream

Remove from heat. Add the chocolate and stir with a whisk until the chocolate is melted.

Stir in: 1 tsp vanilla

3 tbsp orange liqueur

3 tbsp Amaretto

Let cool about five minutes.

Gradually whisk in: 5 tbsp unsalted butter (room temperature)

(An immersible blender is great for this task.)

Refrigerate, covered, until firm. Use a small scoop (with release mechanism) to scoop into balls. Roll balls lightly in cocoa or chopped toasted pecans.

Notes

Every good chocolate has its own unique taste. You may want to experiment to find your favorite.

This recipe was developed for Peter's semisweet. You may need to adjust the amount of cream in the basic recipe for different chocolates, so that the ganache is not too stiff or too soft. If I use a Callebaut semisweet, I increase the cream to 1 cup.

Truffles will keep in the freezer, tightly covered, for months. Whether they've been in the refrigerator or freezer, you will enjoy the best flavor if you bring your truffles to room temperature before eating.

CHOCOLATE GINGERBREAD COOKIES

Recipe from King Arthur Baking Company

These gingerbread cookies have all the chew of your favorite molasses cookie and, for an added bonus, surprise you with bursts of melted chocolate. Serve warm from the oven, or keep them soft and chewy for several days stored in an airtight container.

Ingredients:

1 3/4 cups unbleached all-purpose flour

1 tsp baking soda

2 tsp ground ginger

1 tsp cinnamon

1/4 tsp cloves

1/4 tsp nutmeg

1/2 tsp salt

1 Tbsp cocoa powder

1/2 cup unsalted butter, at room temperature

1/2 cup packed dark brown sugar

1/2 cup molasses

1 cup semisweet chocolate chips

5 Tbsp Swedish pearl sugar (or coarse sugar)

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 325° F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper, or grease lightly.

Combine the flour, baking soda, spices, salt, and cocoa. In a separate bowl, beat the butter with the sugar until light and creamy. Add the molasses and beat until combined. Beat in the dry ingredients, then stir in the chips.

Scoop the dough a tablespoon at a time, and roll the top portion in pearl sugar. Place the unbaked cookies 1 1/2" apart, sugar side up, onto the prepared baking sheets.

Bake the cookies for 10-12 minutes, until their surface begins to crack. Remove from the oven, cool on the pan for 5 minutes, then transfer the cookies to a rack to cool completely.

Yield: about 30 cookies.

