

Sweet sin

Fabulous fudge recipes are an easy-to-please gift

Fabulous fudge, the ultimate sweet temptation, is an all-time favorite holiday treat. Whether shared with family and friends or given as a gift, this festive treat is the ideal indulgence.

It used to be that irresistibly creamy fudge was the domain of only the most experienced home cooks. Today, thanks to the "secret ingredient," marshmallow creme, even beginning fudge makers can find sweet success. With marshmallow creme in the recipe, preparation is streamlined, air-bubbling beating is eliminated and creamy, smooth texture is insured.

To dispel first-timers' fear of fudge making, here are some helpful hints:

- Follow the recipe exactly, making no ingredient substitutions.
- Use the exact size saucepan called for in the recipe, and stir constantly to avoid scorching.
- Begin timing cooking when the mixture reaches a full rolling boil.
- Cool at room temperature for the smoothest, creamiest fudge texture.

Mix and match to serve or to pack in colorful tins as from-the-heart greetings to special friends.

Fudge Orleans is much more than just a candy. The innovative recipe boasts a buttery-tasting pecan base and a rich and creamy topping of chocolate fudge. The easy-to-prepare, two-layer treat sports real New Orleans praline flavor.

A creative confection with West Coast flair, California White Chocolate Fudge is a soul-satisfying experience, flecked with dried apricots and walnuts. Sour cream provides richness and an unexpected flavor accent.

Chocolate lovers will rave about Dark Chocolate Almond Fudge. The

sensational combination of rich dark chocolate and toasted almonds is a hands-down holiday winner. Prepared with unsweetened chocolate, its deep, satisfying flavor will make it a new-found favorite.

FUDGE ORLEANS

- 1 cup margarine
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 3 cups granulated sugar
- ¾ cup margarine
- ½ cup (5 fl. oz. can) evaporated milk
- 1 12-oz. pkg. semi-sweet chocolate pieces
- 1 7-oz. jar marshmallow creme
- 1 tsp. vanilla

Beat margarine and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Blend in egg. Add flour, mix well. Stir in pecans. Spread dough into 15x10x1-inch jelly roll pan. Bake at 350 degrees, 20 to 25 minutes or until edges are lightly browned.

Combine granulated sugar, margarine and milk in heavy 2½ to 3-quart saucepan; bring to full rolling boil, stirring constantly. Continue boiling 5 minutes over medium heat or until candy thermometer reaches 234 degrees, stirring constantly to prevent scorching. Remove from heat; stir in chocolate pieces until melted. Add marshmallow creme and vanilla; beat until well blended. Spread over crust. Cool at room temperature; cut into squares. Makes 5 lbs.

CALIFORNIA WHITE CHOCOLATE FUDGE

- 2 cups sugar
- ¾ cup sour cream

- ½ cup margarine
- 12 oz. white chocolate, coarsely chopped
- 1 7-oz. jar marshmallow creme
- ¾ cup chopped walnuts
- ¾ cup chopped dried apricots

Combine sugar, sour cream and margarine in heavy 2½ to 3-quart saucepan; bring to full rolling boil, stirring constantly. Continue boiling 7 minutes over medium heat or until candy thermometer reaches 234 degrees, stirring constantly to prevent scorching. Remove from heat; stir in chocolate until melted. Add remaining ingredients; beat until well blended. Pour into greased 8 or 9-inch square baking pan. Cool at room temperature; cut into squares. Makes 2½ lbs.

DARK CHOCOLATE ALMOND FUDGE

- 2 cups sugar
- ¾ cup (5 fl. oz. can) evaporated milk
- ½ cup margarine
- 8 oz. unsweetened chocolate, chopped
- 1 7-oz. jar marshmallow creme
- 1 cup chopped toasted almonds
- 1 tsp. vanilla

Combine sugar, milk and margarine in heavy 2½ to 3-quart saucepan; bring to full rolling boil, stirring constantly. Continue boiling 7 minutes over medium heat or until candy thermometer reaches 234 degrees, stirring constantly to prevent scorching. Remove from heat; stir in chocolate until melted. Add marshmallow creme, almonds and vanilla; beat until well blended. Pour into greased 8- or 9-inch square baking pan. Cool at room temperature; cut into squares. Makes 2 lbs.



Taste-tempting trio

To put the 'happy' in a favorite someone's holidays, prepare a trio of irresistibly smooth and creamy fudge recipes. Fudge Orleans, California White Chocolate Fudge

and Dark Chocolate Almond Fudge, made easy with the secret ingredient — marshmallow creme — are sure to sweeten holiday spirits.

Knowing your cholesterol level can help reduce risk of disease

Many people know that too much cholesterol in their blood isn't good for them, but they don't know how much is too much. The number to keep in mind is 200.

According to the American Heart Association, more than 50 percent of American adult males have cholesterol levels above 200, a level at which the risk of heart disease sharply begins to rise.

Approximately 27 million adults have serum cholesterol levels higher than 260 milligrams per deciliter of blood.

The 10-year Coronary Primary Prevention Trials provided medical scientists with reinforced evidence that a high blood cholesterol level is a cause of coronary artery disease. The study also showed that people who lower their cholesterol levels with diet and drugs have fewer heart attacks and less heart disease.

Cholesterol is a soft, fat-like substance found among the fats in the bloodstream. These fats are called lipids, and a high level of lipids in the bloodstream is called hyperlipidemia. Hyperlipidemia is a major risk factor for heart disease.

Hyperlipidemia can affect your heart in this way — cholesterol and other lipids build up in the inner lining of blood vessels like rust in water pipes, and over time these vessels can close. This narrowing of blood vessels, called atherosclerosis, keeps oxygen-carrying blood from getting to the heart. The result can

be severe chest pain and eventually heart attack.

The body gets cholesterol from two sources. Each day the liver produces about 1,000 milligrams of cholesterol, which is needed to produce certain hormones and to construct cells. The remaining cholesterol in the body comes from food sources. This dietary cholesterol is the cholesterol that could be of concern to many people.

According to the AHA, a person's blood cholesterol level depends on his or her age, sex, and other risk factors: smoking, high blood pres-

sure, excess weight or a family history of heart disease.

How do you find out what your cholesterol level is and how to reduce it if it's too high? Your doctor can measure the amount of cholesterol in your blood with a simple test. Ideally, everyone should have a cholesterol level test done by age 30, and it's suggested the test be repeated every five years. If there is a history of heart disease in the family, the cholesterol level could be checked at age 20 and every five years thereafter.

If your cholesterol level is high, your doctor will want you to begin a

long term program to lower the level. Diet is a safe, practical and effective way to reduce blood cholesterol for most people. Reducing the intake of high-fat meats, whole-milk dairy products, egg yolks and other foods high in saturated fat and cholesterol is helpful, along with eating more poultry, fish, fresh fruits and vegetables, grains and cereals, and low-fat dairy products.

If diet changes alone won't reduce a person's blood cholesterol, his or her doctor may prescribe one of the medications available to help keep within the ideal range.

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