

inviting ideas

Sweet treats are good holiday gifts

Sweet treats are a natural during the holiday season – just to have on hand for family and friends, or to give as a special remembrance. Chocolate is a

favorite in the sweet department for children and adults alike – who can resist elegant truffles or chocolate covered Oreo cookies?

Toula Patsalis, owner of Kitchen Glamor stores, cookbook author, and knowledgeable cooking instructor, not only sells all the makings for those fabulous goodies, but does a great class on Chocolate Tokens of Confection. Interacting with her class attendees, Toula freely gives out her trade secrets and recipes.

Toula's Tidbits:

- if making chocolates, work in a cool area 60-65 degrees
- do not work with more than one pound of chocolate at a time
- make sure chocolate is cut or grated evenly
- always use a chocolate thermometer (preferably a Wilton thermometer)
- always use a double boiler for melting chocolate (or if using a microwave, melt chocolate in 45 second intervals to avoid scorching)
- always use a plastic spatula or a wooden spoon
- never let even a drop of water

touch the melted chocolate (it will ruin it)

■ for delicious chocolate, use one pound of pellets to 1/2 pound chunk chocolate

■ use parchment paper to set hot chocolate on, it doesn't stick!

For those huge caramel apples – make sure your apples are cold – dip in melted caramel, once the caramel sets up, dip in melted chocolate, or drizzle chocolate over the entire apple. When Cool, wrap in clear colored cellophane – these are too pretty to hide.

Make some chocolates, or other confectioneries this year for a different kind of gift. Present them in hand-made boxes, adorned containers, baskets, or chocolate boxes (there is a mold you can purchase).

Here are a few delicious home-made treats or sweets to have on hand for the holidays:

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Presented by Carl J. Giespi & Mark Ronoff

THE LOOK OF FURNITURE

The kitchen of decades past used to be placed where guests were not entirely welcome and homeowners got in and out as soon as meals were over. Today, all that has changed, as guests are invited to spend more time conversing before, during, and after meals. With this in mind, kitchens are increasingly taking on the function of living rooms. And, they are beginning to look more like living rooms as well, with the advent of the furniture look. That is to say that, instead of lining up cabinets on a wall, kitchens feature furniture-like arrangements with more open space. This look, which blends better with the rest of the home, has several distinctive characteristics: decorative "feet" on the base cabinets, staggered depths and heights on both base and wall cabinets for increased visual interest and practicality, and lowered child-friendly counters or raised counters that eliminate the need to bend over at a baking center.

Kitchens have evolved over the years to become multi-purpose rooms for family and visitors. Consider your remodeling needs for the upcoming year. MODERN KITCHEN & BATH can help you create a kitchen that is functional and beautiful and adds value to your home. We cordially invite readers to visit us at 819 E. Fourth Street in Royal Oak to view a wide selection of America's finest crafted cabinetry. America offers the style and efficiency you need to create a distinct look. Call us at 810-546-0660 for quality service and material.

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