

TOFFEE, CHOCOLATE PECAN, aka Christmas Crack

You will need a half-sheet pan for this recipe, approximately 17" x 12", an icing/frosting spatula and wide (18") foil.

INGREDIENTS:

2 sticks REAL butter (NOT margarine!!)
1 cup (packed) light brown sugar
1 1/2 sleeves Keebler Club crackers (a 13.7 oz box has 3 sleeves - enough to make 2 batches)
1 bag (11.5 oz) Nestle's chocolate CHUNKS (NOT chips)
1 cup chopped pecans, cashews or almonds
Extra butter (about 1 tablespoon, softened) for greasing foil

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees for about 15 minutes. It is important that the temperature is nearly exact, so invest in an oven thermometer if you're not sure your oven's thermometer is accurate.
2. Line sheet pan with foil and fold excess foil over pan's edges.
3. Take softened butter and carefully grease foil well.
4. Spread crackers out evenly in one layer on the pan.
5. Place the 2 sticks of butter and 1 cup of brown sugar in a 2 - 3 quart sauce pan on medium (50%) heat.
6. Bring to a rolling boil and allow to boil (WITHOUT STIRRING) for exactly 3 minutes. It will foam up. Do not stir after removing from heat. (During the initial stages of heating, you can "swirl" the pan to get the butter and sugar mixed.)
7. Immediately pour butter/sugar mixture over crackers being VERY CAREFUL not to burn yourself or dislodge the crackers. Once you are nearly finished pouring, it may appear that the butter and sugar in the pan have separated just a little - that is okay and normal, just pour it onto the crackers. Using the frosting spatula, gently spread mixture as evenly as possible over crackers.
8. Place pan in oven for exactly 4 minutes.
9. Remove from oven and sprinkle all chocolate chunks over crackers/caramel layer.
10. Return pan to oven for exactly 1 minute.
11. Remove pan and using frosting spatula, gently spread melted chocolate chunks evenly over cracker/caramel layer, creating an even layer of chocolate.
12. Sprinkle chopped nuts over chocolate.

13. Using frosting spatula, gently press nuts down into chocolate.
14. Allow pan to cool for about 30 minutes and then place in freezer for about 30 minutes.
15. Remove from freezer, lift up edge and incrementally peel back foil while breaking off pieces of toffee.
16. Save pieces in plastic zip-lok bag or airtight container and store in cool place, like the refrigerator, if it lasts that long. ;-)

Each batch will fill three 1-quart zip-lok bags.

TIPS:

Do not spray foil with non-stick spray for this recipe – use only REAL butter, NOT margarine. Alternately, you can use non-stick foil and omit greasing the foil. I have not tried the non-stick foil because I don't know if they make it in the wide variety and it is so expensive! Also, I tried making it by just buttering the pan and not using the foil and removing from the freezer, it released easily.

Use the chocolate CHUNKS instead of chips because they don't have any wax in them, so they melt and spread much more easily. Trust me, I learned this the hard way. :-)

It is very important that you use fresh brown sugar for this recipe.

Instead of nuts, sprinkle peanut butter chips over the chocolate and after they've melted a little, use a fork to swirl/marble them into the chocolate. If they aren't melting well, simply crush them into the chocolate with the for. It doesn't look as nice, but it still tastes great and no one will care anyway because it tastes so good!! I tried the Reese's chips and they didn't melt very easily, so I'll probably try Nestle's brand next time.

Okay to omit the nuts, if necessary; it's still delicious.

I like the Club crackers because their rectangular size allows you to make a complete (without any gaps) layer on the cookie sheet. However, I have used Snack Factory Pretzel Crisps and they make for an interesting variation. You could also try these other cracker varieties: Keebler Townhouse, Keebler Townhouse Pretzel FlipSides or Nabisco Ritz.

Bags of Christmas Crack make great gifts instead of cookies and in my experience, making it (and a lot of it) is much easier and faster than dozens of cookies and it's a nice change from cookies.

Freezes well.

Revision 20201202