



Crack Into These 'Nutty' Recipes

MAPLE PEANUT DELIGHTS

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
 ½ cup butter, softened
 6 cups confectioners' sugar
 1 teaspoon maple flavoring
 2 pounds dark chocolate candy coating
 1 cup chopped peanuts

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese, butter, confectioners' sugar and flavoring until smooth. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour. Shape into 1-inch balls. In a heavy saucepan (or microwave), melt candy coating, sprinkle with peanuts. Place on waxed paper-lined baking sheets. Refrigerate. Yields about 8 dozen.

Kari Martin
 Lancaster County
 Dairy Princess

TOASTED ALMOND CARAMELS

1 teaspoon plus ¼ cup butter, divided
 2 cups sugar
 1 cup light corn syrup
 ¼ teaspoon salt
 1 cup whipping cream
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 1 cup chopped almonds, toasted

Line an 8-inch square pan with foil and butter foil with 1 teaspoon butter; set aside. In a heavy saucepan, combine sugar, corn syrup, salt, and remaining butter. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Reduce heat to medium-low; boil gently without stirring for 4 minutes.

Remove from the heat; slowly stir in cream. Return to the heat; cook, without stirring, over medium-low heat until a candy thermometer reads 245° (firm-ball stage). Remove from the heat; stir in vanilla and almonds. Pour into prepared pan (do not scrape sides of saucepan). Cool completely.

Cut into squares. Wrap individually in wax paper or foil; twist ends. Yields about 4 dozen.

Kari Martin
 Lancaster County
 Dairy Princess

FRUIT CAKE

1 cup sifted flour
 ½ teaspoon baking powder
 ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
 ¼ teaspoon allspice
 ¼ teaspoon cloves
 ¼ teaspoon mace
 1 cup figs, chopped
 1 cup dates, chopped
 1½ cup raisins
 1 cup orange peel, chopped
 ½ cup maraschino cherries, chopped
 1 cup chopped nuts
 ½ cup shortening
 ½ cup sugar
 3 eggs, unbeaten

½ cup maraschino cherry juice
 Sift together flour, baking powder, and spices and mix with fruit and nuts. Cream shortening, add sugar gradually and cream until light and fluffy. Add eggs, singly, beating thoroughly after each addition. Add mixed dry ingredients and fruits alternately with liquid. Pour batter into an 8x5x3-inch loaf pan, which has been lined with oiled brown paper, or wax paper. Bake in a low oven (250°) about 2½ hours.

Mrs. Myrtle E. Sorge
 Sicklerville, N.J.

PECAN CAKE ROLL

4 eggs, separated
 1 cup confectioner's sugar
 2 cups ground pecans
 1 cup whipping cream
 3 tablespoons sugar
 2 teaspoons cocoa
 ½ teaspoon vanilla
 Chocolate shavings and additional confectioner's sugar, optional

In a mixing bowl, beat egg yolks and confectioner's sugar until thick, about five minutes. In another bowl, beat whites until soft peaks form; fold into yolk mixture. Fold in pecans until well blended (batter will be thin). Grease a 15x10x1-inch baking pan; line with waxed paper and grease and flour paper. Spread batter into pan. Bake at 375° for 10-15 minutes or until cake springs back when lightly touched. Turn onto a linen towel dusted with confectioner's sugar. Peel off paper and roll cake up in towel, starting with short end. Cool on wire rack 1 hour. Meanwhile, beat the cream, sugar, cocoa and vanilla in a mixing bowl until soft peaks form. Carefully unroll cake. Spread filling over cake; roll up again. Refrigerate. If desired, garnish with chocolate shavings and confectioner's sugar. Makes 10-12 servings. Note: This cake does not contain flour.

Vera Jane Newswanger
 Morgantown, Pa.

CANADIAN RUM CAKE

1 pound chopped, pitted dates
 1 pound chopped walnuts
 ¼ cup butter
 1½ cups firmly packed light brown sugar
 1 teaspoon baking soda
 1 cup boiling water
 3 eggs, well beaten
 2¼ cups sifted all-purpose flour
 ¼ teaspoon salt
 2 tablespoons rum

Cream butter and sugar until well blended. Add dates and nuts. Mix soda with water and pour over first mixture. Add eggs. Stir in flour and salt, beating until smooth. Add rum and blend well. Turn into greased

13x9x2-inch baking pan. Bake in preheated 300° oven for 1½ hours.

Optional rum glaze:

Mix ¼ cup confectioner's sugar with 2 teaspoons milk and 1 tablespoon rum. Spread on warm cake.

Deborah Goff
 Riegelsville, Pa.

MACADAMIA NUT FUDGE

8 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut up
 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips (6 ounces)
 1 cup macadamia nuts, coarsely chopped
 1 ounce unsweetened chocolate, finely chopped
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 2¼ cup sugar
 1 5-ounce can evaporated milk
 12 large marshmallows

Butter an 8-inch square baking pan. Line the bottom of the pan with foil. In a large bowl, combine the butter, chocolate chips, macadamia nuts, unsweetened chocolate, and vanilla. Attach a candy thermometer to a medium saucepan. Add the sugar, evaporated milk, and marshmallows. Bring to a boil, over medium heat, stirring constantly to prevent burning. Cook stirring constantly until mixture reaches 238°. Pour the hot mixture into the bowl and let stand for 30 minutes. Stir until the mixture begins to thicken, about 1 minute. Spread evenly in the prepared pan. Let stand until completely cooled. Cover with foil and let stand over night to allow the flavors to mellow. Invert the fudge and remove the foil. Reinvert and cut into squares. Store the fudge at room temperature in an airtight container. Makes about 2 pounds.

Cristin Crile
 Washington County
 Dairy Princess

EARTHQUAKE CAKE

1 cup chopped pecans
 1 cup flaked coconut
 1 chocolate cake mix
 3-3½ cup sugar
 ½ cup margarine
 8 ounces cream cheese

Grease and flour 9x13-inch pan. Sprinkle in bottom of pan, pecans and coconut. Cream sugar, margarine, and cream cheese. Set aside. Mix chocolate cake mix as directed and pour over coconut. Spoon cream cheese mixture over top of cake and bake at 350° for 45-60 minutes. Don't use too large a cake if using own recipe or it may run over.

Janet Rosenberry
 Chambersburg, Pa.

QUICK ENGLISH TOFFEE

½ cup chopped pecans
 ½ cup butter
 ½ cup firmly packed brown sugar
 ½ cup semi-sweet chocolate pieces

Sprinkle nuts in buttered 9-inch pie plate. Melt butter in heavy 1½ quart saucepan; add sugar. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly to 290° on candy thermometer (hard crack stage). Pour toffee over nuts. Sprinkle with chocolate pieces; when melted, spread with a spatula. Cool. Refrigerate to set chocolate. Break into pieces. Wrap and store in refrigerator.

Melissa Wolfe
 Sun Area Dairy Princess

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Almonds dress up this entree — Pan Roasted Chicken Breasts Stuffed With Smashed Almonds, Mascarpone, and Lemon.

Featured Recipe

The truth about nuts is finally out of its shell. Despite the fact that adding nuts to a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol can help lower levels of LDL cholesterol (or "bad" cholesterol), when substituted for foods high in saturated fat, a recent survey by Roper Starch revealed that 61 percent of Americans think that nuts are high in cholesterol.

In the past decade, people have avoided fat in foods in pursuit of weight loss, better nutrition and healthier living. The problem with this is that there are foods, such as nuts, which contain fat that can be a positive addition to a healthy diet and beneficial to the body.

Findings of several studies reveal that adding nuts to a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol can help lower levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol when substituted for foods high in saturated fat. The results of these studies have also linked diets high in monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, such as the fat in nuts, with maintaining "good" cholesterol (also known as HDL cholesterol).

Much of the fat found in nuts including peanuts, almonds, walnuts, cashews and hazelnuts, macadamias, and pecans is monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fat. With their unique combination of fats, carbohydrates and proteins, along with a wide variety of vitamins and minerals, nuts can fit perfectly into a healthy eating plan that is high in the good fats and low in saturated fats and cholesterol while being calorie-balanced for weight maintenance.

The good news about nuts is especially important for today's increasingly busy families. Many families are eating meals on the go and fitting in quick snacks between activities. Nuts offer a nutrient-dense, convenient snack alternative.

More information on nuts and nutrition, plus quick recipes from Nabisco, can be found at www.planters.com.

PAN ROASTED CHICKEN BREASTS STUFFED WITH SMASHED ALMONDS, MASCARPONE, AND LEMON

½ cup of roasted almonds with coriander, chili and olive oil (see recipe)
 6 large heaped tablespoons of mascarpone cheese
 Zest and juice of 1 lemon
 4 large boneless chicken breasts (free range, skin on)
 ¾ cup chicken stock
 olive oil
 sea salt
 ground black pepper
 2 bulbs of fennel
 1 pound fresh spinach
 olive oil
 salt and pepper

Blend the roasted almonds in a food processor or in a pestle and mortar until roughly smashed. Then mix 4 tablespoons of the mascarpone, roasted almonds, lemon zest and juice. Blend and season.

Working from one side of the chicken breast slip your fingers in between the skin and the flesh, being careful not to completely remove the skin. Push one good spoonful of the almond-mascarpone paste in the gap of each breast then press the skin firmly back, saving any leftover paste.

Take a hot non-stick pan, drizzle it with a little olive oil and place the breasts skin side down. After a minute, when lightly golden, turn to seal the other side. (If you don't have a pan with a metal handle, transfer to a roasting tray at this point.) Place in the pre-heated 425°F oven for around 10 minutes until cooked.

Meanwhile cut the fennel in half lengthwise, then into thin slices. Throw into a medium hot pan with a little olive oil and seasoning, stir in a couple of tablespoons of water. Cover and leave to cook slowly — about 5 to 10 minutes.

When the chicken is cooked, remove to a warm plate and rest for 5 minutes whilst you move the pan or tray back on the heat and add the stock; allow to cook down to almost nothing, not forgetting to scrape the pan bottom for all its goodness. Finish the sauce by stirring in the rest of the mascarpone and any remaining paste; keep on the heat so it continues to simmer until it coats the back of a spoon. Season to taste. By this point the fennel should be just cooked. Season and chuck in the spinach, leave to wilt down. Serve the chicken with the fennel and spinach, drizzle the sauce over and around the chicken.

Servings: 4

This recipe is from the Almond Board of California

Recipe Topics

If you have recipes for topics listed below, please share them with us. We welcome your recipes, but ask that you include accurate measurements, a complete list of ingredients, and clear instructions with each recipe you submit. Be sure to include your name and address. Recipes should reach our office one week before the publishing date listed below.

Send your recipes to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522.

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