

Chocolate Truffles

From America's Test Kitchen episode: *French Sweets, Refined and Rustic*.

Makes 64 truffles

In step 3, letting the chocolate to rest on the counter for 2 hours allows it to "cure", and contributes to its creamy texture. In step 5, running your knife under hot water and wiping it dry makes cutting the chocolate easier. In addition to the related variations, the truffles can be flavored with 2 tablespoons of your favorite flavored liqueur. We recommend using one of the test kitchen's favorite baking chocolates, Callebaut Intense Dark L-60-40NV or Ghirardelli Bittersweet Chocolate Baking Bar for this recipe. If giving the truffles as a gift, place each one in a 1 1/2-inch candy cup liner and then place the truffles in a gift box. Keep refrigerated until giving.

INGREDIENTS

GANACHE

- 2 cups (12 ounces) bittersweet chocolate, roughly chopped
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons light corn syrup
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Pinch salt
- 1 1/2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 8 pieces and softened

COATING

- 1 cup (3 ounces) Dutch-processed cocoa
- 1/4 cup (1 ounce) confectioners' sugar

INSTRUCTIONS

1. FOR THE GANACHE: Lightly coat 8-inch baking dish with vegetable oil spray. Make parchment sling by folding 2 long sheets of parchment so that they are as wide as baking pan. Lay sheets of parchment in pan perpendicular to each other,

with extra hanging over edges of pan. Push parchment into corners and up sides of pan, smoothing flush to pan.

2. Microwave chocolate in medium bowl at 50 percent power, stirring occasionally, until mostly melted and few small chocolate pieces remain, 2 to 3 minutes; set aside. Microwave cream in measuring cup until warm to touch, about 30 seconds. Stir corn syrup, vanilla, and salt into cream and pour mixture over chocolate. Cover bowl with plastic wrap, set aside for 3 minutes, and then stir with wooden spoon to combine. Stir in butter, one piece at a time, until fully incorporated.

3. Using rubber spatula, transfer ganache to prepared pan and set aside at room temperature for 2 hours. Cover pan and transfer to refrigerator; chill for at least 2 hours. (Ganache can be stored, refrigerated, for up to 2 days.)

4. FOR THE COATING: Sift cocoa and sugar through fine-mesh strainer into large bowl. Sift again into large cake pan and set aside.

5. Gripping overhanging parchment, lift ganache from pan. Cut ganache into sixty-four 1-inch squares (8 rows by 8 rows). (If ganache cracks during slicing, let sit at room temperature for 5 to 10 minutes and then proceed.) Dust hands lightly with cocoa mixture to prevent ganache from sticking and roll each square into ball. Transfer balls to cake pan with cocoa mixture and roll to evenly coat. Lightly shake truffles in hand over pan to remove excess coating. Transfer coated truffles to airtight container and repeat until all ganache squares are rolled and coated. Cover container and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or up to 1 week. Let truffles sit at room temperature for 5 to 10 minutes before serving.

TECHNIQUE

TRUFFLE TRIALS WE OVERCAME

Truffles may be nothing more than chocolate ganache rolled in a coating, but they're full of potential pitfalls.

DULL EXTERIOR

Tempering chocolate for the coating gives it a glossy sheen—but unless you're a

professional chocolatier, it's a tricky business. One wrong move and the results can easily turn matte and look smudged.

DRIPPY MESS

Chocolate-dipped truffles must be drained—and tend to drip all over the counter.

GRAINY INTERIOR

Even if the ganache looks creamy and smooth when warm, it can turn gritty and grainy as it cools.

LOPSIDED LOOKS

Piping perfectly round truffles takes a practiced, steady hand. Otherwise, the results will be lopsided.

TECHNIQUE

HOW TO GET SILKY-SMOOTH TRUFFLES

START WITH MELTED CHOCOLATE Microwaving the chocolate before mixing it with the cream allows us to stir—rather than whisk—them together, reducing the air that can cause grittiness.



ADD CORN SYRUP, THEN BUTTER Corn syrup smooths over the gritty texture of granulated sugar. Small pieces of softened butter add silkiness.



COOL IT DOWN GRADUALLY Allowing the mixture to cool at room temperature for two hours before chilling prevents the formation of grainy crystals.



America's Test Kitchen is a 2,500-square-foot kitchen located just outside of Boston. It is the home of *Cook's Country* and *Cook's Illustrated* magazines and is the workday destination for more than three dozen test cooks, editors, and cookware specialists. Our mission is to test recipes until we understand how and why they work and arrive at the best version. We also test kitchen equipment and supermarket ingredients in search of brands that offer the best value and performance. You can watch us work by tuning in to *America's Test Kitchen* (www.americastestkitchen.com) on public television.