



Chocolate Lover's Weekend

Candied Orange Peel

6 thick-skinned Valencia or Navel Oranges
4 1/2 cups Sugar, plus extra for rolling
1 1/2 cups Water

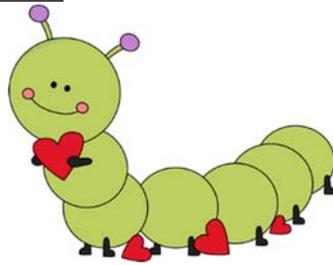


Score oranges into quarters, cutting down only into the peel (not the fruit). Peel the skin and pith into large pieces reserving the orange for another recipe. Cut the peel into 1/4" wide strips. Put the orange peels in a large saucepan with cold water to cover & bring to a boil. Pour off water. Repeat a second time. Drain peels and set aside.

Whisk the sugar with 1 1/2 cups of water. Bring to a simmer and cook for 8 to 9 minutes (230 to 234°F on candy thermometer). Add the hot peels and simmer, gently reducing heat to retain a simmer. Cook until the peels get translucent, about 45 minutes. Resist the urge to stir the peels or you may introduce sugar crystals into the syrup. If necessary, swirl the pan to move the peels around. Drain the peels. Save the syrup for ices tea. Roll the peels in sugar and dry on a rack for 4 to 5 hours. (Or skip rolling in sugar and dry peels on a rack. Once dry, dip in your favorite chocolate.) Store in an air-tight container. Yields about 2 cups of peels.

Black Forest Cheesecake

1 pkg (8 oz) cream cheese, softened
1/3 cup sugar
1 cup (8 oz) sour cream
2 tsp vanilla extract
1 (8 oz) tube of cool whip
1/4 cup baking cocoa
1 tbs confectioners' sugar
1 can (21 oz) cherry pie filling
1 chocolate crumb crust (or use chocolate decadence cookies)



In a large bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Beat in sour cream and vanilla. Fold in whipped topping. Spread half of the mixture evenly into crust. Fold cocoa and confectioners' sugar into remaining whipped topping mixture; carefully spread over cream cheese layer. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours. Top with dollops of cherry pie filling.

Chocolate Decadence Cookies

1/2 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1/4 cup packed dark brown sugar
1/8 tsp ground black pepper
2 tsp vanilla
3/4 cup granulated sugar
1/2 tsp baking soda
1/8 tsp salt
1 egg
1 1/3 cups all purpose flour

In a large bowl beat butter with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add granulated sugar, cocoa powder, brown sugar, baking soda, salt and pepper. Beat until combined. Beat in egg and vanilla until combined. Gradually stir in flour. Divide dough in half. Shape each into a 8" long roll. Wrap each

roll in plastic wrap or waxed paper. Chill about 1 hour or freeze about 30 minutes, until dough is firm enough to slice. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Cut rolls to 1/4" slices. Place slices 2 inches apart on an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake about 8 minutes or until edges are firm. Cool on cookie sheet for 1 minute. Transfer to wire rack to cool.

Milk Chocolate Chip Blondies w/

Salted Caramel

1-1/2 cups packed brown sugar
2 large eggs, lightly beaten, room temp.
1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup (6 ounces) Ghiradelli milk chocolate chips
1 package Kraft Caramels

1/2 cup butter, melted
1 tsp vanilla extract
1/2 tsp baking powder
Coarse Sea Salt

In a large bowl, combine the brown sugar, butter, eggs and vanilla just until blended. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; add to brown sugar mixture. Stir in chocolate chips. Spread into a greased 13x9-in. baking pan. Unwrap caramels and cut into 4 pieces each. Randomly drop on top to blondie batter. Bake at 350° until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 18-20 minutes. Remove from oven and sprinkle with Coarse Sea Salt while still warm. Cool on a wire rack. Cut into bars.

Potato Chip Clusters

9 ounces white baking chocolate, chopped
2 cups coarsely crushed ridged potato chips
1/2 cup chopped pecans



In a large microwave-safe bowl, melt white chocolate. Stir in potato chips and pecans. Drop by tablespoon onto waxed paper-lined baking sheets. Refrigerate until set.

"Winnings" Nut Cookies

1 cup lard (or shortening)
2 cups brown sugar
3 1/2 cups flour
1 cup nuts (or chocolate chips or baking candies) (or a mixture of dried fruit such as 1/3 c diced cherries, 1/3 c diced cranberries & 1/3 c diced apricots)
2 eggs
1 tsp baking soda
1/2 tsp salt

Cream lard and brown sugar. Add eggs. Blend in dry ingredients. Stir in nuts. Roll dough into 1 1/2" diameter logs, wrap in wax paper and chill for at least 2 hours. Cut off 1/2" slices and place on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake in 350 F oven for 5-10 minutes.

Lemon Crinkle Cookies

1 pkg lemon cake mix
1/3 cup vegetable oil
2 tbs. lemon juice
1/2 cup powdered sugar
2 eggs
zest of 2 lemons
1/2 tsp. Lemon extract

Preheat oven to 375F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper. Pour cake mix into a large bowl. Stir in eggs, oil, lemon zest, lemon juice, and lemon extract til well blended. Scoop spoonfuls of dough, form in balls and roll in powdered sugar to coat. Place on baking sheet. Bake for 10 min. or til the edges are lightly browned. Cool for 2-3 min. on the cookie sheet then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.