

Chapter 2

TIPS AND HINTS FOR MAKING FABULOUS FUDGE

When making fudge, large uneven crystals of granulated sugar are dissolved and heated, then re-crystallized. Coarse, grainy fudge results when large crystals are permitted to form. Small crystals result in a smoother and creamier finished product. Stir as little as possible from the time the sugar has completely dissolved through cooking and cooling stages. To prevent large crystals, sugars should be completely dissolved. When large crystals form on the side of the saucepan, they should be removed before a candy thermometer is placed in the pan.

To remove crystals from the side of a pan, use a pastry brush dipped in hot water. Gently brush the crystals down into the syrup or collect them on the brush bristles. Dip the brush frequently in hot water to clean the bristles. Another way to remove sugar crystals is to place a cover on the pan for 2 or 3 minutes. This allows trapped steam to melt the crystals and wash the sides of the pan. If the cover method is employed, make certain the syrup does not boil over.



COFFEE LIQUEUR PECAN FUDGE

3 cups	miniature marshmallows (about 4½ oz.)
2 cups	semi-sweet chocolate chips (12 oz.)
2 ounces	unsweetened baking chocolate (2 squares), coarsely chopped
2/3 cup	evaporated milk (or 5 oz. can)
1 1/3 cups	granulated white sugar
¼ cup	butter (½ stick)
1 cup	pecans, coarsely chopped
¼ cup	coffee liqueur
1/8 tsp	chocolate extract

Butter inside surfaces of an 8-inch square baking pan; set aside.

In a large bowl, combine marshmallows, chocolate chips, and unsweetened chocolate. Set bowl aside.

In a heavy, 2-quart saucepan, combine milk, sugar, and butter. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring continuously until sugar has dissolved. Remove from heat. Quickly pour over ingredients in previously prepared bowl. Stir until marshmallows

and chocolate have melted completely and mixture is smooth. Stir in nuts, liqueur, and chocolate extract. Pour into prepared pan. Let cool until firm. Cut into squares.

DARK CHOCOLATE MINT FUDGE

6 ounces	bittersweet or semi-sweet baking chocolate, chopped
¼ cup	marshmallow crème
1½ ounces	unsweetened chocolate, chopped
½ tsp	peppermint extract
1½ cups	granulated white sugar
¾ cup	sweetened condensed milk
1/3 cup	water
1/3 cup	whipping cream
¼ cup	unsalted butter (½ stick), cut into pieces
24	candied violets* (optional)

* Available at cookware stores and specialty foods stores

Line a 9 x 5-inch loaf pan with foil, overlapping sides; set aside.

In a large metal bowl, combine chocolates, marshmallow crème, and peppermint extract; set aside.

In a heavy 3-quart saucepan, combine sugar, milk, water, cream, and butter. Cook over medium-low heat, stirring continuously, until sugar has dissolved. Brush down sugar crystals from sides of pan using a pastry brush dipped in water. Increase heat to high and bring mixture to a rolling boil. Reduce heat to medium-high. Continue to cook and stir until a candy thermometer registers 232 degrees F, about 9 minutes. Remove from heat. Pour hot mixture over ingredients in previously prepared bowl – do not scrape pan. Stir vigorously with a wooden spoon until chocolate has melted and fudge thickens slightly, about 2 minutes (mixture should be very soft and glossy). Immediately pour mixture into prepared pan. Smooth top with a rubber spatula. Refrigerate until firm. Cut into squares. Press candied violet into center of each piece, if desired. Store in an airtight container in refrigerator. Serve at room temperature.

