



Mmm...I love turtles. These chocolates have been one of my favorites and making them in cookie form is even better. Loads of pecans, caramel topping, and a chocolate sugar cookie make for one excellent bite! Make the caramel sauce ahead of time, or use store-bought.

Turtle Cookies

Ingredients

2 1/2 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup cocoa powder
1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
1 cup sugar
1 cup brown sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 cup chopped pecans
1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

Ingredients - Caramel Sauce

1 cup sugar
1/4 cup water
1 teaspoon light corn syrup
1/2 cup 35% cream
1 tablespoon vanilla extract

Instructions

If you are making homemade caramel sauce, give yourself an uninterrupted 15 minutes and have all the ingredients on hand, including a glass jar to store the caramel sauce. In a larger pot add the water, sugar, and corn syrup and bring to a boil over high heat. Whisk until the sugar is completely dissolved. Allow the mixture to boil for 10 to 12 minutes, stirring occasionally (the less sugar you get on the sides, the less crystallization). The mixture will turn from pale amber to a caramel color very quickly, so keep an eye on it. You don't want it to burn as you will need to start again. As soon as the sauce has turned caramel-colored, turn the heat to low. Add the cream slowly and be careful as the sauce bubbles up. Add the vanilla extract and whisk until the cream and vanilla are combined with the sauce. Whisk continuously for another minute to allow the sauce to thicken. Pour into the jar and cool completely. (Note: You will have leftover sauce to use for another time.)

Preheat your oven to 350°F and line your cookie sheet with parchment paper or a silicone mat. Sift the flour, baking soda, cocoa powder, and salt in a bowl and set aside. In a mixing bowl fitted with the paddle attachment, add the butter and sugars and beat on high until light and fluffy. Turn the mixer to medium and add the eggs one at a time followed by the vanilla extract. Beat for another 1 to 2 minutes. Fold in the flour mixture and until most of the flour has been absorbed. Return it to the mixer and blend for another 3 to 4 rotations. Stir in the chopped pecans and chocolate chips.

Using a round, small ice cream scoop or a tablespoon, drop the dough onto the prepared cookie sheet 2" apart. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes and allow the cookies to rest in the cookie sheet for an additional 5 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely. Heat up your caramel sauce in the microwave for 10 to 20 seconds until it can be poured with a spoon. Dip the spoon into the jar and using a back and forth motion, drizzle over the cooled cookies.

Makes 36 to 40 cookies.