

## JOHN'S CLASSIC DRINKING CHOCOLATE



Allow the truffles to come to room temperature before serving. Makes about 3 dozen truffles.

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- 2½ cups whole milk
- 4 ounces 99% unsweetened chocolate, coarsely chopped
- ⅓ cup granulated sugar
- 1½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- ¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon (optional)
- ⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)

Heat the milk in a medium saucepan over medium heat until it is hot to the touch. Whisk in the chocolate and sugar and continue whisking for 1 to 2 minutes until the sugar has dissolved. Whisk in the vanilla and the cinnamon and cayenne, if using. Reduce the heat to low. The chocolate may be made ahead; it will thicken as it sits.

Serve in demitasse cups or mugs depending on desired portion. Serves 6 to 8.

Note: For a lighter, airy consistency, remove the hot chocolate from the heat and mix with a hand blender on low speed just before serving. Or make ahead and use the frother of an espresso machine to reheat it. Individual servings can also be topped with frothed milk.

This can be made up to 3 days ahead and refrigerated, but if you use the spices, keep in mind their flavor intensifies over time.

### DARK CHOCOLATE: IT'S GOOD FOR YOU!

The health benefits of dark chocolate accrue from the cacao bean, from which chocolate is made. Once the cacao bean is processed, it is called cocoa, cocoa mass, cocoa liquor or cocoa solids.

- Dark chocolate and cocoa may provide energy, endurance and a strong immune system.
- Healthful chocolate contains at least 65 percent chocolate, has no added fats after cocoa butter, and lists chocolate first on ingredient list.
- The fewer ingredients, the better. Good quality dark chocolate will have more fat grams per serving than sugar grams.
- Health benefits don't apply if chocolate contains hydrogenated fats and/or too much sugar.
- If you savor the chocolate and let it melt in your mouth, you will be satisfied with less.
- For celebratory occasions, there should be no culinary limitations. Celebratory chocolate desserts, however, are not meant to, nor will they, reduce one's cholesterol or weight.

—From *Eat Chocolate—Lose Weight: The Chocoholic's Survival Guide and Practical Handbook* by Anne Isham (Nortex Press, 2004)

**Right: A cacao pod, which holds about 40 cacao seeds (or beans).**




**LOIS BOATWRIGHT** *CoServ Electric*

Prize-winning recipe: Baked Fudge

This month's winning recipe for Baked Fudge is an old-fashioned dessert. It's like a chocolate brownie pie without the crust. The top gets that perfect brownie crackle, but inside it's rich and creamy. Serve it with a dollop of pure, unsweetened whipped cream for a taste straight from Grandma's kitchen.

**Cook's Tip:** If you want to lightly sweeten the whipped cream, add 1/2 tablespoons of powdered sugar to the cream as you beat it. For a special treat, add a teaspoon of vanilla extract as well.

**BAKED FUDGE**

- 4 eggs
- 1 3/4 cups sugar
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup cocoa
- Pinch of salt
- 1 cup butter, melted
- 1 cup finely chopped pecans
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1/3 cup dark chocolate chips
- 1 cup whipping cream

Place eggs in mixing bowl and beat well (about 3 minutes). Add sugar, flour, cocoa and salt, and beat well. Stir in melted butter, pecans and vanilla until thoroughly blended. Pour into 9x9-inch baking dish or pan. Sprinkle chocolate chips on top. Place in a larger pan and pour water into larger pan until water comes 1 inch up side of smaller pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 45 minutes or until set and crusty. Test by inserting a knife 1/2 inch from the edge to see if the knife is clean when removed. Do not overbake. Remove from hot water to wire rack. Cool, then refrigerate until cold. Cut into squares. Whip the cream and put a dollop onto each square before

serving. Makes about 20 squares.

Serving size: 1 square. Per serving: 271 calories, 3 g protein, 19 g fat, 24 g carbohydrates, 117 mg sodium, 79 mg cholesterol

**LUSCIOUS DARK CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES**

- 1 package (12 ounces) Hershey's Special Dark chocolate chips
- 1 tablespoon instant coffee granules
- 1 tablespoon rum extract
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 2 2/3 cups powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- Cocoa powder, powdered sugar, toasted coconut or finely chopped nuts for garnish

Microwave chocolate chips in large microwave-safe bowl on High for 20-30 seconds at a time, stirring in between, until chocolate is melted.

Mix instant coffee granules and rum extract in small bowl and stir until coffee is dissolved. Set aside.

In large mixing bowl, mix cream cheese and sugar together, then add coffee/rum mixture. Add melted chocolate and vanilla. Mix well. Scrape down sides and cover bowl with plastic wrap. Chill for 20-30 minutes.

Shape a spoonful at a time into 1-inch balls by rolling in hands. Place on cookie sheet. Dust with or roll in your choice of garnish. Place each truffle in a small foil candy liner and keep refriger-

ated until ready to serve. Makes about 3 dozen truffles.

**MARY BETH HALL**
*Pedernales Electric Cooperative*

Serving size: 2 truffles. Per serving: 205 calories, 2 g protein, 10 g fat, 30 g carbohydrates, 39 mg sodium, 14 mg cholesterol

**CHEESECAKE WITH DARK CHOCOLATE**
**CRUST**

- 1 cup crushed nuts (macadamias or walnuts work best)
- 1 cup flour
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup butter, softened

Combine all ingredients and press into 9x9-inch baking dish. Bake at 325 degrees for 30 minutes.

**FILLING**

- 1 cup whipping cream
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

2-3 squares dark baking chocolate  
With an electric mixer, whip whipping cream until it thickens. In separate bowl, mix cream cheese, sugar and vanilla. Fold whipped cream into cream cheese mixture. Grate 2-3 squares of dark chocolate (depending on taste), reserving some to top with, and fold into mixture.

Spoon mixture over crust, smooth with back of spoon, and top with reserved grated chocolate. Refrigerate for 1 hour before serving. Serves 16-18.

**WILMA GRISCHKOWSKY**
*Pedernales Electric Cooperative*

Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 266 calories, 3 g protein, 21 g fat, 23 g carbohydrates, 96 mg sodium, 46 mg cholesterol


**RECIPE CONTEST**

June's recipe contest topic is **CAJUN VS. CREOLE**. Do you have family recipes from either tradition, or just a favorite dish that fits the bill? If so, please send it to Home Cooking, 2550 S. IH-35, Austin, TX 78704. You may also fax them to (512) 486-6254 or e-mail them to [recipes@texas-ec.org](mailto:recipes@texas-ec.org). Please include your name, address and phone number, as well as the name of your electric co-op. The deadline is February 15. The top winner will receive a tin filled with Pioneer products. Runners-up will also receive a prize.