

## Haystacks

- 1 (11-ounce) bag butterscotch chips
- 2 cups chow mein noodles
- 1 cup cocktail peanuts

Melt butterscotch chips. Stir in noodles and peanuts. Drop by teaspoon on parchment paper. Let stand until hard, about 20 minutes.

## Other Candies

### Special K Bars

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 1 cup creamy peanut butter
- 5 cups Special K cereal, slightly crushed
- Butter, for greasing pan
- 1 (12-ounce) bag semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 (11-ounce) bag butterscotch chips

In saucepan combine sugar and corn syrup. Bring just to a boil. Remove from heat and stir in peanut butter. Pour over cereal in large bowl and mix. Lightly press mixture into buttered 9x13 inch pan, buttering hands as necessary. In saucepan, slowly melt chocolate and butterscotch chips, stirring to mix. Pour over cereal mixture and spread. Let cool for several hours. Cut into small squares.

Knopf, Alfred A. The Fannie Farmer Cookbook. 1986, 12th edition.

Rombauer, Irma S. et al. Joy of Cooking. 2006, Scribner.



# Valentine Candy Class

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Bedford County FCE

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## From Sugar to Candy

Candy is simply sugar, liquid and flavoring that are melted together and heated to a high enough temperature to solidify. The degree to which the syrup is heated dictates the final consistency of the candy. As the mixture heats, the water evaporates and the concentration of sugar in the syrup rises. The higher the temperature and concentration of sugar, the harder the mixture will be upon cooling. So chewy candy, like caramel, is cooked to a lower temperature than a crunchy type of candy, like brittles.

There are two ways to test the stages of sugar syrup. One is to use a candy thermometer (see equipment) and the other is the cold water test. Many candy makers use both methods as there is a range of temperatures for each stage and it can vary with air temperature, humidity, ingredients, etc. from batch to batch.

The chart on the facing page describes the stages with temperatures, how the syrup reacts in cold water and some examples of candies that finish at that stage. The major stages are soft ball, firm ball, hard ball, soft crack and hard crack. The temperature of the syrup rises slowly to 220° F and will hover there a little and then take off quickly. It will level off again around 230° F and every 10 degrees after that. So pay attention and check the thermometer often.

For the cold water test, use a cup of cold (not ice) water and drop 1/2 teaspoon of the sugar syrup into the water. Immediately, work the dropped syrup in the water with your fingers for a few seconds. Refer to the chart for the characteristics at each stage. Remove the pan from the heat while doing this as it will take a few seconds and the temperature can rise quite a bit during that time.

## Diannes Cookies

- 1 pound white chocolate (or white chocolate melting wafers)
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 1 cup Cocoa Puffs cereal
- 1 cup crispy rice cereal
- 1 cup miniature marshmallows
- 1 cup cocktail peanuts

Melt white chocolate with almond extract. Mix the cereals, marshmallows and peanuts in a large bowl. Pour over the melted chocolate and stir to mix. Drop by teaspoons onto parchment paper and let set. Remove to an airtight container.

## White Chocolate Peanut Butter Clusters

- 1 pound white chocolate (or white chocolate melting wafers)
- 3/4 cup creamy peanut butter
- 2 cups Captain Crunch cereal
- 2 cups crispy rice cereal
- 2 cups miniature marshmallows
- 2 cups cocktail peanuts

In a large Dutch oven, melt the white chocolate stirring until smooth. Add the peanut butter until well combined. Meanwhile in a large bowl, combine cereals, marshmallows and peanuts. Pour into peanut butter mixture and fold until well combined. Drop by spoonfuls onto parchment lined baking sheets. Let set up several hours. Store in an airtight container between layers of waxed paper or parchment.

Store in an airtight container.

## Seafoam

- 2 cups sugar
- 1 bottle dark corn syrup
- 8 teaspoons sifted baking soda
- 18 ounces tempered chocolate or chocolate melting wafers

Combine sugar and syrup in a large heavy-bottomed pan. Cook to 305 degrees, stirring occasionally. Add baking soda and stir or beat until it foams up. Pour onto two silpat lined baking sheets (it will spread out quite a bit). Let set until cool - about 1 hour. Break into chunks. Dip in the melted chocolate and let set on a parchment lined sheet. Store in an airtight container.

## Drop Clusters

Drop clusters are the easiest to make. These are simply mixtures of nuts, cereals, etc. that are coated in a creamy mixture and dropped onto sheets to cool and set up.

### Chocolate Peanut Clusters (Crockpot Candy)

- 1 1/2 (16-ounce) jars salted dry roasted peanuts
- 1 (11 1/2-ounce) bag milk chocolate chips
- 1 (10-ounce) bag peanut butter chips
- 2 (12-ounce) bags white chocolate chips
- 1 (11 1/2-ounce) bag 60% cacao bittersweet chocolate chips

In a heavy bottomed Dutch oven, pour in the milk chocolate chips, peanut butter chips, peanuts, white chocolate chips and bittersweet chips in layers. Place over low heat and cover. After about 20 minutes and with chips melted around the edges of the pan, stir to combine. Cover again and leave over heat until completely melted, stirring occasionally. (Alternatively, you can layer the ingredients into a slow cooker and cook on low for 1 hour, stir, and then cook another 1/2—1 hour until completely melted.) Drop by spoonfuls onto parchment paper. Let stand until set. Store in an airtight container at room temperature. Makes a whole lot.

Stage	Temperature	Cold Water Test	Examples
Soft Ball	234 ° —240° F	Makes a soft ball which does not hold its shape; flattens when held in the fingers.	Fudge Fondant Pralines  Caramel Corn Opera Creams
Firm Ball	242° - 248° F	Makes a firm ball which holds its shape.	Caramels Marshmallows Marzipan
Hard Ball	250° - 268° F	Makes a hard but pliable ball.	Divinity Taffy
Soft Crack	270° - 288° F	Makes hard separate threads that bend when re-moved from water.	Butterscotch Nougat
Hard Crack	290° - 310° F	Makes brittle threads that remain brittle out of water.	Nut Brittles Toffee Candy Apples  Lollipops

## Crystallization

Nothing is more frustrating than when your smooth, velvety candy syrup turns to a dense, grainy mass with lightning speed. This is due to sugar crystals—bits of undissolved sugar or crystals that form on the sides of the pan—which set off a chain reaction that causes the syrup to crystallize and become grainy.

Preventing crystallization:

- If the recipe calls for butter, grease the sides of the pan with some of it before putting in the other ingredients
- Corn syrup or cream of tartar in the recipe can be helpful
- When adding the sugar to the pan, pour it in the center of the other ingredients
- Before heating, stir all of the ingredients together so they dissolve as much as possible
- When the syrup boils, cover the pan and let it boil for 2-3 minutes so the rising steam will wash down the sides of the pan, uncover and proceed
- As the syrup cooks, wash down any crystals on the sides of the pan with a natural-bristle brush, dipped in hot water, may need to do this a couple of times, the extra water will evaporate
- Once the syrup starts to boil, try not to stir it unless specified or necessary—butter, milk or chocolate in recipes will need slow stirring to prevent burning and high temperature candies will need to be stirred briefly to prevent scorching but stir slowly and try not to touch the edges of the pot
- If you detect the beginnings of crystallization, add a small quantity of water and begin cooking process again
- When pouring out of the pan, don't scrape the bottom and edges

## Peanut Brittle

2 cups sugar  
1 cup light corn syrup  
1/2 cup water  
1 cup butter  
4 cups **raw** peanuts  
2 teaspoons baking soda

Combine sugar, syrup, water and butter in a large Dutch oven. Cook on medium heat until candy thermometer reaches soft ball stage (238 - 240 degrees). Add peanuts (which have been heated in microwave for 4 minutes). Cook until thermometer reaches 302 degrees, stirring often to keep peanuts from burning on the bottom. Add baking soda and stir (it will foam up quite a bit). Pour onto butter greased baking sheets or silpat lined sheets. As it cools, use two forks to pull brittle so it is very thin. Allow to cool and break into pieces. Store in an airtight container.



stage. Remove from the heat. Quickly stir in the vanilla and transfer to a small mixing bowl or loaf pan (lined with lightly oiled foil for easy cleanup) to cool slightly, about 5 minutes. Working quickly so that the caramel does not harden, and using a greased spoon, spoon 1 tablespoon caramel over the center of each pecan group. Let the caramel cool for 30 minutes, then loosen each candy from the pan. Spoon a teaspoon of chocolate over each caramel candy. Refrigerate for 20 minutes to set the chocolate. Store between layers of waxed paper in an airtight container at room temperature for 10 days or in the refrigerator up to 3 weeks.

## Hard Candies

Hard candies are cooked all the way to the hard crack stage. Once they boil, use a high heat so they keep their clear color and don't crystallize. Use caution with sugar this hot as it will cause serious burns. Pour away from yourself and keep pets and children out of the kitchen. Use a long handled wooden spoon to stir as it can spatter.

### **English Toffie**

1 pound butter  
2 cups sugar  
3 tablespoons light corn syrup  
6 ounces semi-sweet chocolate chips  
3/4 cup sliced almonds, toasted

Combine butter, sugar and syrup in a large saucepan and cook, stirring constantly, until it reaches between 285—300 degrees on a candy thermometer. It will be the color of peanut butter. Pour into buttered 10"x15" jelly roll pan—it doesn't have to reach all the edges. When set for a few minutes, sprinkle the chips on toffee and let melt. Spread chocolate over the toffee and sprinkle with almonds. Let cool completely and break into pieces. Store in an airtight container.

## **Candy Making Prep**

Sugar is hygroscopic—meaning it absorbs moisture. So on a humid day, candy, which is made of sugar, will absorb the moisture in the air and become soft and sticky. It is best to make candy on a clear, cold day. If you are working in a more humid environment, let some of the moisture evaporate by cooking the candy syrup to two degrees higher than specified in the recipe.

Candy making requires all of your attention and things can happen quickly so have everything ready before you begin. Prepare your pans, get out all equipment needed and prep all ingredients before you begin cooking.

## **Equipment**

**Heavy bottomed, deep, straight-sided pot**—this keeps the candy from burning. Use a pan 4 times the volume of the ingredients as the mixture will boil up and foam up and you don't want an overflow.

**Double boiler**—used for melting chocolate, you can use a saucepan and a metal or heatproof glass bowl that fits on top

**Wooden spoons or silicone scrapers**—used for stirring (metal gets too hot)

**Metal pancake turner or bench scraper**—for spading, turning and spreading

**Offset spatula**—for spreading mixtures and smoothing tops

**Natural bristle pastry brush**—for washing down sugar crystals

**Silicone pan liners/marble slab/jelly roll pan**—for cooling candy mixtures

**Truffle dippers**—metal fork like tool and spiral basket like tool for dipping truffles and centers into chocolate, can break center tines out of a plastic fork

**Thermometers**—a candy thermometer that goes to 400 degrees and clips on the side of the pan to measure the temperature of the sugar syrup; a digital instant read or chocolate thermometer that will read in 1 or 2 degree increments for tempering chocolate

Test your thermometer once in a while by bringing water to a boil and check temperature (water boils at 212° F at sea level, subtract 1 degree for every 500 feet above sea level—Bedford County is 755 feet above sea level so it will boil at 210 1/2 degrees F here). If one or two degrees off, make adjustments in cooking as needed. If more than 5 degrees off, replace. Always bring the temperature up on your candy thermometer by warming in water before sticking into hot sugar syrup or put your thermometer in at the beginning to avoid breaking it.



Generously butter a 9x9 inch or 11x7 inch baking pan or spray with cooking spray and line with parchment paper. In a 4 quart pot combine sugar, corn syrup, butter and 1 cup of the cream. Bring slowly to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Wash down side of pan with water to prevent crystals. Place a warmed candy thermometer on the pan. Heat the remaining 1 cup of cream in the microwave for 1-2 minutes until hot. Gradually add the cream in a slow stream to the pot while constantly stirring. You need to add it slowly enough that the caramel never stops boiling or it will become crystallized. Stir frequently as the mixture begins to thicken and then stir constantly as it starts to darken. Cook until it reaches 242° F and forms a firm ball. Remove from heat and stir in the vanilla. Pour the caramel into the prepared dish. Do not completely scrape out the sides and bottom as this will be firmer and make your caramels have ribbons. Let cool completely overnight. Cut wax paper strips 5-6" long and then into thirds, about 4" wide. Cut the caramels into squares and place in the center of each wax paper sheet. Roll up and twist ends.

### **Turtles**

2 cups pecan halves, toasted  
1 cup heavy cream  
1/2 cup light corn syrup  
3/4 cup packed light brown sugar  
2 tablespoons butter  
2 teaspoons vanilla  
6 ounces tempered chocolate or chocolate melting wafers

On a silpat or parchment paper lined baking sheet, arrange the pecans in groups of four—like four legs sticking out. In a saucepan combine the cream, corn syrup, sugar and butter. Bring to a boil over low heat, stirring to dissolve the sugar, then wash down the sides of the pan with a pastry brush dipped in warm water. Place a warmed candy thermometer in the pan and cook, stirring frequently until the mixture reaches 246° F, the firm ball

## Pralines

“PRAH - leens” are a patty-shaped pecan candy from New Orleans. “PRAY - leen” is a clear nut brittle made with almonds or hazelnuts and pulverized. New Orleans pralines have an unmistakable grain that comes from beating the sugar mixture while it is warm.

### **New Orleans Pralines**

1 1/2 cups sugar  
3/4 cup light brown sugar  
1/2 cup milk  
6 tablespoons butter  
1 1/2 cups pecans  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Combine all ingredients and bring to a softball stage, 238°-240° F (bring to a rolling boil over high heat, then reduce to medium heat and cook for 3 minutes), stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Stir until mixture thickens slightly, becomes creamy and cloudy, and pecans stay suspended in mixture. Immediately spoon out onto buttered parchment paper.

## Caramels

Caramels are a mixture of sugar, corn syrup (and/or honey), milk (and/or cream) and butter. The characteristic flavor comes from the caramelization of the sugar but other flavors can be added. Caramels are cooked slowly over medium heat to the firm ball stage. Resist the temptation to speed up the process by increasing the heat or you can get grainy or scorched caramels. The higher the temperature you cook the mixture to, the firmer the caramels. The length of time they cook determines the flavor and color. So be patient.

### **Cream Caramels**

2 cups white sugar  
3/4 cup dark corn syrup  
3/4 cup butter, cut into chunks  
2 cups whipping cream, divided  
1 teaspoon vanilla

## **Chocolate Coatings**

Real chocolate contains cocoa butter (natural fat in the cocoa bean) and chocolate liquor (ground up cocoa nibs—like baking chocolate—no alcohol). If you get a good chocolate bar you will notice it is shiny and has a snap to it when you break it. This is tempered chocolate. It is the way the crystals in the cocoa butter form that gives it a shine and snap. When you melt the chocolate for dipping the structure is changed and if you don't put it back in temper it will solidify with a duller color and softer texture that bends instead of snapping and can get a “bloom” on it—white streaks or dots where the cocoa butter comes to the surface. While perfectly fine to eat, it doesn't look attractive. We found that using good tempered chocolate bars to start with and the tempering method below had the best results with a flavor that melts on your tongue and shiny surface with a good snap.

### **Tempering chocolate with a modified seeding method:**

Chop chocolate into fine shards. Place 3/4ths of the chocolate in a glass bowl and microwave at 50% power until mostly melted. Add remaining chocolate and stir until melted, returning to the microwave for no more than 5 seconds at a time to complete the melting (don't want to get it too hot).

(From: Cook's Illustrated)

Because chocolate can be so fussy to work with there are alternative products for dipping chocolate candies. **Candy coating, almond bark, candy melts**, etc. are a chocolate-like coating that is made with vegetable fats instead of cocoa butter, coloring and flavoring. It is much easier to use. We found that it streaked a little with just a hint of shine and a good snap. It had a very artificial taste. **Chocolate melting wafers** contain cocoa with vegetable fats (no cocoa butter) and don't need tem-

pering but have a better chocolate taste. **Chocolate chips** contain ingredients to help them retain their shape at high temperatures. You can melt these for use on toffee that's covered with nuts, etc. but they will streak and bloom and are very dull as a coating for dipped chocolates. They have no snap and just bend instead of breaking.

If you get chocolate too hot (especially white chocolate) or if you get a little water in it, the chocolate will seize and form a clumpy mass. If you see this starting to happen, add a little shortening or oil and whisk well to bring it back—this will make the chocolate softer when setting up so only add as much as needed.

### Cooling

If the candy is to be beaten or stirred after it has cooled, let it rest, undisturbed until it is lukewarm (about 110° F) - cool enough to touch the bottom of the pan. May take 30 minutes or longer. You can set it on a cooling rack, heat-absorbent surface or in a pan of ice water. Don't stir until cooled, beat or stir without stopping until it has thickened and lost its gloss.

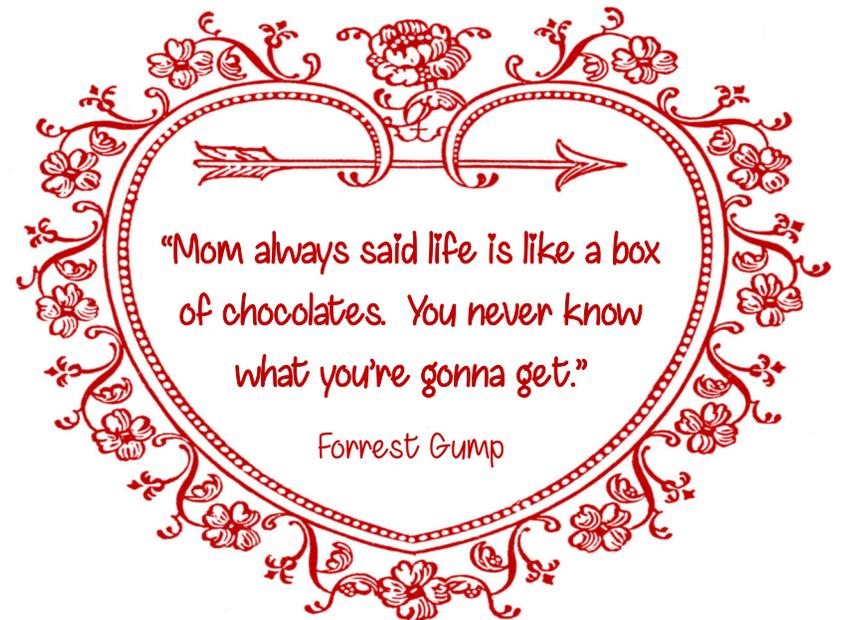
### Storing Candy

Store candies in airtight containers, separate from each other. Fudge stored with brittle will make the brittle soft. Store at room temperature, if cool enough. If too warm, store in the refrigerator or freeze. Candy tastes best at room temperature. Don't refrigerate hard candies, caramels, taffies or divinity because they are so hygroscopic and will become soft and crumbly in the refrigerator. Taffies and caramels benefit from wrapping individually in waxed paper, cellophane or foil squares.

### Martha Washingtons

10 ounce jar maraschino cherries, drained, chopped and blotted on paper towels to remove all moisture  
1 cup butter, melted  
1 pound powdered sugar  
1 tablespoon vanilla extract  
14 ounces shredded sweetened coconut  
14 ounce can sweetened condensed milk  
3 cups finely chopped toasted pecans  
16 ounces chocolate or chocolate almond bark

Combine cherries, butter, sugar, vanilla, coconut, condensed milk and pecans. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Form into balls about a tablespoon size. Refrigerate balls for 20 minutes. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Dip the balls in the chocolate coating, tapping off as much as possible and place on parchment lined sheet. Let set. Store in an airtight container, in the refrigerator, if warm.



turn to the sheet and freeze until ready to coat.

Truffle centers may be rolled in sifted cocoa powder, sifted powdered sugar, shredded sweetened and toasted coconut or finely chopped toasted nuts. You can also dip the centers. Either temper chocolate or melt chocolate flavored almond bark. Working quickly (and leaving centers in freezer, taking a few at a time, dip with dipping tools or a fork, tapping off the excess and placing on a parchment lined sheet. Let set. Layer between waxed or parchment paper and store in refrigerator. Let come to room temperature before serving.

### **Mocha Truffles**

Dissolve 1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons instant espresso powder in 2 tablespoons warm water. Make **Dark Chocolate Truffles**, stirring the espresso mixture thoroughly into the warm chocolate and cream mixture. After dipping in chocolate or almond bark, while still wet, top with a chocolate covered coffee bean.

### **Samoa Truffles**

2 cups sweetened shredded coconut  
11 ounces soft caramels, unwrapped  
2 tablespoons milk  
Dash of salt  
10 ounces chocolate or chocolate almond bark

Place a large skillet over medium high heat and then add the coconut to the pan. Stir constantly for 5-7 minutes or until the coconut turns a golden brown color. Remove from pan and let cool. In a double boiler, melt together the caramels, milk and salt. Stir until smooth and then add 1 3/4 cups of the toasted coconut (reserve the remaining 1/4 cup for later). Mix until very thick and thoroughly combined. Pour onto a parchment lined baking dish and spread into an even layer. Let cool for several minutes until cool enough to handle. Roll into small teaspoon size balls. Chill the centers. Dip in melted chocolate or almond bark and sprinkle with a little of the remaining toasted coconut.

## Types of Candies and Recipes

### Bark

Bark is a chocolate (white, milk, semi-sweet, dark) candy which resembles tree bark. It can have nuts or dried fruits or other ingredients pressed into the surface. It is great for using up bits of leftover chocolate.

### Tiger Bark

1 pound white chocolate almond bark, broken in pieces  
12 ounces creamy peanut butter  
6 ounces semi sweet chocolate chips

Place almond bark in a microwaveable bowl. Microwave 1 minute. Stir, microwave in 30 second increments stirring between until melted. Stir in peanut butter and microwave 1 minute, stir. If needed microwave in 30 second increments until smooth and creamy. Spread onto a 15 1/2 x 10 inch jelly roll pan that has been lined with waxed paper. In a microwave safe bowl melt chocolate chips at 50% power in 30 second increments, stirring between until melted. Pour over peanut butter mixture, use a butter knife to marble. Chill until set cut in pieces.

### Fudge

Fudge is a semi-soft candy made from a cooked sugar syrup enriched with cream or butter. It can overcook quickly, so have everything ready. Cook it slowly over medium heat to the soft ball stage. Resist the temptation to increase the heat to speed things up as it can create a scorched flavor and overly grainy texture. For an old fashioned grainy fudge, start stirring the moment you take the pan off the heat. For a smooth, creamy fudge, let the syrup mixture cool to 110° F before stirring. Don't scrape the bottom of the pan when pouring out as the bottom has been cooked to a higher temperature and could crystallize the whole batch. The flavor of fudge matures after a day or so and the texture improves. If stored longer than 10 days at room temperature or 1 month in the refrigerator, it will develop white spots, known as bloom. It's fine to eat but doesn't look good.

### Five Minute Chocolate Fudge

2/3 cup evaporated milk  
1 1/2 cups sugar  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 1/2 cups mini marshmallows  
1 1/2 cups milk chocolate chips  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
1/2 cup chopped walnuts or pecans

Mix milk, sugar and salt in a saucepan. Over medium heat, bring to a boil. Cook 5 minutes stirring constantly. Remove from heat, stir in marshmallows and chocolate chips until melted and well blended. Stir in vanilla and nuts. Pour into a buttered square dish. Let cool, then cut in squares.

### Maple Walnut Fudge

1 cup half and half  
3/4 cup maple syrup  
1/2 cup heavy cream  
3 cups sugar  
1/4 cup dark corn syrup  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
3 tablespoons butter, softened  
2 teaspoons vanilla  
1 1/2—2 cups walnuts, toasted and coarsely chopped

In a large heavy saucepan combine half and half, maple syrup, cream, sugar, corn syrup and salt. Stir over low heat until the sugar is dissolved, about 5 minutes, then brush down the sides of the pan with a pastry brush dipped in warm water. Raise the heat to medium, place a warmed candy thermometer in the pan, and cook the mixture, without stirring, until it reaches 234° F (soft ball stage). Remove from heat and add butter and vanilla on top, without stirring.

Cool the mixture to 110° F by placing the bottom of the pan in

cold water to stop the cooking. When cool, stir the fudge in the pan with a wooden spoon just until it thickens and begins to lose its sheen OR transfer to the bowl of a heavy-duty mixer (don't scrape out of bottom) and beat on low speed with the paddle attachment until it begins to thicken and lose its sheen, 5-10 minutes. Watch carefully or it may thicken too much and become unworkable.

Stir in walnuts and pour into an 8" square pan lined with buttered foil that extends over the sides. Smooth the top with an offset spatula and let stand for 1 hour. Use a large, heavy knife to score into 1" squares. Cover and refrigerate at least 24 hours. Take out of the pan and peel off the foil. Finish cutting into squares and serve or store.

### Truffles

Named after the savory and expensive black truffles, traditional candy truffles are a plain or flavored ganache center that is rolled in a variety of coatings or dipped in chocolate. They are one of the easiest candies to make and there are all kinds of non-traditional variations on fillings. Chilling the centers will help keep them from falling apart while coating.

### Dark Chocolate Truffles

12 ounces bittersweet or semisweet chocolate, finely chopped  
1 cup heavy cream

Place chocolate in a medium bowl. Bring the heavy cream to just under a simmer in a small saucepan. Pour over the chocolate and stir gently until the mixture is smooth and thoroughly blended. Cool to room temperature, stirring occasionally and then refrigerate for 3-4 hours, until the ganache is thick and quite stiff. Line a baking sheet with wax or parchment paper or a silicone liner and refrigerate until cold. Use a melon baller or small cookie scoop (about 3/4" in diameter) to scoop out balls of ganache onto the lined and chilled sheet. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and refrigerate until firm, about 2 hours. When firm, roll the balls between your palms to smooth them out. Re-