

# Holiday Snaps







1 cups packed brown sugar  
 3/4 cup vegetable shortening  
 1 egg  
 1/4 cup molasses  
 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
 1 cup 3 Minute Brand® Quick or Old Fashioned Oats  
 2 teaspoons baking soda  
 2 teaspoons ground ginger  
 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
 1/4 teaspoon salt, optional  
 sugar



Combine sugar and shortening; beat until creamy. Stir in egg and molasses. Combine flour, oats, baking soda, ginger, cinnamon and salt. Add to creamed mixture; mix well. Chill 1 hour. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease cookie sheet. Roll dough into 1-inch balls; roll in sugar. Place on prepared cookie sheet 2 inches apart. Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until lightly browned. Let stand 5 minutes before removing to racks to cool. Makes 4 dozen.

Nutrition information per cookie: 62 calories, 9.5g carbohydrate, 1g protein, 2.5g fat, 4.5mg cholesterol, 38mg sodium, .5g dietary fiber.

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Submitted by  
Tonya Netzley

submitted  
by Jessica  
Forrest

## Salted Butter Caramel Ice Cream

One generous quart (liter)

Be sure to use good salt. I use **fleur de sel**, but if you don't have it, a mild-tasting sea salt will do in a pinch, such as **Maldon**, fine gray salt, or kosher salt. Don't use ordinary fine table salt; it's far too harsh. In step 6, all of the caramel may not dissolve. Stirring it over very low heat should melt any stubborn bits. If not, don't worry; they'll be strained out later. Because of the caramel in this ice cream, once churned and frozen, it'll remain nice & creamy. As noted, this is an update from a previous recipe which had 1 1/2 cups (300g) for sugar in the caramel custard, which some readers reported made the finished ice cream quite soft. I reduced it by 1/4 cup (50g). But if you like the caramel flavor stronger, you're welcome to use 1 1/2 cups of sugar in step #5.

### For the caramel praline (mix-in)

1/2 cup (100g) sugar

3/4 teaspoon sea salt such as **fleur de sel** (see headnote)

### For the ice cream custard

2 cups (500ml) whole milk (divided)

1 cup (240ml) heavy cream, warmed

1 1/4 cups (250g) sugar

4 tablespoons (60g) salted butter, cubed

scant 1/2 teaspoon sea salt

5 large egg yolks

3/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. To make the caramel praline, spread the ½ cup (100g) of sugar in an even layer in a medium-sized, unlined heavy duty saucepan: I use a 6 quart/liter pan. Line a baking sheet with a silicone baking mat or brush it sparingly with unflavored oil.
2. Heat the sugar over moderate heat until the edges begin to melt. Use a heatproof utensil to gently stir the liquefied sugar from the bottom and edges towards the center, stirring, until all the sugar is dissolved. (Or most of it—there may be some lumps, which will melt later.) Continue to cook stirring infrequently until the caramel starts smoking and begins to smell like it's just about to burn. It won't take long.
3. Without hesitation, sprinkle in the ¾ teaspoon salt without stirring, then pour the caramel onto the prepared baking sheet and lift up the baking sheet immediately, tilting and swirling it almost vertically to encourage the caramel to form as thin a layer as possible. Set aside to harden and cool.
4. To make the ice cream, make an ice bath by filling a large bowl about a third full with ice cubes and adding a cup or so of water so they're floating. Nest a smaller metal bowl (at least 2 quarts/liters) over the ice, pour 1 cup (250ml) of the milk into the inner bowl, and rest a mesh strainer on top of it. Warm the cream in a small saucepan or microwave oven and set aside.
5. Spread the 1 1/4 cup (250g) sugar in a large saucepan, with a capacity of at least 4qts/4l, in an even layer. Cook over moderate heat, until caramelized, using the same method described in Step #2.
6. Once caramelized, remove from heat and stir in the butter and salt, until butter is melted, then gradually whisk in the warm cream, about 1/4 cup at a time, stirring as you go. The caramel may harden and seize, but stirring it over low heat should encourage those bits to melt. (A few bits may be stubborn, which will dissolve or can be strained out later.) Stir in the remaining 1 cup (250ml) of the milk.
7. Whisk the yolks in a small bowl and gradually pour some of the warm caramel mixture over the yolks, stirring constantly. Scrape the warmed yolks back into the saucepan and cook the custard using a heatproof utensil, stirring constantly and scraping the bottom as you stir, until the mixture thickens. If using an instant-read thermometer, it should read 160-170°F (71-77°C).
8. Pour the custard through the strainer into the milk set over the ice bath, add the vanilla, then stir frequently until the mixture is cooled down. Refrigerate at least 8 hours or until thoroughly chilled.
9. Freeze the mixture in your ice cream maker according to the manufacturer's instructions.

10. While the ice cream is churning, crumble the hardened caramel praline into very little bits, about the size of very large confetti (about ½-inch, 1 cm). You can use a mortar and pestle or place the caramel shards in a sturdy freezer bag and crush them with a rolling pin. If you used a silicone baking mat, you fold the mat repeatedly to crumble the caramel into bits.

11. Once your caramel ice cream is churned, quickly stir in the crushed caramel, then chill in the freezer until firm.

**Variations:** Add some strong liquid espresso (or instant espresso powder) to the custard to taste, prior to churning the ice cream to make **Coffee-Caramel Ice Cream**.

Other options might be some of the mix-ins in [The Perfect Scoop](#), like gooey Dark Chocolate Truffles, crackly chocolate *Straciatella*, or Oatmeal Praline folded in at the last minute.

This is also excellent served with warm Mocha Sauce (page 166), although it's also excellent melting over sautéed apples or alongside a wedge of apple pie or tarte Tatin for a caramel double-whammy.

Dear Robin,

We have a Christmas tradition of Grandma making 7 kinds of tins of candy. We ta-da the Opening of the tins to the Olympic song while we pass them around our table. The candy tins contain: Divinity, Panocha, Chocolate fudge, Peanut brittle, Toffee, Spiced pecans, and Salted Almonds. I loved this tradition because this was a desert for after dinner that I did not have to make and it was one that lasted until the tins were empty. I loved the Panocha so here it is:

#### Panocha

1 1/2 cups sugar

1 cup brown sugar

1/3 cup light cream

1/3 cup milk

2 tablespoons butter

1 teaspoon vanilla

1.2 cup broken walnuts or pecans

Butter sides of heavy 2 quart saucepan. In it combine sugars, cream, milk, and butter. Heat over medium heat, stirring constantly till sugars dissolve and mixture comes to boiling. Then cook to soft-ball stage (238 degrees), stirring only when necessary.

Immediately remove from heat and cool to lukewarm (110 degrees) without stirring. Add vanilla. Beat vigorously till fudge becomes very thick and starts to lose its gloss. Stir in nuts and spread in buttered shallow pan. Score in squares while warm. Top each with a nut half. Cut when firm.

Thanks for doing this. Sandra Block



## Melissa Friedrich's English Pub Tomato Soup Recipe

*(submitted by  
Robm Krumme)*

½ stick butter

1 lg. onion, diced

3 lg. carrots, diced

1 lg. leek, sliced

½ lb. bacon

1 lg. can tomato puree (28 oz)

1 lg. can peeled tomatoes (28 oz)

2 quarts chicken stock, heated

¼ cup flour

¼ cup sugar

3 T. malt vinegar

8-10 fresh basil leaves

Salt and pepper to taste

Melt butter in large pot. Add bacon, carrots, leaks, onion. Cook until bacon is done. Add flour and make a pasty mix. Remove from heat. Add tomatoes and puree. Return to heat and gradually add hot chicken stock. Stir to a light boil. Add sugar, basil & vinegar with salt & pepper. Simmer 1 hour uncovered. Let cool. Blend in blender.

This recipe freezes well. Makes 5-6 quarts of soup.

# Nana's Love – Holidays & Apple Cake

*Feel free to try the recipe and if you are a nut about nuts, you can even add 2 C of chopped nuts...but you don't need to. Bon Appetit! ~Kali Rourke*

**Fall and Winter are different here in Central Texas.** Trees start to change, but not to the vivid colors I remember from my Northwest Washington childhood. Muted tones seem to dominate the land with an occasional bright mesquite tree to break up the monotony.

The temperatures barely drop from summer's highs until a front comes ripping through, usually around Thanksgiving, causing rain and winds that knock every turning leaf to the ground. Summer often metamorphoses directly into winter, but not usually with the lovely snowfall and sunny, but icy, days of my childhood.

**It is in the fall, however, that I miss the Northwest the most.**

I long for the oranges, reds and gold of the trees. I remember the smell of burning leaves, spicing the slowly chilling air as we bid fond goodbyes to the brief summer sun. I miss the smell of the evergreens and thick, humus topsoil under my feet.

I loved the anticipation in the air as school began and we welcomed the coming Halloween and Thanksgiving, as they led up to Christmas.



**I miss the taste of my Nana's apple cake.**

She did not make it very often when we were young. We were poor and it took expensive items like oil, sugar, cloves and cinnamon. We could get the apples fairly cheap...after all, it was the Northwest, but the other things could be quite dear.

When Nana decided it was time to bake an apple cake, the house would smell like fall and the holidays all day long. All of the kids were on their best behavior, and Nana only had to look thirsty to have her favorite Pepsi delivered to her by some grandchild who was particularly good at sucking up.

The rich, cinnamon smell was just a tease for the main event that was ahead, though. We waited through the day with anticipation and rushed through our dinner, barely tasting it, but salivating at the prospect of Nana's apple cake.

It was served in small squares of brown, moist, savory deliciousness. If we were particularly flush, there would be whipped cream in a dollop beside it, but you could do without.

I remember biting into a piece and tasting the oil and small apple chunks as they burst on my taste buds. Then the cinnamon hit the middle of my tongue. It was "heaven on a fork" and I loved it almost as much as the angel who baked and served it to me.

**It was Nana's love, wrapped in the tastiest wrapper she could achieve.**

**Nana's Apple Cake Recipe:**

4 C Chopped Apples

1 t Salt

1 t Soda

2 t Cinnamon

¼ t Cloves

1 C Oil

3 Eggs

1½ t Vanilla

2 C Sugar

2 C Flour

Sift salt, cinnamon, soda and cloves. Add oil, eggs, vanilla; then add apples, sugar and flour into the bowl. Mix. Bake in 13×9" pan at 350 degrees for 1 hr. or until toothpick comes out clean. Sprinkle with powdered sugar or serve with whipped cream and a big dollop of love.

Keeps for up to a week if covered or refrigerated.