

Easy Pecan Pralines: Southern Sweetness in Every Bite

Here's what you'll need to create these irresistible Easy Pecan Pralines:



TIME
3-5 min

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INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ cups granulated sugar
- ¾ cup dark brown sugar, packed
- ½ cup whole milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
- 1 ½ cups pecans, coarsely chopped (lightly toasted for best flavor)

DIRECTIONS

1. Prepare : Your Work Surface:
2. Before you begin cooking, prepare your work surface. Lay out a long sheet of wax paper (or parchment paper) on your counter or a flat table. Keep a tablespoon (the kind you would eat soup with, not a measuring spoon) handy near the wax paper, as you'll need to work quickly.
3. Combine : Ingredients in Saucepan:
4. In a sturdy 4-quart saucepan (a heavy-bottomed one is best to prevent scorching), combine the 1 ½ cups granulated sugar, ¾ cup packed dark brown sugar, ½ cup whole milk, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, and 6 tablespoons of real butter (cut into small pieces).
5. Heat the mixture over low heat, stirring often with a wooden spoon. Continue stirring until the butter is completely melted and both sugars are fully dissolved. The mixture should be smooth with no grainy sugar crystals visible.
6. Boil the : Mixture:
7. Once the sugars are dissolved, increase the heat to medium-high. Bring the mixture to a full, rolling boil.
8. Once boiling, let the mixture continue to boil for exactly 3 minutes. During this 3-minute boil, stir constantly with your wooden spoon. Be aware that the mixture will bubble up quite high, so ensure your saucepan is large enough to accommodate this. This boiling process is crucial for the sugar to reach the correct stage.
9. Thicken and : Drop:

10. After exactly 3 minutes of boiling and constant stirring, immediately remove the saucepan from the heat.
11. Continue to stir the mixture constantly with your wooden spoon for precisely 2 minutes. During this stirring period off the heat, the mixture will begin to thicken significantly and may become slightly opaque. You'll feel it resisting your spoon more.
12. Work : Quickly: As soon as the 2 minutes of stirring off-heat are complete, immediately begin to drop the pralines. Using your tablespoon, quickly scoop individual portions of the thickened mixture and drop them onto the prepared wax paper. Work swiftly as the mixture will continue to set and thicken in the pan. Aim for individual rounds, roughly 2-3 inches in diameter.
13. Cool and : Store:
14. Allow the dropped pralines to rest undisturbed on the wax paper for at least 15 minutes. During this time, they will set and harden as they cool.
15. Once completely cooled and firm, carefully peel the pralines off the wax paper.
16. Store the pralines in an airtight container at room temperature. They are best enjoyed within a few days. This recipe typically yields 12 to 14 pralines, depending on size.

SWAPS & NOTES

Sugars: The combination of granulated and dark brown sugar is crucial for the classic praline flavor and texture.

Dark brown sugar provides a deeper, more molasses-like note.

Whole Milk: Whole milk is essential for the richness and creamy texture of the pralines.

Avoid using lower-fat milk, as it can affect the consistency.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Prep Before You Start: Having your wax paper and spoon ready before you begin cooking is vital, as the dropping stage requires speed.

Use a Heavy-Bottomed Pan: This prevents scorching and helps distribute heat evenly, which is crucial for candy making.

Do Not Increase Heat Too Much: While you need a boil, too high heat can cause the sugar to crystallize or burn.

Stir Constantly: Continuous stirring during the boiling and cooling phases is essential to prevent scorching and to achieve the correct texture and consistency.

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