

Brigadeiros (Brazilian Fudge Balls)

They say a way to a man's heart is through his stomach. Enthusiastic women supporters of a handsome Brazilian general running for president in 1945 knew this well. They made these addictive little fudge balls to hand out at fundraisers. The treats remain one of the country's most recognized and beloved sweets. The general lost the election, but the sweet he inspired won in a landslide.

Ingredients

1 tablespoon unsalted butter, softened, plus more for buttering hands and plate
1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
1/4 cup unsweetened natural cocoa
Pinch kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
about 1/2 cup good-quality chocolate sprinkles

special equipment

fine mesh strainer
heatproof spatula
small paper candy cups

Directions

Lightly butter a large flat plate and set aside.

Pour the condensed milk into a medium saucepan over medium-low heat. Sift the cocoa through a fine mesh strainer into the pan, then whisk the milk and cocoa until smooth. Whisk in the butter and salt.

Cook the mixture over medium-low heat, stirring and scraping constantly with a heatproof spatula, for about 10 minutes, until very thick. It's ready when a swipe with the spatula leaves a clean path on the bottom of the pan and it takes several seconds to fill in again.

Remove the fudge from the heat and stir in the vanilla. Pour onto the buttered plate, spread evenly and press plastic wrap lightly on the surface to cover. Cool to room temperature.

When fudge is cool, use buttered hands to roll small balls (about 1 scant tablespoon). Dredge in the chocolate sprinkles and pop into paper candy cups.

If not serving immediately, cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days. Bring to room temperature before serving.

total time: 1 hour (includes 30 minutes cooling)

active prep: 30 minutes

serves: makes 24 (1-inch) balls

difficulty: *easy*