

ALMOND BRITTLE

Since developing this brittle by accident, Chef Kurt has made it in American Culinary Federation competitions to garnish his desserts. Many chefs wanted the inside scoop—how did he take the sticky out of brittle? Now he's sharing his technique with you!

by Chef Kurt Kwiatkowski

Featured Food: Almonds

Yield: ½ pound

Ingredients

½ c. unsalted whole almonds 1/8 t. cream of tartar

1 c. sugar ½ t. salt

¼ c. water

Preparation

Place almonds in a dry skillet over medium heat. Toast until a light nutty aroma comes from the pan and the almonds have darkened slightly, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove almonds from the skillet and let cool.

Combine sugar and water in a non-stick pot; cook over low heat for 5 minutes. Sprinkle cream of tartar over the surface. Turn the heat up to medium and continue to cook, without stirring. Watch carefully and take the pan off the heat once the color is a nice caramel color (golden/dark brown), another 10 to 15 minutes.

Pour the sugar mixture onto a silicone baking mat that you have placed on a baking tray. Tip the tray slightly to cause the mixture to spread out without touching it. Sprinkle evenly with salt. Set aside to cool.

Put almonds into a food processor; pulse until well-chopped into very small pieces but NOT all the way to powder form. Remove from food processor bowl and set aside.

After the sugar mixture is well cooled, hard, and not sticky to the touch, break it up into pieces. Put the pieces into a food processor and pulse until a gritty sand-like powder is produced.

Preheat oven to 325°F. Spread the sugar-powder about ¼- to ½-inch thick on the silicone baking mat, in shapes if you want. The key is to have even coverage with no holes in the sugar-powder. Top with the finely chopped almonds. Place the tray in preheated oven for 2-4 minutes until sugar has melted again. Remove from the oven and cool. Serve with dessert.