

**2023 Best of Show, Outstanding Adult, and 1st Place in Adult Tarts by:  
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## **DULCE DE LECHE MOUSSE IN PECAN NESTS\***

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Preheat Oven: 350° F

Total Cook Time: 45 minutes

Chill Time: 1-2 hours

Total Time: 2-3 hours (with chill time)

Number of Recipe Servings or Yield: 8 tarts



### **INGREDIENTS**

#### **CANDIED PECANS FOR TOPPING:**

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon heavy cream
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup pecans

#### **PECAN NESTS:**

- 1 1/3 cups pecans
- 3/4 cup powdered sugar
- 2 large egg whites
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

#### **MOUSSE:**

- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/2 cup dulce de leche (jarred or homemade)
- 1/2 teaspoon unflavored gelatin powder
- 1 tablespoon hot water

*\*Recipe is the property of Western Pecan Growers Association*

## DIRECTIONS

- Step 1: Toast the 1 1/3 cups pecans for the nests on a cookie sheet in a 350° oven until fragrant, approximately 12-14 minutes, stirring once or twice to prevent burning. Remove from oven and set aside to cool.
  - Step 2: Make candied pecans for topping: Place 2 tablespoons butter and 1 tablespoon heavy cream in a small saucepan and heat on low until butter melts. Sprinkle 1/3 cup sugar on top (don't stir yet) and continue heating on low until sugar dissolves and mixture starts to bubble. Add 1/2 cup pecans, stir, and bring to boil over medium heat. Boil for 2-3 minutes, stirring occasionally, until mixture resembles caramel. Dump out onto parchment paper to cool. When cooled, chop into small pieces. Set aside.
  - Step 3: Place the now cooled oven-toasted 1 1/3 cups pecans in the bowl of a food processor with the 3/4 cup powdered sugar. Pulse to grind the nuts into a fine meal (approximately 50 pulses). Set aside.
  - Step 4: Place egg whites in the bowl of a stand mixer along with 3 tablespoons sugar, 1/8 teaspoon cream of tartar, and 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract. Whip on medium high, scraping sides of bowl occasionally with spatula, until stiff glossy peaks form, 7-8 minutes. Using a spatula, fold in the ground nut/powdered sugar mixture, mixing just until well blended. Scoop into a piping bag fitted with a 1/2-inch star tip. Pipe 8 nests onto a parchment paper-lined baking sheet (tip: draw 8 evenly spaced 3-inch circles on a rectangle of parchment paper, then flip and place on baking sheet): start at the center of each circle and pipe in a circular motion to form a 3-inch circle. Pipe a second layer on top of the outside circumference layer of the nest base to form a "lip" (think inverted jar lid). Leave out on countertop to rest for 15 minutes while you heat the oven to 375°. Place nests in oven and immediately reduce oven temperature to 325°. Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until lightly browned on the edges. Remove from oven and cool completely.
  - Step 5: Make the mousse: Add 1 tablespoon of hot water to a small mixing bowl and sprinkle with 1/2 teaspoon gelatin powder. Stir until gelatin is completely dissolved. Set aside. Whip 1 cup heavy cream with mixer until soft peaks form. Start slowly drizzling the gelatin water into the whipped cream and continue beating until stiff peaks form. Gently fold in 1/2 cup of dulce de leche with a spatula until well blended and no streaks of caramel remain. Spoon into a piping bag fitted with a large round tip. Pipe generous dollops of mousse into cooled nests. Sprinkle tops with the chopped candied pecans. Refrigerate for at least an hour before serving. Refrigerated in a covered container, they will keep well for a day or two.
- Note: Pecan decorations were made by sandwiching two toasted pecan halves together with dulce de leche, and then wrapping it in homemade marshmallow fondant. This was then pressed into a DIY pecan mold made from gelatin and glycerin. Not only are they cute, they taste good, too! Leaves were made from the same marshmallow fondant.