



February 6, 2016

FN DISH



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Chefs' Picks: Treats for a Snowy Day

Chefs' Picks tracks down what the pros are eating and cooking from coast to coast.

With winter storms blanketing the country, there are plenty of snow days. Before you turn to reheated leftovers and a packet of hot chocolate, borrow a recipe from these snow-inspired chefs who have the perfect ways to warm up after snowball fights or shoveling.



Marshmallows (with Hot Chocolate)

Chef Cory Colton, executive pastry chef of [Quality Italian](#) in New York City, loves his hot chocolate with autumnal flavors, like pear and ginger. “The combination of spices, sweet pear and rich, dark chocolate could not be more perfect. The kick of spice from the ginger in the marshmallows is unexpected, but a welcomed addition as it melts into the mug,” he says.

Spiced Hot Chocolate with Ginger Marshmallows

1 1/4 cups cream
2 3/4 cups milk
4 tablespoons sugar
1/2 cup pear puree
1 cinnamon stick
4 star anise

10 whole cardamom pods
1 1/2 cups good-quality dark chocolate (preferable 70 percent cocoa), chopped
2 tablespoons good-quality cocoa powder, such as Valhrona

In a heavy-bottomed pot, bring cream, milk, sugar, pear puree and the spices to a boil over medium heat. Cover the pot, bring down to simmer and allow the liquid to infuse for 30 minutes. Move the chopped chocolate and cocoa powder to a heatproof large bowl. Bring the mixture back to a boil, then pour the milk mixture through a fine strainer directly over the chocolate and cocoa powder. Whisk by hand until chocolate is melted and dissolved, or use a hand blender to combine.

Serve with Ginger Marshmallows (recipe below).

Ginger Marshmallows

Note: You'll need a candy thermometer for this project!

7 gelatin sheets

Ice, for chilling gelatin water

2 cups sugar

3/4 cup water

2 tablespoons corn syrup

2 egg whites

2 teaspoons fresh ginger, finely grated

Cornstarch and confectioners' sugar, for dusting

Prepare a baking sheet by lining it with parchment and dusting the surface with a mixture of equal parts cornstarch and confectioners' sugar.

Submerge gelatin sheets in ice-cold water and allow to bloom (get soft).

In a small pot, combine sugar, water and corn syrup. Put your candy thermometer in the pot. Bring to a boil and continue cooking until mixture has reached hard ball stage on a candy thermometer.

While the sugar mixture is reaching a boil, whip the whites, using a mixer on medium-high speed; continue to whip to soft peaks.

By the time the sugar mixture has reached the hard ball stage, the whites should be at a soft peak stage. With the mixer on medium speed, slowly add the hot sugar mixture to the whites, running it down the very inside of the mixer bowl to avoid making contact with the moving whisk (and spraying everywhere).

Remove gelatin sheets from water and squeeze out all the excess water that you can. Place the gelatin in the pot where the sugar had cooked – the residual heat will melt the gelatin, turning it into a liquid.

Drizzle the hot gelatin liquid into the whipping meringue in the same manner you did with the sugar syrup.

Lastly, add the finely grated ginger and whip until the mixture has cooled slightly but is still warm to the touch.

Spread the mixture onto the prepared pan, and smooth out and level with a spatula. Finish by dusting the top with another layer of confectioners' sugar and cornstarch mixture.

When cool, slice into squares. Drop the marshmallows into your hot chocolate (or eat them on their own!).