

# CHOCOLATE      PECAN      TURTLE CLUSTERS

I have always  
wanted to make Turtle Clusters.

Not because I have  
a fascination with real live turtles and think it would be fun  
to nibble on  
one. I've actually NEVER wanted to do that. Thank you so much  
for asking. You  
are always so considerate. ?

I've wanted to  
make Turtle Clusters because the flavors of chewy homemade  
caramel,  
crisp pecans and heavenly chocolate all combined into one  
blissful candy is  
just a bite of heaven right here on earth, that's why. Heaven.  
On. Earth. Is  
what I am saying here, folks. Whoever came up with the  
combination should be  
kissed on both cheeks, high-fived with both hands and given 50  
thumbs up.

You'll have  
to help me out with the thumbs, guys. The last time I checked  
I only had  
two.

If you hate  
caramel, pecans and chocolate...please do not give 50 thumbs up,  
just  
disregard this post. No hard feelings. See you tomorrow for  
a chocolate  
free recipe. ?

As for you fellow  
turtle lovers, let me show you how easy they are to make!

Here is how to prepare it:

**For Complete Cooking Instructions Please Head On Over To Next  
Page Or Open button (>) and don't forget to SHARE with your  
Facebook friends**

2 1/2 C pecans  
1/2 C butter (I use salted)  
1 C brown sugar  
1/2 C light corn syrup  
7 ounces sweetened condensed milk (1/2 of a 14 ounce can)  
1/2 t vanilla  
1 (12 ounce) package milk chocolate chips  
1/2 t shortening (I use butter flavored Crisco)

#### **How to make it :**

1. Toss 2 1/2 cups of pecans into a large skillet.  
Toast them over medium high heat, stirring occasionally, until  
they have  
darkened just a bit and smell fragrant and wonderful. Should  
only take a few  
minutes
2. Find yourself 2 large  
cookie sheets. Line them with parchment paper and spray it  
with cooking spray.  
Arrange your pecans into clusters, three to a group works  
well. You want to  
leave some space (about an inch) between each cluster.
3. Make your caramel (full tutorial with  
pictures found here). Place 1/2 C butter into a medium-sized  
sauce pan. Melt it  
over medium high heat. Add 1 C brown sugar, 1/2 C light corn

syrup and 7

ounces sweetened condensed milk to the pan. Increase the heat just a bit and

stir it continually. Cook and stir until it reaches 235-240 degrees. I

generally remove it from the heat when it reaches about 234 degrees. It will

continue to rise in temperature just a bit even without the direct heat, making

the caramel just the right texture.

4. Stir in 1/2 teaspoon vanilla

5. Carefully drizzle about 1 1/2 teaspoons of caramel over each nut cluster. You'll want to work quickly, as the caramel will

begin to set up. Be sure there is caramel touching all of the nuts in your

cluster. The caramel works like glue, sticking the nuts together.

6. In a microwave safe bowl pour 12 ounces of milk chocolate chips. Heat in the microwave for 30 seconds at a time, stirring

after each cooking interval.

7. Add 1/2 teaspoon of shortening to the melted chocolate. Allow it to sit for a minute or two (so it can melt and make the

chocolate chips more spreadable). Stir it all together.

8. Spoon about 1 1/2 teaspoons of melted chocolate over the top of the caramel and nuts. Swirl it around along the top

making a pretty swoop with your spoon.

9. Allow the chocolate to set up. Once it has hardened and cooled you can serve them immediately, or transfer them to an air

tight container.