



Brittle Love

(adapted from Gastro Chic)

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Last Valentine's Day, Gastro Chic published a recipe for peanut brittle with a chocolate heart painted on it, with instructions to "ignore your peanut brittle heart until it turns cold and hard." Then "To serve, smash the heart into pieces with a mallet. Enjoy!"

Since I, too, wasn't feeling the love that day, I commented that after smashing the peanut brittle heart, shards of it should be thrown from the rooftops of tall Manhattan skyscrapers. OR, dip the shards in the finest chocolate, dust with a bit of fine French gray sea salt, and send it to those you want to seduce. Idea! Brittle Love was born.

Ingredients:

2/3 cups water
2 cups sugar
1 stick unsalted butter, cubed
1/3 cup light corn syrup
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 Tablespoon sea salt, fine grind
12 oz. can of high quality salted, skinless peanuts (I like New York's own Bazzini) Nuts)
4-6 oz. excellent quality semisweet chocolate (Ghirardelli works great for this and is widely available)
French gray salt (I love to use "Le Paludier Sel Marin de Guerande, Fin Gris")

* Special Equipment:

- Candy thermometer
- Parchment paper or Silpat sheets

- 1) Line two sheet pans with parchment paper or a Silpat sheet and set aside.
- 2) Combine water, sugar, butter and corn syrup in a large heavy bottomed saucepan. Place over high heat and stir until combined and butter and sugar have dissolved.
- 3) Combine the baking soda and salt in a small bowl and set aside.
- 4) When butter has melted, reduce the heat and attach the candy thermometer

about halfway into the mixture and the tip is not touching the bottom of the pan. Allow the mixture to simmer until it becomes browned, bubbling and foamy and the temperature reads 295 degrees (around "soft crack" stage). This will take about 20 minutes, with the temperature rising quickly in the last couple of minutes, so don't stray too far from the pot.

5) Reduce the heat, add the baking soda and salt, and combine with the melted sugar mixture (it will foam up a bit more).

6) Working quickly, remove from heat and add the peanuts, stir to combine. Pour onto a lined sheet pan and using a large spatula spread the brittle into a thin layer (as much to the edges of the pan as possible). Allow to cool completely.

7) Once the brittle has cooled, break into random shards using your hands and set aside.

8) In a microwave-safe bowl, break up the chocolate into pieces and place in the microwave on high for about a minute. Stir and microwave again for about another minute until it is completely melted.

9) Dip the ends of the brittle shards into the chocolate and place onto a parchment paper or Silpat-lined sheet pan. Sprinkle with a bit of French gray sea salt and allow the chocolate to set (you may also place the pan in the fridge for five minutes or so to help the chocolate harden).

10) Once the chocolate has hardened you may:

- a. Eat some
- b. Throw it at someone
- c. Package it up nicely and show some Brittle Love!