

SWEET LIFE



UTAH'S JULIEANN CARAMELS USES
A TREASURED FAMILY RECIPE TO
CRAFT TREATS MADE WITH FRESH
BUTTER, RICH CREAM AND A
WHOLE LOTTA LOVE.



CARAMEL CRISPY TREAT
see recipe on page 74

SMOOTH. CREAMY. BUTTERY. SWEET.

An old-fashioned square of caramel can provide one of life's most satisfying respites. The trio of heavy whipping cream, perfectly-churned butter and sugar combine in perfect harmony to create a magical, melt-in-your-mouth moment even on the busiest of days. For Rowena Montoya, chef and owner of Sandy, Utah's JulieAnn Caramels, that perfect, caramelly bite has a beautiful backstory as well.

Montoya officially launched her caramel business five years ago. But its beginnings harken much further back to when her aunt Nancy Ann took Montoya in after her mother passed away when she was just fifteen years old. "My whole world had been rocked, and it didn't make sense to me anymore," she recalls. "But she loved me through the loss of my mother and showed me how to dust myself off, keep going and always have courage."

Montoya remembers the most formative moments were those spent in the kitchen with Nancy Ann and her other beloved aunt, Julie. It was a place where the trio shared stories and the aunts lent her advice on both cooking and life. "To this day, I think of the kitchen as a healing place."

After growing up, marrying and raising five kids in Utah with her husband, Frank, Montoya would find those life lessons circling back again after Frank

was forced to close his business in 2012 during the economic downturn. He then got a job that required traveling to trade shows. Montoya started looking for ways to help attract buyers to his booth, and, in a lightning-bolt moment, remembered the decadent and dreamy old-fashioned caramels she used to make with her aunts while growing up. Soon she was on the phone to Aunt Julie, who joined her from California to spend three days in the kitchen perfecting the recipe. Before long, eager fans had dubbed Frank "the caramel guy" and were asking where they could buy the sweet little treats for themselves.

Thus, JulieAnn Caramels was born, the company rightly named after the two aunts so instrumental in its creation—Julie on the culinary side, and Nancy Ann on the packaging end.

Over the years, Montoya has added over 40 different flavors to a selection of caramels sold at Utah-area boutiques and on-line. But she attributes the success of the company to a base recipe and method which calls for using only the highest quality whipping cream, butter and half-and-half, each batch lovingly tended and hand-stirred to perfection. "Before Julie stepped in to help, I could never get the recipe quite right with the products I was trying," she says. "But then I learned just how much the

quality of the butterfat matters in making the perfect caramel, and it's been Darigold ever since."

In addition to the ever-popular classic and sea-salt-kissed versions, Montoya recently introduced a tropical coconut, mango and pineapple flavor. She's currently developing a lavender vanilla caramel, which will join a roster that also includes maple bacon, pretzel, licorice, root beer and chocolate peanut-butter flavors. She has also become known for the signature caramel crispy treats often found in her custom corporate gift boxes. These confections feature JulieAnn's signature caramel layered in between two crisp-rice squares and topped with, say, a drizzle of chocolate sauce or scattering of flaky sea salt. "Whether we are pureeing fruit into it or layering in something like a habanero, in the end, I think it's the texture of our caramel that makes it stand apart. It's very smooth and layered in depth of flavor."

And through it all, Montoya hopes that her little company-that-could not only satisfies a person's sweet tooth, but conveys a story to them as well. "I hope our story inspires people to have courage, to be happy no matter what life deals them. Somebody took the time to instill that in my life and now I am hoping to do the same with a product that is made with so much love." ❖



recipes:
chewy salted caramels
caramel crispy treat
sumores
caramel sauce
hot caramel wassail



SUMORES
see recipe on page 74



WAFFLES WITH CARAMEL SAUCE
see recipe for caramel sauce on page 74

BROWNIES AND ICE CREAM WITH CARAMEL SAUCE
see recipe for caramel sauce on page 74



HOT CARAMEL WASSAIL
see recipe on page 74

chewy salted caramels

Note: While JulieAnn Caramel's family recipe remains a closely-guarded secret, here is one of our favorites.

1 CUP DARIGOLD HEAVY WHIPPING CREAM
¼ CUP (½ STICK) DARIGOLD BUTTER
¼ TEASPOON SALT
¼ CUP WATER
¼ CUP CORN SYRUP
1½ CUPS GRANULATED SUGAR
1 TABLESPOON VANILLA EXTRACT
COARSE SEA SALT

Line a 9 x 9-inch pan with parchment paper; brush paper with canola oil and set pan aside.

Combine whipping cream, butter and salt in a small saucepan and cook on medium until cream is heated and butter is melted (be careful not to scald milk mixture); set aside.

Add water and corn syrup to a large, heavy-bottomed saucepan; slowly add sugar into center of pan so it forms a mound. Using a spatula, press sugar into liquid until coated with syrup mixture, being careful that no sugar crystals splatter on sides of pan. (If necessary, brush sides of pan with a damp pastry brush to remove any stray sugar crystals.) Do not stir. Hook a candy thermometer to the side of the saucepan and cook over medium-high heat; the mixture will become very bubbly. When thermometer reaches 300°F, turn off heat and whisk in cream mixture; return to medium-high heat and bring temperature back to 245°F. The mixture will turn golden brown. Remove pan from heat; stir in vanilla.

Pour into prepared pan; tap pan on counter to let any air bubbles escape. Let sit 30 minutes on counter; sprinkle with coarse sea salt of choice. Set aside for 3 hours.

Remove caramel from parchment to cutting board. Cut into squares or rectangles with a sharp knife.

Wrap each caramel in pre-cut pieces (2 x 1½ inch squares) of waxed paper; twist ends closed. Caramels will keep at room temperature for about two weeks.

Caramel cut into 1-inch squares will make 81 pieces.

caramel crispy treat

1 CUP (2 STICKS) DARIGOLD BUTTER
2 BAGS (12 OZ. EACH) MINIATURE MARSHMALLOWS
8-9 CUPS CRISP-RICE CEREAL
1 LB. ANY FLAVOR JULIEANN CARAMELS, ROOM TEMPERATURE

Melt the butter and marshmallows together over medium-low heat in a stockpot until completely melted, stirring frequently. Remove from heat. Stir in 4 cups crisp-rice cereal; gradually add in 4 more cups, mixing until firm. Add additional 1 cup if mixture appears to be wet.

Line a 13 x 9-inch pan with freezer paper. Wet hands and press one-half of the cereal mixture into the pan. Lay caramel between 2 sheets of freezer paper; roll flat to approximately 13 x 9 inches. (Soften the caramel in the microwave for a few seconds until pliable.) Lay onto the crisp-rice mixture and top with the remaining cereal mixture. Let cool and cut into squares. Makes 12 to 24 servings.

TIP: Top with white chocolate, fresh coconut or crushed peppermint candy.

sumores

2 GRAHAM-CRACKER SQUARES
1 MARSHMALLOW
2 JULIEANN CARAMELS, ROLLED TO ½-INCH THICKNESS
½ CUP SEMI-SWEET CHOCOLATE CHIPS, MELTED
¼ CUP WHITE CHOCOLATE CHIPS, MELTED (OPTIONAL)

Place graham-cracker squares on a microwave-safe plate and set aside.

Cut marshmallow in half. Wrap each half in a sheet of caramel; set aside.

Place chocolate chips in a microwave-safe dish and heat at HIGH power for about 50 seconds, stirring every 20 seconds or until chocolate melts. Do not overcook or chocolate will seize up.

Roll the caramel-covered marshmallow in melted chocolate to cover sides and top; place chocolate-side-up onto one graham cracker. Repeat with remaining caramel-covered marshmallow. Drizzle white chocolate over tops (optional). Microwave on HIGH power 10 to 15 seconds, or until marshmallow begins to soften. Insert a stick if desired. Serve immediately. Makes 2 servings.

caramel sauce

1 CUP SUGAR
¼ CUP WATER
1 TEASPOON LECITHIN
¼ TEASPOON SALT
⅛ TEASPOON CREAM OF TARTAR
¾ CUP DARIGOLD CREAM
1 TEASPOON VANILLA
¼ CUP (½ STICK) DARIGOLD BUTTER

Add the sugar, water, lecithin, salt and cream of tartar to a heavy-bottomed pot and cover. Cook over medium heat until the sugar is melted; do not stir. (The liquid will be clear and may start to turn golden.) Combine the cream with the vanilla and set aside.

Remove the lid from the pot and continue to cook without stirring. Cook until the mixture turns a nice amber color. Observe continuously while cooking, as the sugar can rapidly change from browned to burned. Add the butter and whisk in completely. The mixture will foam up, which is expected.

Turn the heat off and add the cream, whisking as you go. (The mixture may seize up, but will smooth out again.) Turn the heat on again for the mixture to fully combine. Cook until hot. Then transfer directly to a hot, sterilized, pint-sized canning jar and cover with a sterilized lid (following directions for hot-process canning).* Keep refrigerated after opening. Makes about 2 cups (1 pint).

* If using within 1 to 2 weeks, refrigerate in any covered container.

TIP: Use as a topping on apples, waffles or brownies.

hot caramel wassail

1 GALLON APPLE CIDER
1 12-OZ. CAN FROZEN ORANGE-JUICE CONCENTRATE
3-4 CLOVES IN TEA INFUSER/BAG
4 CINNAMON STICKS
CARAMEL SAUCE

Place cider, juice and spices in a large pot/crock pot and simmer on low for 30 minutes. Remove cloves and portion into cups. Stir 1 to 2 teaspoons caramel sauce into each cup. Makes about 30 servings.

OUR BUTTER *is* BETTER.

DCG ONE: PICK UP THIS PHOTO FROM LAST ISSUE
p37



DARIGOLD BUTTER IS BETTER BUTTER. THE BUTTER THAT JUST TASTES BETTER, BASTES BETTER AND BAKES BETTER THAN ORDINARY BUTTER BECAUSE OF OUR EUROPEAN-STYLE VACUUM CHURN. IS IT REALLY BETTER? YOU BET YOUR BUTTER.