

FAMILY RECIPES

Great Dishes From Local Chefs | By Christina Elston

Duff Goldman's Super-Good Cookbook Doesn't Fudge on Fun

Duff Goldman started his cooking career behind the scenes, at a bagel shop in a mall and as a fry cook at McDonald's. Even his first real restaurant job had him far from the spotlight. He baked cornbread and biscuits, and nothing else, every day. But that's where Goldman started noticing the magic of the baking process. "If I mix it for 15 seconds longer, the cornbread is different. If I don't heat the pans up before I put the batter in, it's different. If I don't leave huge chunks of lard in the biscuits, they're not as flaky," explains Goldman. "It gave me an understanding of baking that I just found beautiful."

Now that Goldman is in the spotlight – as a TV personality and the owner of Charm City Cakes in Baltimore and L.A. as well as five Duff's Cakemix DIY decorating studios – he's still smitten. "For me, baking is magical," he says. "I put something in the oven, and it rises, and I'm still gleeful that it actually worked."

No one understands that kind of joy better than kids, which is probably why Goldman's latest project is a cookbook just for them. "When I'm with adults and we're baking, and I see that the cookies are doing what they're supposed to do in the oven, I clap and get excited and sometimes I get funny looks," says Goldman. "But with kids, they clap and get excited, too."

"Super Good Baking for Kids," which came out at the end of September, has all the silly Goldman is known for but doesn't talk down to young bakers. Unlike previous generations, today's kids have YouTube at their fingertips to help with their cooking questions. "They can find 100 different videos on how to cream butter and sugar. They can find a bunch of different videos on how to bloom yeast," Goldman says. "The level of skill kids have today is far beyond what they used to have, and I tried to address that with this book."

The book includes recipes for *pâte à choux*, crepes and yeast breads, and teaches techniques such as blind-baking pie crust and deep frying. "Some of the recipes are pretty challenging, even for adults," says Goldman. But kids will also love the science and the fun stuff – including a listing of all Goldman's favorite types of candy, his favorite places to eat in New York and two pages devoted to doughnuts from around the world. Once kids have mastered a recipe, they'll find suggestions for ways to "trick it out." Cake doughnuts become doughnut bread pudding. Cookies become ice cream sandwiches.

With this fudge recipe, cooks can switch out or omit the nuts, or add mini marshmallows or dried cranberries. Kids can make fudge of different flavors by using different kinds of chips: vanilla, butter-scotch or even orange-vanilla. "There's a lot of different cool chips on the market now," Goldman says.

His tips for fudge success:

- Measure ingredients with care.
- Don't overcook the fudge, or it will get too thick and dry out.



PHOTO BY EVI LABELER



Duff Goldman

PHOTO COURTESY CHARM CITY CAKES

- Pop the pan in the freezer for a bit before cutting so it's good and cold.
- Use a sharp knife to cut the fudge – for safety and pretty pieces. "We cut ourselves more with dull knives," Goldman says.

And while this book was created for kids, Goldman doesn't want parents to shy away from the fun and learning it might hold for them as well. "This book is certainly appropriate for adults," he says with a laugh. "Learning is always better when it's delicious."



PHOTO BY EVI LABELER

Fudge from Duff Goldman's 'Super Good Baking for Kids'

Makes 48 squares

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 10 minutes, plus 2 to 3 hours for chilling

Equipment

9-by-13-inch baking dish
Sheet pan
Large pot
Waxed paper
Wooden spoon

Ingredients

2 cups (250 grams) chopped walnuts
6 cups (1050 grams) semi-sweet chocolate chips
2 (14-ounce) cans sweetened condensed milk
½ cup (1 stick, 113 grams) unsalted butter
Pinch of kosher salt
1 teaspoon (5 grams) pure vanilla extract
Cooking spray

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Spray a 9-by-13-inch baking dish with cooking spray and line it with waxed paper.

Place the walnuts on a sheet pan and toast them in the oven for 10 minutes, or until they are fragrant and just start turning brown.

In a large pot, combine the chocolate chips, sweetened condensed milk, butter and salt. Heat over medium heat to just short of a boil, until the mixture is loose and the chocolate chips are melted.

Remove the pot from the heat and, using a wooden spoon, stir in the vanilla and the toasted walnuts.

Pour the hot mixture into the prepared baking dish and put it in the fridge until it is cool and set. Cut into 2-inch squares. ♦