



## PECAN PRALINES

Featured on July 21, 2017 for “Cajun and Creole Food Traditions” demo

*“A trip to the French Market on Decatur Street always turned into a special occasion once we sat down at Café du Monde for beignets. After gobbling them up and leaving only traces of powdered sugar behind (because I’d end up wearing most of it!), I’d wander down the river side of the market to Aunt Sally’s Praline Shop, where the smell of caramelizing sugar and pecans lured me into the store. Aunt Sally’s pralines are still traditionally made by hand just like they were 25 years ago, in small batches and in an old copper pot over a gas stove. When I was a kid I’d press my nose up against the viewing window and watch the pralines get stirred and scooped from the pot and onto marble slabs to cool and get bagged. **Pralines** are best eaten fresh-made when they’re still melt-in-your-mouth creamy and tender.” – excerpt from *Damgoodsweet: Desserts to Satisfy Your Sweet Tooth, New Orleans Style* (Taunton, 2009) by David Guas and Raquel Pelzel*

### PECAN PRALINES

Recipe from *Damgoodsweet: Desserts to Satisfy Your Sweet Tooth, New Orleans Style* (Taunton, 2009)  
Makes 3 dozen

#### Ingredients

4 tablespoons butter, Unsalted  
½ cup plus 4 tablespoons heavy cream  
1 cup sugar  
1 ¼ cups light brown sugar, packed  
2 cups pecan pieces

#### Procedure

Line two rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper and set aside. Melt the butter in a medium saucepan over medium-low heat. Stir in the .5 cup of cream and both sugars until they are dissolved. Increase the heat to medium and simmer until the mixture reaches 240-250 degrees Fahrenheit, using a heatproof rubber spatula to gently push the mixture back and forth in the middle and around the edges occasionally. [If the mixture begins to crystallize, add 2 tablespoons of the cream and continue to cook until it loosens up.]

Stir in the pecans, turn off the heat, and give the mixture a final gentle stir, making sure to get into the bottom and corners of the pan. Using a wooden spoon, portion about 2 tablespoons of the praline mixture onto the prepared baking sheets, leaving at least 1 inch between each praline. Usually by this time portion out about half of the mixture, and what’s left in the pan begins to crystallize and stiffen. When this happens, add the last 2 tablespoons of cream and place the saucepan back onto medium heat until the mixture looks creamy and saucy, and then continue portioning out the rest of the pralines. Cool for 30 minutes and then transfer to an airtight container. Pralines stored properly last for up to 3 days before they begin to crystallize.



Smithsonian  
National Museum of American History  
Kenneth E. Behring Center



For more recipes from **Cooking Up History**, visit: [www.s.si.edu/CookHistory](http://www.s.si.edu/CookHistory).

