

ARTISAN CARAMELS



CLASSIC AND
INSPIRED
CONFECTIONS

SANDY AREVALO

ARTISAN
CARMELS

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FRONT TABLE BOOKS
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INGREDIENTS AND TOOLS

Basic Ingredients



HEAVY CREAM

Also called heavy whipping cream.

CORN SYRUP

For most recipes, use light corn syrup, which is made with vanilla. Dark corn syrup is made with molasses and is better for recipes like stout and pretzel or pfeffernüsse.

SUGAR

White granulated sugar, also known as cane sugar, is preferred in all of these recipes.

BUTTER

Always use unsalted butter.

Additional Ingredients for flavoring

These will vary by recipe. (In the step-by-step, we will make Salted Vanilla Bean caramels with these flavors.)

VANILLA

Use a good-quality vanilla for a stronger flavor. I prefer the vanilla that has flecks of vanilla bean seeds mixed in. The seeds add no real additional flavor, but they look pretty.

SALT

If you like an added crunch, I suggest using a coarse sea salt.

TOOLS

8-QUART STOCK POT

An 8-quart pot may seem large, but larger is better as it will help prevent the caramel from boiling over. Use stainless steel or ceramic coated pots, not Teflon or other non-stick coating. After extended use over such high heat, the coating breaks down and will end up in your caramel.

CANDY THERMOMETER

Don't have one? Get one! You can follow the visual clues of the caramel, but a candy thermometer will tell you exactly when it's ready.

WOODEN SPOON

You will want to use a strong wooden spoon. I have snapped quite a few flimsy handles.

JELLY ROLL PAN

A jelly roll pan is similar to a cookie sheet but has sides. It should be 12.5 x 17.5.

PARCHMENT PAPER

NOT wax paper. The wax on wax paper cannot withstand the heat of the caramel, and could melt or even ignite for recipes that call for the oven.

COOKING SPRAY

I have this listed under tools instead of ingredients, because its real purpose is to prevent caramel from sticking to the pan or the parchment

paper, but it does not provide any flavor.

LIQUID MEASURING CUP

A 4-cup measuring cup will be easiest for you, but a 1- or 2-cup will work as well.

MEASURING CUPS

You will mostly need the 1 cup, but some recipes call for a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup.

MEASURING SPOONS

Keep all sizes handy. Liquid flavorings call mostly for the tablespoon, but some of the spices will call for a teaspoon, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon, or $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon.

HELPFUL TIPS

Remove your caramel from the heat once it reaches 248 degrees on a candy thermometer. The caramel will continue to cook as you stir in your flavors. This tip is repeated throughout the book, but it will help prevent you from overcooking your caramel.

Don't walk away from boiling caramel. I cannot stress this enough. It changes so quickly and can be ruined very easily!

I suggest keeping your parchment-lined pan next to your boiling pot. If it happens to start boiling over, you can remove it from the heat and set it on the pan with minimal damage to your stove.

If boiling caramel lands on your stove top, counter top, floor, or baking pan, don't scrub it off. Soak it in hot water until the sugars dissolve, and then clean it with the appropriate cleaners.

The caramel is hot and can splatter when you stir it, especially when you add alcohol-based flavorings such as vanilla. Be careful and wear protective clothing like aprons and long oven gloves. You might want to keep ice water handy in case of burns.

Wait the full time before cutting and wrapping your caramels. Six hours is fine, but eight hours is ideal.

Don't put caramels in the fridge to cool—this will turn them as hard as rocks and will make it really difficult to cut them.

Once caramel is cooled and cut, wrap in parchment or cello wrappers and store in an airtight container in a cool, dry place.

Most caramels, once wrapped, have a shelf life of about three weeks. Caramels wrapped in parchment squares instead of cello wrappers will become stale faster. Caramels with a crust or a topping have a shelf life of one to two weeks.

STEP-BY-STEP CARMELS



Add your cream, sugar, butter, and corn syrup to your 8-quart stock pot and set over medium-high heat, stirring constantly to incorporate the butter. Your mixture will be a pale yellow/cream color.



Once your caramel starts to boil, it will do so rapidly and furiously. You will notice that the bubbles are small and “fuzzy.” Be careful, because this

is when it is most likely to get away from you. If you need to look or step away for any reason, set your spoon across the top of the pot; this will help prevent boil-overs.



Keep stirring. You don't have to do it constantly, but do it often to prevent burning.

It will take some time, about 45 minutes, but the caramel will turn golden in color. The bubbles will then be fatter and slower to pop.



It's time to start paying attention to your candy thermometer! The caramel will increase from the "Soft Ball" stage to the "Firm Ball" very quickly!! Once it reaches 248 degrees—that's the line right below firm ball—turn off

the heat and quickly stir in the salt and vanilla. Keep in mind that the caramel will continue to cook, even after you have removed it from the heat. The longer you take, the harder the caramel will become.



Pour into a prepared pan.



Allow it to cool for 8 hours.

Remove the caramel from the pan, remove the parchment paper, and cut into squares.



Top with sea salt.



JUST THE BASICS

THESE FOUR FLAVORS WILL HELP YOU GRASP THE BASICS. THEY HAVE LIMITED FLAVORINGS BUT STILL YIELD AMAZING ARTISAN CARAMELS.

SALTED VANILLA BEAN CARAMELS

RICH, BUTTERY CARAMEL TOPPED WITH BEAUTIFUL PIECES OF SEA SALT. PERFECTION DEFINED.

CARAMEL

4 cups heavy cream

4 cups sugar

¾ cup butter

2 cups light corn syrup

1 Tbsp. vanilla

1 Tbsp. coarse sea salt

PREPARE YOUR PAN

1. Spray a jelly roll pan with a thin layer of cooking spray. Using a clean, dry paper towel, wipe off the excess. Make sure you cover the sides and bottom of the pan—this will help prevent the caramels from sticking.
2. Trim a piece of parchment paper so that it covers the bottom of the pan, but has about a 2-inch overhang over the handles or sides.
3. Spray the parchment paper again with a light layer of cooking spray and wipe the excess off.

MAKE THE CARAMEL

1. Combine the cream, sugar, butter, and corn syrup in an 8-quart stock pot.
2. Bring the mixture to a boil, stirring constantly. Be careful—it can bubble over very quickly if you aren't paying attention!
3. Cook over medium-high heat, and continue to stir until a candy thermometer reaches 248 degrees. Your caramels will be just beneath the firm ball stage.
4. Remove from the heat and quickly stir in the vanilla and sea salt. Keep in mind that the caramel will continue to cook, even though you have removed it from the heat. The longer you take, the harder your caramel will become.
5. Pour the caramel into the prepared pan and let it cool completely before cutting. This takes about 8 hours.



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