

Apricot Penuche

TOTAL COOKING TIME: 35 minutes (plus cooling time)

2 C brown sugar
1 C white sugar
1 C heavy cream
2 T light corn syrup
1/4 t salt

1 t vanilla extract
1/2 C chopped pecans (optional)
1/4 C diced dried apricots
2 T honeybush apricot tea (put into 2 tea bags)

INFUSE THE CREAM: Heat the heavy cream until just simmering. Remove from heat and add the two tea bags, each containing 1 tablespoon of honeybush apricot tea. Let steep for 10 minutes, then remove the tea bags and squeeze out any excess cream.

PREPARE THE PAN: Line an 8x8-inch square dish with parchment paper, leaving some overhang on the sides for easy removal.

COOK THE MIXTURE: In a medium saucepan over medium heat, combine the brown sugar, white sugar, infused cream, corn syrup, and salt. Stir until the sugar is dissolved. Continue to cook until the mixture reaches the soft ball stage (234-240°F or 112-116°C), where a small amount of syrup dropped into cold water forms a soft ball that flattens when removed from the water.

COOL THE MIXTURE: Remove from heat and let the mixture cool without stirring until the bottom of the pan is lukewarm.

BEAT THE MIXTURE: Add the vanilla extract and beat the mixture until it becomes creamy. Stir in the chopped pecans and diced dried apricots if using.

SET THE CANDY: Pour the mixture into the prepared pan. Let it cool completely before lifting it out using the parchment paper overhang and cutting into squares.