

CHOCOLATE SAUCE

MAKES 2 CUPS

This recipe is for a basic, all-purpose chocolate sauce. Its thick and smooth dark chocolate consistency is reminiscent of the Smucker's hot fudge ice cream topping I had as a child. It makes a great gift—put it in a beautiful jar with some ribbon—for any chocolate lover.

1/4 cup sugar

1/2 cup + 2 tablespoons water

1/2 cup light corn syrup

1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder, sifted

1/2 cup bittersweet chocolate chips

4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter, cubed

1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract

1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

In a large saucepan, combine the sugar, water, corn syrup, and cocoa. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Add the chocolate chips and butter. Whisk constantly until the butter and chocolate have melted. Reduce the heat to medium and cook for about 12 minutes to thicken it up a bit. Stir in the vanilla and salt.

Let the sauce cool before storing in the refrigerator.

VARIATIONS

Chocolate-Mint Sauce: Add 1 tablespoon crème de menthe or 2 teaspoons mint extract (in addition to the vanilla). If you use extract, taste and see if you need more since brands of extracts can vary widely in strength.

Chocolate-Orange Sauce: Add 1 tablespoon Grand Marnier or 2 to 3 teaspoons orange extract (in addition to the vanilla). If you use extract, taste and see if you need more since brands of extracts can vary widely in strength.

Chocolate-Whiskey Sauce: Add 1 tablespoon whiskey (your choice).

Raspberry-Chocolate Sauce: Stir in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup freeze-dried raspberries.