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## Bourbon Balls

*Makes about 60 bourbon balls*

Folks asked for this Southern classic the minute we first flipped the open sign, but it took a while to add them to our collection. I raved over others' bourbon ball recipes but didn't want to add another item to our crazy holiday baking schedule. Big mistake. They're now a holiday tradition at the bakery, where we sell gift boxes of them in December, and again at Valentine's Day and Mother's Day.

A good bourbon is essential for success; it's not being cooked out, so each drop is savored. I'm a fan of W.L. Weller Special Reserve, because it's mellow with a smooth honey feel that works well with the dark richness of the pecans and sorghum syrup.

**2 cups pecan halves**

**3 cups coarsely crumbled Birdseed Cookies (page 106, prepared without the seeds/not included) or sugar cookies**

**¼ cup sugar**

**½ cup heavy cream**

**3 tablespoons dark corn syrup**

**3 tablespoons sorghum syrup**

**1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract**

**1¼ cups semisweet chocolate chips**

**3 tablespoons good bourbon**

1. Put 1 cup of the pecans in a food processor and pulse until just coarsely chopped. Transfer to a large bowl and add the cookie crumbs. Pulse the remaining 1 cup pecans until finely chopped, transfer to a small bowl, add the sugar, and stir until combined.
2. In a large saucepan, combine the cream, corn syrup, sorghum syrup, and vanilla and bring to a boil over high heat. Remove the pan from the heat, add the chocolate chips, and mix until the chocolate has melted. Add the cookie crumb mixture and stir, then add the bourbon. Mix thoroughly. Transfer to a large bowl, cover tightly with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 2 hours.
3. Using a very small (½-ounce) scoop or a spoon, form the chocolate mixture into small balls about 1 inch or so in diameter. Roll them through the sugar-pecan mixture to coat and set aside on a tray.
4. The bourbon balls will keep in an airtight container at room temperature for a few days, refrigerated for up to 1 week, or in the freezer indefinitely.



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