

# Valentine Candies

By JENNIE HARRIS

"My Valentine was lacy red,"

Said Sue.

"I framed my Valentine."

Then laughing Fragoletta said,

"I framed mine, too,

For I ate mine!"

PERHAPS it is the long stretch between Christmas and Easter that makes Valentine Day such an eager time for candy-making and candy gifts. There's the big excitement in the kitchen. There are the platters of snowy taffy to be cut into long taffy sticks, wrapped in oil paper and tied, five or six pieces together, with red ribbon and one dangling red heart. There are great squares of divinity under a crock on the sideboard besides fudge, the rich, creamy kind.

And out on the refrigerator is the pie pan of butterscotch to be broken into zig-zags, and also the cooling panful of fondant sirup. . . . Candy making for any happy-excuse time is as huge fun in a large family as are the many devisings of new ways to tie the boxfuls into valentines.

For the finest fudge, we learned the simple secret: To use unskimmed milk, to cook it softly, to wait till the fudge is thoroughly cold before beating. Our present chief, who praises it to the skies, calls it Divinity Fudge, so by that name you shall know it.

**DIVINITY FUDGE.** Two cupfuls of sugar, one of milk, a square of chocolate, a lump of butter. Note that the recipe calls for the usual fudge ingredients—the cream quality is due to the way the fudge is treated. If you live on a farm use this morning's milk—it is then unrisen but not so rich as cream. If you live in town use the top cup of this morning's or yesterday's pint. But if you must use thin milk, then beat in a tablespoonful more of butter when the fudge is cold and first ready to beat.

Put the milk, then the sugar, into the cold thick saucepan, mix thoroughly and pull over a fire that will let it cook as fast as possible without scorching. Stir to keep it from scorching, and when the milk foam boils high and loose and full, drop in one square of unsweetened chocolate—whole; not shaved. Stir till there is a smooth, beautiful chocolate paste all through the white foam of the milk, and the candy boils low and tight. When it is very low, drop in the tablespoonful of butter and continue stirring till it seems to be near the test stage.

There's a stage when it sinks in a lump and separates into pollywogs when you stir it. Test immediately after that. If it sinks again, and you can just pick it up and work it in your fingers it is done.

Remove from the fire, remove the spoon, so there will be no temptation for crystallizing, and lower the saucepan gently into a pan of cold water—careful that the water isn't high enough to seep in.

An hour later come back to your fudge. Test by sinking your finger to the bottom. If you find not the least trace of heat, it is ready. Now remove the fudge from the water, add the teaspoonful of vanilla and beat with a substantial spoon.

You may have to beat it ten minutes—twenty—even more, but just before it is finished it surprises you by getting suddenly light and fluffy, as easy to the spoon as egg whites. Beat still a little longer till it starts drying on the spoon—and spoon out thickly onto the buttered platter. Leave it unspread, rough and rich looking, just as it falls in loops. Cut it at once.

**BUTTERSCOTCH** is easiest of all candies to make. Ten minutes for boiling, ten more for cooling. No stirring, and never a failure. This was our father's favorite—and most wonderful when we filled it with pecans or hickory-nut goodies, or with roasted peanuts—a great black panful of them, which our mother roasted to their finest stage just beyond that of the first pale browning. Then we must lay open the hot fragrant shells and fold the butterscotch round and round some ten or twelve nut meats, and taste at once that crisp nuttiness with the brown sugar-and-butter purity of our fresh candy.

Put two cupfuls of brown sugar, one cupful of cold water and a heaping tablespoonful of butter over the fire, and stir enough to dissolve the sugar before the boiling can start. Then let it alone till it looks like time to test. Dip carefully into the pan to try some in the cup of cold water. Cook it till the click stage—same as for taffy. Then pour it gently into a buttered saucepan, without scraping—and lo, butterscotch as soon as it is cooled! Mark it with a knife when half cooled; or break it into pointed, gold-brown pieces.



**SIRUP COCONUT CANDY** is made of three cupfuls of white sugar, one cupful of milk, a cupful of white corn sirup—and when this boiled low and tight, a lump of butter to set it boiling tighter.

Stir this candy to keep the milk from scorching. At the click stage pour half of it gently into a buttered pan to be pulled later into a delicious cream taffy. And into the other half left in the pan empty half a package of shredded coconut, hold this over a dish of cold water, and beat immediately into a coconut candy that cuts into firm squares of most delicious flavor.