

Cacao Nib Pecan Brittle with crunchy salt

Inspired by the two-ingredient croquant in David Lebovitz's [The Perfect Scoop](#), my twist adds extra crunchy bits for added texture and flavor. The cacao nibs add an almost smoky back note, and are now more widely available than ever. Look for them in the chocolate aisle at major grocery stores, and definitely at Whole Foods. ([Here's what I've written about cacao nibs.](#))

I suggest breaking the brittle up into irregular chunks, and eating it as is, like candy. You can also pulverize it in the food processor and sprinkle it over frosted cakes or cupcakes. Or ice cream. Or oatmeal. I did not just write that.

Makes (I don't know -- enough for a few people to munch on)

1 cup pecans

1 cup sugar

Small squeeze of lemon juice

1-1/2 tablespoons cacao nibs

2 generous pinches very coarse, crunchy salt (I used [Grigio di Cervia from The Meadow](#))

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Toast the pecans for about 10 minutes, stirring once or twice, until a shade or two darker and very fragrant. Once cool, remove nuts to a plate, and line the baking sheet with foil.

In a medium saucepan, cook the sugar and lemon juice over medium heat, stirring with a silicone spatula very slowly, very gently, in little swirls, in figure-8s, until the sugar melts. During this process, the sugar will clump and harden in parts, crystallizing and looking miserable for a few minutes. Keep stirring and it will work itself out and liquefy. After about 10 minutes, give or take, it should be fully melted and a richer, caramel-like color. Carefully dump in the pecans and the nibs, give a quick, careful stir to coat, and, working very quickly, scrape out onto the foil-lined pan, dragging it into an oblong shape instead of in a high heap. Sprinkle quickly with the salt. Let cool completely, at least 10 minutes, so that it becomes rock hard.

Break up in pieces, and eat, or pulverize.

(NB. Do not walk away from the caramel while it's on the stove, or it will burn. Do not answer your phone. Do not check email. Do not pass go.)