

Spookybook Treats

Halloween is right around the corner... ok it's 2 months away! But Halloween stuff is out all over the stores already, and while we're planning our Haunted Tour for our community theater group, our other friends in the theater are getting ready to stage an hilarious (TANGENT ALERT: I HATE using the word "an" before words that start with h, but I guess that's proper English, so...) production of the play called Kitchen Witches! Someone had a great idea to sell a Halloween cookbook as a fundraiser for the theater. Being a stay-at-home-mom of 4, I have a few holiday-themed recipes in my vault that are fun for the kids *and* adults (to eat), so I'm going to contribute my favorite Halloween recipes. Since I have to type them up to submit to the cookbook anyway, I thought I'd put them on my blog, along with a recipe for one of my favorite desserts: peanut butter bars – YUM!

Toasted Pumpkin Seeds

large pumpkins

salt

seasonings (your choice)

butter

Extract seeds from pumpkin, separate from pulp, and discard pulp. Put the seeds in a colander and run water over them to get rid of all the pulp. Drain on paper towels. Melt 1 Tablespoon of butter and toss pumpkin seeds in a bowl with the butter and salt and / or seasonings. Spread seeds out onto a cookie sheet. Toast seeds in an oven preheated to 350° for about 30 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes and adding salt occasionally. Check the seeds to see if they're done by taking a sample out, letting it cool, and tasting it. If the insides are dry, they're done. Be careful not to burn – you want a nice golden brown color.

NOTES: I use a clean, thin dishcloth instead of paper towels since I've had problems in the past with the seeds sticking to

the paper towels. Be creative with the seasonings; you can use popcorn seasoning, taco seasoning, garlic salt, onion powder, cayenne pepper, cajun seasoning, etc. Pumpkin seeds are high in iron, vitamin A, and zinc; if you want to make them even healthier use olive oil instead of butter.

Rice Krispies Treats Spiders

YIELD: 3-5 spiders

3 Tablespoons margarine or butter

1 package (10 oz. or about 40) marshmallows or 4 cups mini marshmallows

6 cups rice krispies cereal

food coloring

prepared frosting

candy corn

string licorice

shredded coconut

In a large microwave-safe bowl, melt margarine and marshmallows on high for 2 minutes, stirring after 1 minute. Add a few drops of food coloring and stir mixture until smooth. Add rice krispies cereal, stirring until well coated. Let cereal mixture slightly cool until it is safe to touch. With buttered hands, shape cereal mixture into spider shape and place on wax paper. Let cool. Attach decorations to the spider with frosting using candy corn for eyes, licorice for the web, and coconut for the hair. You can color the coconut by soaking in warm water with a few drops of food coloring for about 30 minutes. Dry coconut on a paper towel before using.

Peanut Butter Bars

1 lb. powdered sugar

2 cups graham cracker crumbs

2 sticks melted butter

12 oz. peanut butter

Mix all ingredients together in a 9×13 non-greased pan. Melt

large bag of chocolate chips and spread on top. Cut into squares in pan and refrigerate until cold.