



Tips for making low-calorie treats that are kind of edible

Ned Hickson

Unless you're a hyperactive nine-year-old fueled by Pixie Sticks and Hostess Cupcakes without an ounce of concern for weight-gain — because concern is the ONLY ounce you're going to gain this holiday season — then you're like the rest of us trying to get through the next six weeks without looking like Jabba the Hutt's stunt double.

What this means is finding a healthy balance between satisfying your God-given right to partake in all of those delicious holiday treats while, at the same time, adhering to the God-given Commandment to avoid glut-tony.

Yes, the Lord does indeed work in mysterious ways. Take fruitcake for example...

No, seriously; please take mine.

That's why today I'll be sharing quick and easy holiday recipe tips that are both low-calorie and delicious! (Coincidentally, "quick

and easy" used to be my wrestling nickname.)

Today, I am going to show you how to make a cup of hot chocolate that you can drink as an alternative to that buttered rum or egg nog, which are not only high in calories but, depending on the alcohol content, can lead to making a snow angel in the front yard wearing nothing but a Santa hat.

In August.

So avoid the awkwardness — and calories — with this hot and delicious alternative!

(Coincidentally, "hot and delicious" is a nickname I've

never been given.)

Step 1: Grab your favorite holiday mug! Or someone else's!

Step 2: After filling your holiday mug with water and heating it in the microwave until you hear the ceramic crack.

Step 3: Add one packet of low-calorie hot chocolate mix, depending on the size of your mug (or waist line). Most are only 60 calories! (of actual flavor)

Step 4: Stir liberally (or conservatively, depending on where you stand on the issue) to distribute the ingre-

dients evenly.

Step 5: Take your first sip and enjoy the satisfying taste of responsible holiday eating!

Step 6: Spit out the contents into the nearest sink.

Step 6.5: Squirt approximately 1 cup of dark chocolate syrup into your tasteless hot chocolate while no one is looking.

Step 7: Enjoy your beverage, and the real satisfaction of knowing everyone is jealous of your amazing "willpower." Ok, fine.

So this wasn't exactly as low-calorie as I'd planned.

But at least you won't have to worry about ending up in the yard making snow angels again.

I hope you'll join me next week, when I share my recipe for making holiday fudge you can eat without the guilt (or any actual memory of it).

Ned is a syndicated columnist with News Media Corporation. His latest book, "Pearls of Writing Wisdom: From 16 years as a shucking columnist" is available online at Port Hole Books.

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