

Sweet Fire Truffles

These little sweet treats have a kick and were created to celebrate a good friend's 60th birthday — Bruce is always sweet, but can be fiery!

3 cups (1 lb.) chopped high-quality dark chocolate (I prefer Callebaut or Lindt)
1/2 cup heavy cream
4 oz. unsalted butter (1 stick)
2 tsp. espresso powder or 1 oz. espresso
2 Tbsp. brandy
2 Tbsp. Grand Marnier or Cointreau
2 tsp. EVOO olive oil, same year pressing if possible
2 big pinches sea salt
1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper
Cocoa powder for rolling

Put all ingredients except chocolate in a pan over a second pan filled with water (to simulate a double-boiler and make sure not to get mixture too hot). Heat slowly until mixture is steamy but not starting to get bubbles around the edge. I so often get it too hot! Add chopped chocolate, turn off heat and cover for about 10 minutes until melted. Stir very gently. When chocolate is well mixed into liquid, refrigerate. If the chocolate starts to separate, refrigerate before completely mixed. When the butter is opaque and getting firm but soft, use an immersion blender to reunite the oil with chocolate solids and make a silky-smooth mixture. Refrigerate for several hours until firm. To roll truffles, use small scoop and roll ball of desired size in your hands, then roll in cocoa powder. Easiest to roll at room temperature. Best stored in refrigerator and served at room temperature.