

# A SUGAR SHAKE Recipe

## Bourbon Salted Caramel and Bacon—Cacao Nib Krispie Squares

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*One batch of Bourbon Salted Caramel will allow you to make two or three batches of Krispie Squares. Use a pot larger than you think you need; when you add the butter and cream, the mixture will bubble violently.*

[For the Bourbon Salted Caramel \(Adapted from Sally's Baking Addiction\):](#)

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 6 pieces
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon flaky sea or kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon bourbon

Prepare all your ingredients before starting. They should all be ready to go and within convenient arm's reach of your stove. (The exception is the bourbon; that can stay in the bottle until you're ready to add it.) It's helpful to use a measuring cup with a pour spout for the cream so that it's easier to drizzle it in slowly.

In a dry medium saucepan, heat sugar over medium heat. Stir constantly with a high-heat resistant spatula. The sugar will develop a sandy texture and then will start to melt and form clumps. Once that begins happening, keep a close eye on it. It will look very strange, and eventually will look like you have a pot full of off-white plastic pieces. Keep stirring. It will, I promise, melt down and darken to an amber color. Be careful not to let it burn.

Once the sugar is completely melted, add the pieces of butter, one at a time. You don't need to wait for the first piece to melt before you add the next, but be very careful—the caramel will spit and bubble as the butter melts in.

Once the butter has completely melted, slowly add the cream as you stir gently. I suggest wearing an oven mitt on your stirring hand, as the (very hot) caramel will steam and spatter as the (cold) cream is added. The steam can be pretty intense. The level of liquid (and foamy bubbles) will rise in the pan rapidly and a bit violently; once the cream has been mixed in, let the mixture boil for about a minute.

Remove from heat and let the bubbles subside. Add the salt and bourbon and stir thoroughly. For the Bacon Krispie Squares, you can use the caramel while it's still hot. For other uses, you'll want to cool it down to room temp first. You can make the caramel in advance; cover and refrigerate for up to two weeks. Bring to room temp slowly or microwave to get it liquidy enough to use.

Here's a little note for you: Caramel is capable of super-heating hot enough to melt glass. If you are reheating the caramel after refrigeration, zap it in short 10-second increments and stir it up until it's loose. How do I know it melts glass? Because I tried warming it in a water bath and left the heat on. Don't do that.

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## For the Krispie Squares

- 8 ounces bacon ends or thick-cut bacon
- ¼ cup cacao nibs
- 6 cups rice cereal (e.g. Rice Krispies)
- 2 tablespoons bacon grease, plus more to grease pan
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 package (10 ounces) marshmallows
- ½ cup Bourbon Salted Caramel

Dice bacon into ¼-inch pieces. Start in a cold pan and cook until well crisped and fat is rendered out. Remove bacon from pan—save the grease!—and set aside to cool. If you're making multiple batches of Krispie Squares, cook all your bacon first, in eight-ounce batches. Once bacon is cool, combine with cacao nibs and rice cereal in a large bowl. Mix together well.

Add a teaspoon or two of bacon grease to a 9x13 pan (or two 9x9 pans). Use a piece of waxed paper to spread the grease all over the sides and bottom of the pan. Set pan and waxed paper aside.

In a large pot, combine bacon grease and butter and melt over medium-high heat. Add marshmallows and stir. When marshmallows begin to melt, add Bourbon Salted Caramel. Continue stirring until marshmallows and caramel are completely melted. Remove from heat and add cereal mix. Stir well until cereal is thoroughly coated.

Acting quickly, dump mixture into the prepared pan and spread with a spatula. Don't worry about getting it all pressed into the corners at this point—just get it out of the pot and roughly spread evenly. Use the greased waxed paper to smooth out the mixture.

Allow to cool. Cut into 18 squares. (Or however many floats your boat.) Can be left at room temp for a couple days. After that, store in the fridge or freeze.