

Rum Balls or Bourbon Balls

History:

Although these no-bake rum balls most likely only date back to the mid-20th century, baked goods, such as rum cakes and various types of baked rum sweets, date back hundreds of years, as far back as rum was coming in on ships to the New Land. There is no written documentation of rum balls in this exact manner existing before the 1940s (and bourbon did not exist in colonial pre-America at all, although bourbon balls are darn delicious!) but that does not mean that rum balls didn't exist, or that their predecessors didn't, just that we don't have written record. Rum was a popular ingredient in early American baked goods, and it served as both food flavoring and preservative agent. The difference between the new and the old is that these modern ones are not baked, which would have been too modern for colonial times.



Ingredients:

2 c vanilla wafer crumbs
2 Tbsp cocoa
1 ½ c confectioner's sugar
1 c pecans, very finely chopped (or substitute with nuts of your choice)
2 Tbsp white corn syrup
¼ c bourbon or dark rum

Directions:

Mix well the vanilla wafer crumbs, cocoa, 1 cup of the confectioner's sugar (leaving ½ cup for later), and pecans. Add the corn syrup and bourbon/rum, and mix well. Shape into 1" balls, and put into a tin or other metal container for at least 12 hours before serving. Take balls out and roll them in the last of the confectioner's sugar. You can roll the balls before or after storing them, but we prefer to do it after, so the sugar is fresh for the consumer. For a special treat, you can put a whole drained maraschino cherry in the center of each ball as you roll it, for a chocolate-covered cherry surprise (although you'll have to store the balls in the fridge if you do this). Please be advised that, because these balls are not baked, they retain their full rum or bourbon kick, so be careful of your intake if you're a lightweight!

Adapted from Colonial Williamsburg's *The Williamsburg Cookbook*, and modified by Leah Angstman.