

Red-Hot Popcorn Balls

Harvest Dance | October 2006



For a playful way to serve, thread the popcorn balls onto shoestring licorice and hang them up. We used an old wooden rake and strung them on the tines. Eating them is like bobbing for popcorn balls!

- 12 CUPS POPPED POPCORN
- $\frac{3}{4}$ CUP LIGHT-COLORED CORN SYRUP
- $\frac{3}{4}$ CUP SUGAR
- $\frac{1}{2}$ OF A 7-OZ. JAR MARSHMALLOW CRÈME ($\frac{3}{4}$ CUP)
- 1 TBSP. BUTTER
- $\frac{1}{2}$ TSP. VANILLA
- $\frac{1}{4}$ CUP RED CINNAMON CANDIES
- 10–12 STRANDS BLACK SHOESTRING LICORICE (OPTIONAL)

Remove all unpopped kernels from popped popcorn. Place popcorn in a buttered 17×22-inch baking pan or roasting pan. Keep popcorn warm in a 300° oven while preparing marshmallow mixture.

In a medium saucepan bring corn syrup and sugar to boiling over medium-high heat, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Stir in marshmallow crème, butter, and vanilla until combined.

Pour marshmallow mixture over hot popcorn; stir gently to coat. Cool until popcorn mixture can be handled easily, about 15 minutes. Stir in candy pieces. With damp hands, quickly shape mixture into 3- to 4-inch diameter balls. If desired, when balls have cooled completely, use an ice pick or metal skewer to make a hole through each ball. Twist and turn the pick or skewer inside the popcorn ball to make a hole about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in diameter. Thread a strand of licorice through each ball; knot one end of the licorice to secure. To make ahead, wrap balls (without licorice) in plastic wrap. Store at room temperature for up to 2 days. Thread licorice through before serving. Makes 10 to 12 popcorn balls.