

# ESPRESSO NUTELLA BUCKEYES

**AKA BRANDON'S CHOCOLATE BALLS**

*Paired with Port Brewing's Santa's Little Helper*

**MAKES 24-30 SERVINGS**

## *Ingredients*

- 8 ounces Nutella
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 8 ounces confectioner's sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 3/4 tsp kosher salt
- 6 ounces semisweet chocolate
- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- 1/2 tsp instant espresso powder

## *Directions*

In a large bowl, combine the Nutella, butter, sugar, vanilla and salt. Stir until it forms a smooth dough. Scoop out 1 to 2 tablespoons of the mixture at a time, then roll them in the palms of your hands to form balls. Place the dough balls on a baking sheet lined with wax paper and refrigerate until firm, at least 30 minutes.

Add the chocolate and oil to a saucepan or double-boiler over low heat and melt, stirring occasionally. When the chocolate is completely melted, remove the dough balls from the refrigerator and stick toothpicks in each of them. Dip the dough balls in the chocolate and coat them in the mixture, then place back on the wax paper. Set aside and the chocolate set, about 10 minutes.

Serve at room temperature or store, refrigerated in an airtight container, for up to 1 week.

# LUXARDO RICH CHERRY SHORTBREAD COOKIES

*Paired with Ballast Point's Victory at Sea Imperial Porter*

**MAKES 32 SERVINGS**

## *Ingredients*

- 2 cups all purpose flour (sifted)
- 2/3 cup powdered sugar (sifted)
- 5 tbsps corn starch (sifted)
- 1 1/3 cup salted butter - room temperature
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 3 tbsps reduced to 1/3 tbsp Bourbon or Whiskey
- 35 Luxardo Cherries with syrup drained (three extra to eat while cooking or through in a Manhattan cocktail)

## *Directions*

1 Add Bourbon or Whiskey to a small pan away from heat. Put over heat and reduce by 2/3. Watch for alcohol to ignite (flambé) and burn blue. OK either way. Take off heat and save 1/3 tbsp for addition with vanilla extract.

In a large bowl, to keep ingredients from dusting the kitchen, combine butter and powdered sugar. Whip vigorously together until smooth. Add vanilla extract and liquor reduction. Mix until light and smooth.

In a medium bowl combine sifted flour and cornstarch. Mix into butter sugar mixture, one cup at a time. Mix slowly until the dough is soft.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Line baking sheets with parchment paper. Roll dough into one inch balls and place on a cookie sheet one and a half inches apart. When the cookie sheet is full, press Luxardo cherry into each ball, most of the way. Bake for 12 minutes or until slightly brown on top. Pull parchment paper off the cookie sheet, with cookies on it, onto a cooling rack.

Cool and pair with Ballast Point Brewing's Victory at Sea, Coffee Vanilla Imperial Porter. Cheers!