

Caramel Cracker Cake

For the caramel (Or you could buy caramel—this is a thick, spreadable caramel, so if you use a liquid caramel sauce, the cream will simply be looser and might not set up as firm.):

1 cup heavy cream
2 tsp vanilla extract
1 tsp kosher salt
1 cup sugar
1 tbsp corn syrup
3 tbsp water
¼ cup unsalted butter

Heat the heavy cream, vanilla extract, and kosher salt in a small saucepan, keeping an eye on it so it doesn't boil. Meanwhile, stir together the sugar, corn syrup, and water in a medium saucepan and brush down the sides of the pan with water. Heat over medium high heat, bringing it to a constant boil and brushing the sides of the pan with water if you notice any sugar crystals forming. Allow the sugar to brown to a deep chestnut brown (it will start to emit white smoke), swirling occasionally so it will color evenly. Remove from heat and slowly whisk in the warm cream, being careful not to let it bubble over and stirring thoroughly after each addition. Add the butter and stir until smooth, then strain the caramel into a jar that's been placed in an ice bath and stir occasionally until it's come down to room temperature. Refrigerate at least two hours until completely cold.

For the cream:

1 cup heavy cream

Whisk one cup of heavy cream until it comes to stiff peaks. Take your caramel out of the fridge and fold one cup of it into the cream.

For the cake:

2 sleeves Ritz crackers

Line a 9-inch cake pan with plastic wrap. Layer in some of the caramel cream and top it with a single layer of crackers. Repeat until the dish is full. Cover with plastic wrap and freeze or refrigerate at least four hours or overnight. If you freeze, allow it to warm up a little in the fridge before serving. The longer you let this sit in the fridge, the softer the crackers will become; I like to do it overnight because the top crackers retain some of their crisp but the inner crackers soften and meld with the cream.