



French-style Hazelnut Praline

What exactly 'praline' means depends on where you are in the world – for more details see website. The praline I'm talking about is French praline in the traditional sense: caramelised sugar mixed with nuts and set into a slab that can then be broken into shards or blitzed into a sprinkle as fine or coarse as you like – what we might call nut brittle in English.

Makes about 280g/10oz (1¾ cups blitzed)



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup castor sugar (220g/7¾oz)
- ⅓ cup water (80ml)
- 70g blanched hazelnuts, toasted (2½oz/about ½ cup)
- About ¼ teaspoon salt flakes, more or less to taste (optional)

METHOD

1. Line a heatproof tray with baking paper and place close to the stove.
2. Roughly chop the hazelnuts and place near the stove.
3. Combine sugar and water in a small heavy-based saucepan and place over a medium heat.
4. Cook without stirring until it's dark golden, swirling the pan if necessary as it starts to caramelize so it colours evenly; this quantity may take around 20 minutes to caramelize.
5. When it's dark golden, add the nuts and swirl the pan to combine well.
6. Continue cooking, swirling regularly, for a further minute or so, ensuring it doesn't get too dark.
7. Pour onto the baking paper-lined tray and tilt the tray to spread it out as thinly and evenly as possible.
8. Sprinkle with salt (if using) and set aside until completely cool.
9. Pulse in a food processor to give a praline you can sprinkle, or break into shards to use as a larger garnish.