

BUTTERSCOTCH SAUCE

A recipe by **FoodNouveau**

INGREDIENTS

Makes 1½ cups sauce

½ cup [125 ml / 1 stick] unsalted butter
1 cup [250 ml] packed brown sugar
1 cup [250 ml] heavy cream
½ to 1 tsp [2.5 to 5 ml] sea salt or *fleur de sel*
2 tsp [10 ml] best-quality pure vanilla extract
(such as Nielsen-Massey)

Optional: seeds scraped from a 1½-inch [4-cm] piece of vanilla bean



METHOD

Melt the butter in a medium, heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat. Add the sugar, cream and ½ tsp [2.5 ml] salt and whisk until the ingredients are well blended. Bring to a gentle boil and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat and add the vanilla extract and vanilla seeds, if using, whisking to combine. Taste the sauce; if you feel it still needs a little salt, sprinkle more until you reach a flavor that makes your head spin with delight.

Serve the sauce warm or cool. The sauce does thicken a little as it cools, but it still remains soft enough that you can spoon it straight out of the fridge (very handy for sudden cravings!). Store in airtight containers in the fridge for up to 2 weeks.

Notes:

> **Butter:** Using unsalted butter is preferable because you control how salty your sauce becomes. If you only have semi-salted or salted butter, simply omit the salt, taste the sauce at the end, and adjust the seasoning if it needs it.

> **Best-quality vanilla extract:** This is another thing I'm a snob about. You simply should never use cheap, \$2 a bottle vanilla extract in any recipe; the taste just doesn't cut it. Nielsen-Massey vanilla is a gourmet product, but a little goes a long way. For the past few years though, I've been making my own vanilla extract: it's easy, you can refill the bottle endlessly, and it tastes just as good as the expensive stuff. Try it!

> **Salt:** *Do not use regular table salt in this recipe.* Its harsh taste would be much too strong for the sweet sauce. Any kind of sea salt (flaky or fine) is good, but for the best taste use *fleur de sel*, which has a deliciously subtle salty flavor that goes perfectly with sweets. Because every salt's salting power varies widely, always add a little at a time, tasting as you go, to make you don't ruin your caramel.

> **Lactose-free butterscotch sauce:** Because I'm lactose-intolerant, I have tested the recipe both with regular butter and cream and with goats' milk butter and lactose-free cream. Both results were just as delicious (and showed very little difference in flavor), so feel free to use easier-to-digest substitutes if need be.