



Turkey Time

Serve these on Thanksgiving Day and your guests will gobble them right up.

YOU'LL NEED

- 48 uncoated Basic Cake Balls (recipe on following page)
- 48 ounces (3 pounds) chocolate candy coating
- Deep, microwave-safe plastic bowl
- 48 paper lollipop sticks
- 48 pretzel sticks, broken in half
- Styrofoam block
- 240 caramel candy corn pieces
- Toothpicks
- 48 candy-coated espresso beans, in shades of brown
- 48 orange rainbow chip sprinkles
- 48 red miniature heart sprinkles
- Black edible-ink pen

TO DECORATE

Have the cake balls chilled and in the refrigerator.

Melt the chocolate candy coating in a microwave-safe plastic bowl, following the instructions on the package. The coating should be about 3 inches deep for easier dipping. (I usually work with about 16 ounces of coating at a time.)

When you are ready to dip, remove a few cake balls at a time from the refrigerator, keeping the rest chilled.

One at a time, dip about ½ inch of the tip of a lollipop stick into the melted candy coating, and insert the stick straight into a cake ball, pushing it no more than halfway through. Dip the cake pop into the melted candy coating, and tap off any excess coating, as described on page 36.

Immediately insert the tips of 2 pretzel stick halves into the bottom of the turkey body, on either side of the lollipop stick, for legs. Hold them in place until the coating sets like glue. Repeat until all the cake pops have legs. Let dry completely in the Styrofoam block.

Dip the tips of 5 pieces of candy corn into the leftover melted candy coating, and attach them to the back of a cake pop for feathers. Hold them in place until the coating sets like glue. Repeat until all the cake pops have feathers. Let dry completely in the Styrofoam block.

Using a toothpick, apply a small amount of coating to the front and toward the top of the cake pop, and attach an espresso bean. Hold in place until the coating sets. Repeat with the remaining pops and let dry completely.

When the pops are dry, use a toothpick to dot a small amount of coating onto the espresso bean in position for the beak, and attach an orange rainbow chip sprinkle. Use the same technique to attach a red miniature heart sprinkle upside down under the beak for the wattle. Repeat with the remaining pops and let dry completely in the Styrofoam block.

Draw eyes on the espresso beans with a black edible-ink pen, and let dry completely.



Basic Cake Balls

Cake balls are bite-size balls made of crumbled cake mixed with frosting and covered in candy coating. They are super-easy to make and form the basis of endless variations of decorated cake pops, cupcake pops, and cake bites.

MAKES 48 CAKE BALLS

YOU'LL NEED

18.25-ounce box cake mix
 9-by-13-inch cake pan
 Large mixing bowl
 16-ounce container ready-made frosting
 Large metal spoon
 Wax paper
 2 baking sheets
 Plastic wrap
 32 ounces (2 pounds) candy coating
 Deep, microwave-safe plastic bowl
 Toothpicks
 Resealable plastic bag or squeeze bottle (optional)

Bake the cake as directed on the box, using a 9-by-13-inch cake pan. Let cool completely.

Once the cake is cooled, get organized and set aside plenty of time (at least an hour) to crumble, roll, and dip 4 dozen cake balls.

Crumble the cooled cake into a large mixing bowl. See “Crumbling Your Cake” on page 30. You should not see any large pieces of cake.

Add three-quarters of the container of frosting. (You will not need the remaining frosting.) Mix it into the crumbled cake, using the back of a large metal spoon, until thoroughly combined. If you use the entire container, the cake balls will be too moist.

The mixture should be moist enough to roll into 1½-inch balls and still hold a round shape. After rolling the cake balls by hand, place them on a wax paper-covered baking sheet.

Cover with plastic wrap and chill for several hours in the refrigerator, or place in the freezer for about 15 minutes. You want the balls to be firm but not frozen.

If you're making a project that calls for uncoated cake balls, stop here and proceed to decorate the cake balls, following the project instructions.

(continued)

The first time I tried a cake ball was at a Christmas party in 2007. The appearance of the balls was deceptive—they looked like peanut butter balls—and I almost passed them by. But then I was told they weren't peanut butter balls at all, but cake balls. Well, the name alone sent me straight over to investigate. And I'm so glad I did, because they have been a featured sweet at many family get-togethers since and the basis for my cake-pop craze.

