

## Penguins Love Summer

We have a jumbo beach towel that makes this bold statement, it drives one of my friends crazy! She insists that penguins and summer just don't mix. However, I have found some backing to the warm weather penguin, thanks to Kristen Doyle over at Kids Cuisine. In the penguin recipe that follows, I have altered the chocolate chips to be dairy-free friendly semi-sweet or dark (the original called for milk chocolate).

"Penguins seem to be all the rage these days. After the incredible movie, March of the Penguins came out, these adorable little creatures started getting the attention they deserve. With other kid-friendly blockbuster movies out like Happy Feet and Surf&rsquo;s Up, penguins went from being supporting actors to taking the lead roles. With all of this attention, it comes to no surprise that if you look through any birthday party supply catalog you will find an entire section now devoted to penguin themed birthday parties.

My three year old nephew has fallen deep into the penguin craze. At his party over the weekend I got to witness his mom creating these perfect penguin snacks for his celebration. With a little patience (they like to fall over if you do not wait for the ganache to harden and cool completely), you too can join in on all the penguin fun."

Perky Penguins (from Taste of Home Magazine)

- 1/2 cup [dairy-free semi-sweet or dark] chocolate chips
- 1-1/2 teaspoons shortening
- 12 large marshmallows
- 2 packages (2-1/4 ounces each) Tootsie Rolls
- 12 miniature [dairy-free, semi-sweet] chocolate chips
- 18 pieces candy corn
- 6 cream-filled chocolate sandwich cookies [such as Newman O's]

In a microwave-safe bowl, combine the chocolate chips and shortening. Microwave, uncovered, at 50% power for 1 to 1-1/2 minutes or until chips are melted, stirring every 30 seconds. Cool slightly. Place a small amount of chocolate mixture on top of six marshmallows. Let stand for 1 hour or until set.

Warm the chocolate mixture. For the penguin bodies, carefully dip sides of the marshmallows in chocolate mixture so three-fourths of the marshmallows are covered, leaving about 3/4-in. vertical strip of white. Let stand on waxed paper until set, about 1 hour.

For penguin heads, cut Tootsie Rolls into two-piece sections. Place on a microwave-safe plate; microwave at 10% power for 10-15 seconds or until slightly warmed. Carefully roll each into a ball.

With a toothpick, position chocolate chips for eyes. For beaks, cut off yellow end of six candy corn pieces; flatten remaining candy slightly. Press gently into chocolate balls. Reheat chocolate mixture. Dab a small amount onto bottom of each ball; position on penguin bodies. Let stand until set, about 45 minutes.

Separate cream-filled cookies; remove and discard cream filling. For wings, cut six cookies in half. Rewarm the chocolate mixture. Spread a small amount on each cookie half; attach to penguins with cut edge facing forward.

For bases, attach penguins to remaining cookies using melted chocolate. For feet, remove white ends of remaining candy corn pieces and discard; flatten candy. Attach two candies to each cookie base. Let stand for 45 minutes or until set.

Yield: 6 penguins.