

## **SAUCE CARAMEL CLASSIQUE/CLASSIC CARAMEL SAUCE**

Makes about 4 cups (plenty for a variety of uses!)

- 600 g / 3 cups cane sugar
  - 240 g / 1 cup water
  - 480 g / 2 cups heavy cream, warmed for a minute or so in the microwave
  - Large pinch of kosher salt
  - 56 g / 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut in chunks, softened
1. Have a small cup of warm water and a pastry brush on the counter next to your stovetop. Oven gloves are also nice to have on hand.
  2. Place the sugar in a mound in the center of a medium/large saucepan then drizzle the water in an X across it and around the periphery of the pan to moisten the sugar. Don't splash!
  3. Place the pan on low heat to allow the sugar to dissolve. At this stage it's OK to briefly stir but try to avoid getting sugar crystals up on the sides of the pan. If that occurs wet your pastry brush and gently brush down the sides of the pan. Once crystals form it can snowball into a chain reaction resulting in a hunk of crystallized sugar in the pan!
  4. Once the sugar is dissolved and you start seeing some bubbling, increase the heat to medium high and cook **WITHOUT STIRRING** (it's OK to swirl the pan to even out the browning) until the sugar has caramelized to medium deep amber. Watch closely! If it goes too far you'll have a smelly burnt mess.
  5. Remove the pan from the heat and gradually whisk in the heavy cream,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup at first then the rest gradually. The mixture will splutter (here's where oven gloves are nice) but as you continue to add the cream, the spluttering reduces. The cream essentially stops the cooking of the sugar.
  6. Transfer the caramel to a bowl and let it cool, stirring now and then, until warm. Blend in the butter and salt.
  7. Refrigerate until needed.

I typically store my caramel in a quart container, place a piece of plastic wrap directly on the surface and keep it refrigerated for up to three months. I also keep some on hand in a squeeze bottle for drizzling on ice cream, tarts or pastries or brushing on top of shortbread cookies. If using it warm, portion out what you need and gently heat it in the microwave. Great stuff!