

BETTER THAN STORE BOUGHT SWEET & SPICY ALMONDS

By: Rita Nader Heikenfeld, Macy's Culinary Professional, Community Press columnist and herbalist

Susan, this makes a great gift from the kitchen or a wonderful appetizer or start to a holiday meal. As you know, almonds, like all nuts, contain fiber and protein, plus a good amount of calcium. If you'd rather substitute walnuts (great source of Omega 3's) or your favorite nut, go ahead! I like using organic sugar, sea salt, Susan's local honey and cold pressed Canola and olive oil. This is adapted from my book "Gifts without Ribbons: Homemade Love".

2 cups whole almonds, skin left on and toasted ***
¼ cup sugar
1/8 teaspoon salt
1-2 teaspoons favorite Cajun or Creole spice mixture
2 tablespoons ea: honey and water
1 teaspoon each: Canola and olive oil

Mix sugar, salt and spice mixture in large bowl and set aside. Stir together honey, water and oils in pan and bring to a boil. Immediately stir in nuts and continue to cook and stir until liquid is absorbed, about 5 minutes. Immediately transfer nuts to bowl with sugar/salt mixture and toss until evenly coated. Pour out onto sprayed cookie sheet. When cool, break up and store airtight at room temperature up to a month.

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