CHOCOLATE COVERED CHERRY POPCORN

This was inspired by Valentine's day but great for the whole year. For all you gourmet popcorn lovers…popcorn has never tasted better than this! We have paired our candied cherry halves with sweet cherry flavored popcorn then topped it off with chunks of chocolate and drizzled milk and dark chocolate. This sweet yet salty treat is out of this world!

Ingredients:

Popcorn Mixture

12 cups of popcorn (we used Homestyle)

1 cup sugar

¼ cup butter

½ cup light corn syrup

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon of red or pink food coloring

1 teaspoon cherry flavoring

1 bag of green vanilla candy melts

½ teaspoon baking soda

Popcorn Topping

½ cup candied cherry halves

½ cup of chocolate chips or chocolate baking chunks

½ bag of milk chocolate melting chips

½ bag of dark chocolate melting chips

Combine sugar, butter, light corn syrup and salt in a heavy saucepan. Over medium heat stir occasionally until it begins to boil. Continue to stir and boil for 2 minutes. Add in food coloring. Remove from heat and stir in the cherry flavoring and baking soda.

Pour syrup over warm popcorn and mix well. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. Spread popcorn mixture onto the lined cookie sheet. (To make a crunchy version see below.) Sprinkle the chocolate chips/chunks and candied cherry halves on top of the popcorn. In separate bowls melt the milk and dark chocolate melting chips in the microwave (read manufacturer's directions on melting chips) until chocolate has a drizzle consistency. Drizzle milk chocolate, then the dark chocolate over the popcorn. Let chocolate candy coating set for at least an hour.

For a crunchy popcorn version:

After pouring the popcorn mixture on the parchment lined cookie sheet, place in a preheated oven at 200 degrees for 15 minutes. Remove from oven and stir/flip popcorn over. Repeat 2 more times, for a total baking time of 45 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool before adding the chocolate chips/chunks, cherries and drizzling the chocolates over the popcorn.