

# BON APPÉTIT

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**WINTER SPICE**  
Caramel Apple Upside-Down Cake



90

Lobster pot pie, oh my!  
Entertaining with Style  
in Telluride, Colorado.

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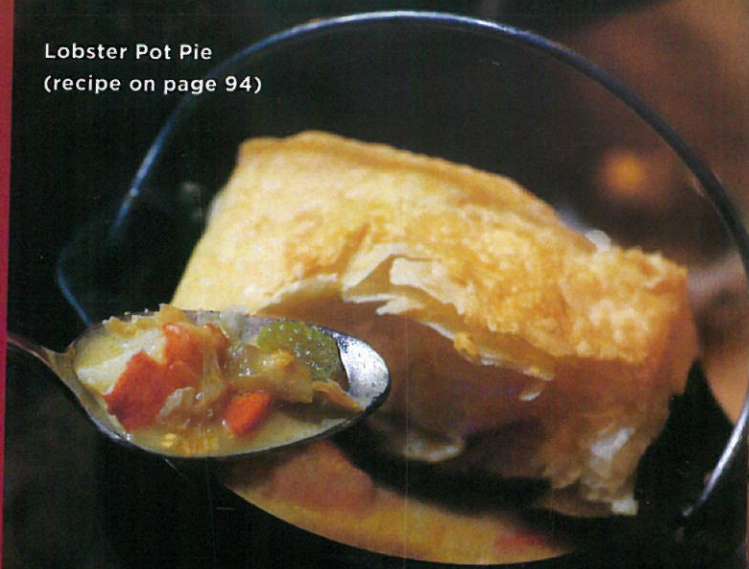
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Lobster Pot Pie  
(recipe on page 94)



FUN ON THE SLOPES, FUN  
AT THE STOVE: IT'S A PARTY  
IN A COLORADO KITCHEN—  
AND YOU'RE INVITED.

# SNOWDAY







ENTERTAINING WITH STYLE / REAL PEOPLE, REAL PARTY

## MENU FOR 8

Melted Rosemary Brie on Apple Wedges

Maple-Glazed Bacon on Gorgonzola Polenta Squares

Lobster Pot Pies

Frisée and Fresh Herb Salad with Kumquats and Shiitake Mushrooms

### AUSTRALIAN GRENACHE

Port-Poached Pears with Vanilla Mascarpone Filling and Honey-Cayenne Pecans

PRODUCED BY MARA PAPATHEODOROU  
TEXT BY NINA ELDER  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY GARY MOSS

Friends know that the food is going to be first class when chef Jake Linzinmeir (at head of table) invites them over for dinner. On the menu tonight? Pot pie (opposite, top) filled with butternut squash, peas, and—wait for it—lobster. Before dinner, the gang meets on the mountain to go snowmobiling (opposite).



## Chef Jake Linzinmeir spends most of his time at his

three Telluride, Colorado, restaurants, so on his day off there's just one thing he wants to do—throw a dinner party. “I never get tired of cooking,” he says. “When you can just focus on the food it becomes a relaxing experience. It's kind of like skiing—meditation through motion.”

But skiing is more than just a metaphor to Jake—it's the pre-party fun. He and his friends usually hit the slopes to ski or snowmobile, then meet up at Jake's house, where everyone pitches in. Some set the table or chop veggies; others pick the wine or choose the CDs.

Tonight's menu—polenta squares with bacon, a frisée salad with kumquats, and a rustic but elegant lobster pot pie—is inspired by Jake's family, midwesterners who get their culinary inspiration from all over the world. “My dad was a pilot and we would travel with him a lot,” says Jake. “Every time we'd get to a new city we'd go in search of the best food in town.” And this evening, there's no doubt where to find the best food in Telluride. ►

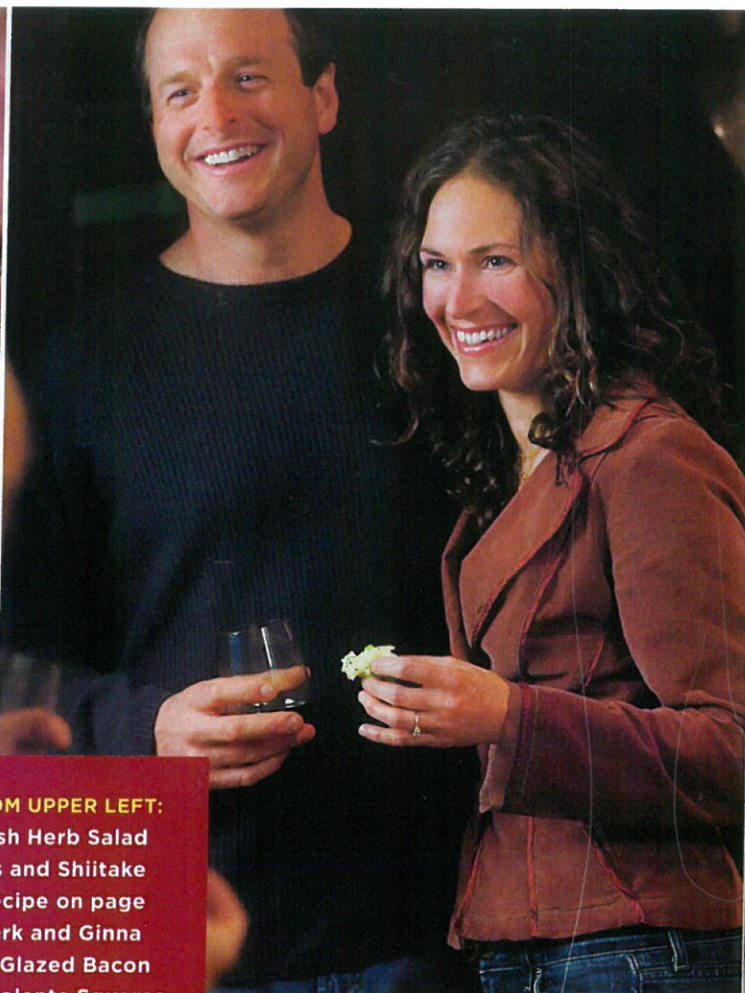
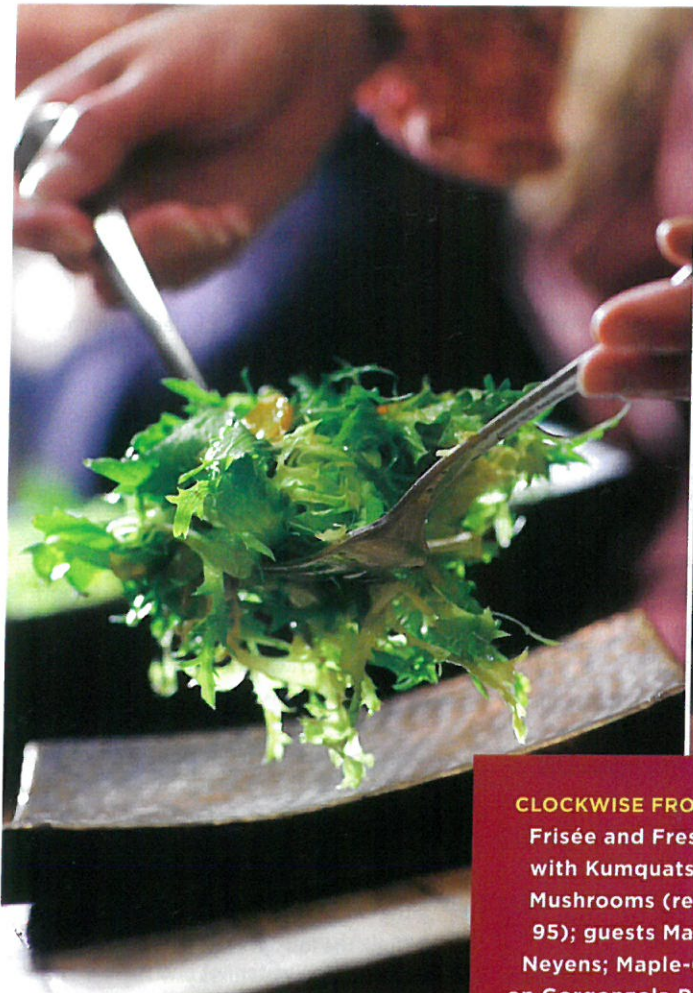


### Small Kitchen, Big Ideas

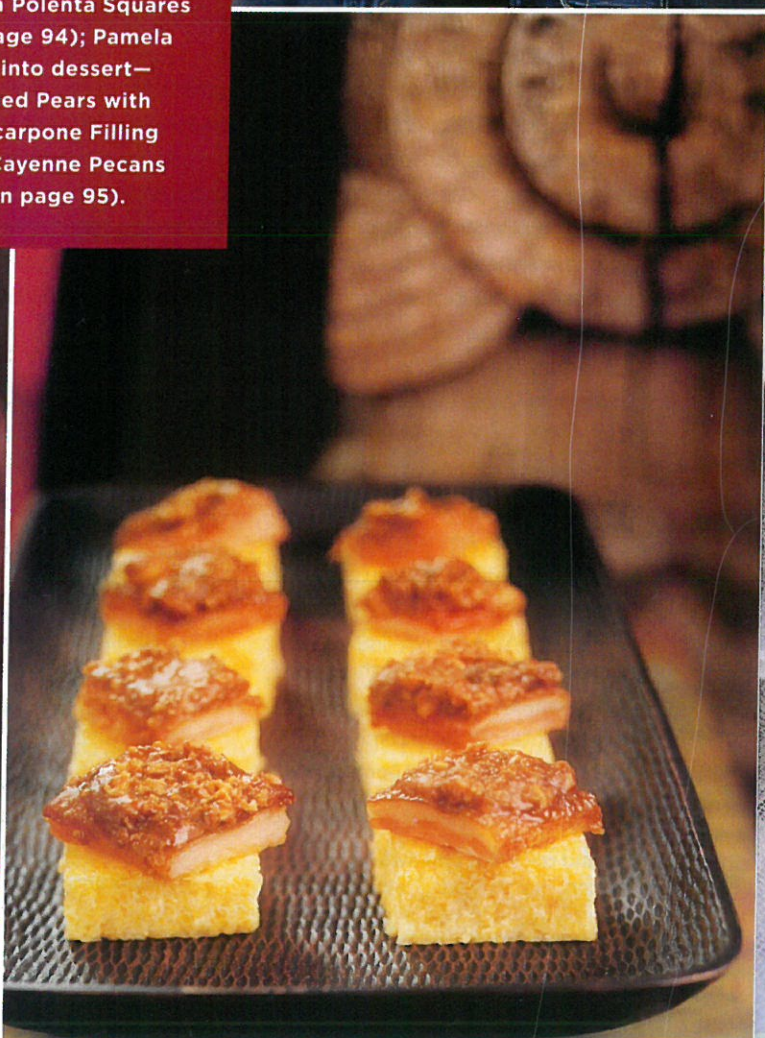
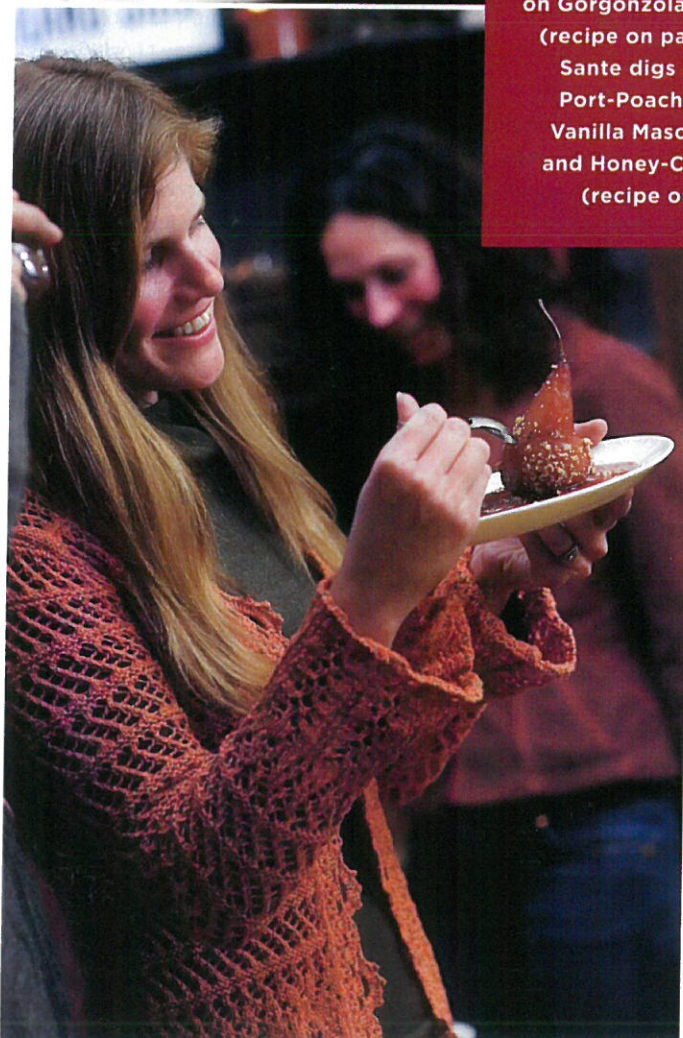
When you see Jake's tiny kitchen (left) it's hard to believe that this entire menu was made in such a small space. “The smaller, the better,” he says. “Too much space breeds disorganization. If the room is too big you lose the intimacy of what's happening in the kitchen.” The centerpiece of the room is a black La Cornue stove that Jake bought from the original importer. A custom range hood with pot rack (left and below) keeps essential equipment close at hand. To make the space complete, just add friends. “If I'm entertaining I want everyone in the kitchen with me,” he says.



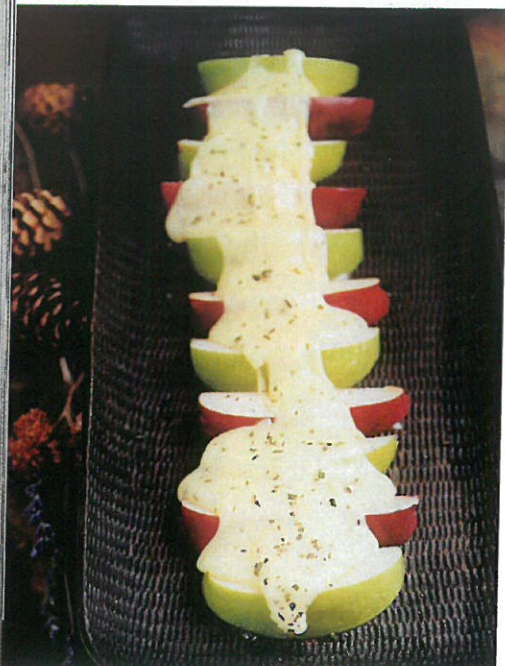




**CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT:**  
Frisée and Fresh Herb Salad  
with Kumquats and Shiitake  
Mushrooms (recipe on page  
95); guests Mark and Ginna  
Neyens; Maple-Glazed Bacon  
on Gorgonzola Polenta Squares  
(recipe on page 94); Pamela  
Sante digs into dessert—  
Port-Poached Pears with  
Vanilla Mascarpone Filling  
and Honey-Cayenne Pecans  
(recipe on page 95).







### ▲ Melted Rosemary Brie on Apple Wedges

8 SERVINGS

- 2 large Granny Smith or Fuji apples, cored, cut into ½-inch-thick slices
- 1 10-ounce piece Brie, rind trimmed, cheese cut into thin slices
- Chopped fresh rosemary

Arrange apples on baking sheet. Top each with slice of Brie. Sprinkle with rosemary and freshly ground black pepper.

**DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 hour ahead. Cover; let stand at room temperature.

Preheat broiler. Broil apples uncovered until cheese melts, moving sheet for even cooking, about 1 minute. Transfer to platter; serve hot.

### Maple-Glazed Bacon on Gorgonzola Polenta Squares

You've never had bacon like this—caramelized in a low oven with brown sugar, maple syrup, and walnuts.

8 SERVINGS

- 1½ cups whole milk
- 1½ cups low-salt chicken broth
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup polenta (coarse cornmeal)\*
- ¾ cup coarsely crumbled Gorgonzola cheese or other blue cheese
- 1 pound thick-cut applewood-smoked bacon

- 1 cup (packed) golden brown sugar
- ½ cup walnuts
- ¼ cup pure maple syrup

Bring first 3 ingredients to boil in heavy medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Gradually whisk in polenta. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook until polenta is thick enough to come away from sides of pan, stirring almost constantly, about 15 minutes. Mix in cheese. Spread polenta evenly in 9x9x2-inch pan. Chill until cold and firm, at least 2 hours and up to 1 day.

Meanwhile, preheat oven to 250°F. Arrange bacon in single layer on rimmed baking sheet. Using on/off turns, blend sugar, walnuts, and maple syrup in processor until nuts are chopped and crumbly texture forms. Sprinkle mixture over bacon. Bake until topping is caramelized and bacon is cooked through but still flexible, about 1 hour. Cool 10 minutes. Cut crosswise into 1-inch pieces.

Cut polenta into 1-inch squares; place on rimmed baking sheet; top each polenta square with bacon piece.

**DO AHEAD** Can be assembled ahead. Let stand 1 hour at room temperature or cover and chill up to 1 day.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Bake polenta uncovered until heated through, about 10 minutes. Transfer to platter; serve hot.

\*Available at some supermarkets, Italian markets, and natural foods stores.

### Lobster Pot Pies

Jake cooks and serves these individual pot pies in small cast-iron kettles, which are available from Lodge Manufacturing (lodgemfg.com; 423-837-7181).

8 SERVINGS

#### SAUCE

- 4 1⅓- to 1½-pound live lobsters
- 5 tablespoons butter, divided
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 carrot, chopped
- 1 celery stalk, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, chopped
- 2 cups dry white wine
- ¼ cup brandy

- 6 tablespoons all purpose flour
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh tarragon
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper

#### FILLING

- 4 cups ¾-inch cubes peeled butternut squash (cut from 2-pound squash)
- 1 cup thawed frozen peas
- 1 17.3-ounce package frozen puff pastry sheets (2 sheets), thawed
- 1 tablespoon fresh tarragon leaves
- 1 large egg, beaten to blend (for glaze)

## Lobster 101

Never cooked a lobster before? Follow these tips from our test-kitchen experts.

- \* Use a very large, deep pot.
- \* Before adding the lobsters, make sure the water is boiling vigorously.
- \* Cook the lobsters just two at a time to keep the water hot and the cooking time quick.

**FOR SAUCE:** Bring very large pot of water to boil. Add two lobsters; boil 5 minutes (lobsters will not be fully cooked). Transfer to rimmed baking sheets. Repeat with remaining lobsters. Reserve cooking water. Remove meat from claws and tail; cover and chill. Reserve lobster shells, trimmings, and juices.

Melt 2 tablespoons butter in large pot over medium-high heat. Add next 4 ingredients; sauté until just tender, about 5 minutes. Add 16 cups reserved cooking water, wine, brandy, and reserved lobster shells, trimmings, and juices; bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium; simmer 1 hour.

## >> WHAT TO DRINK

Australian Grenache is a nice pairing for this menu. Jake's pick? Betts & Scholl 2002 Barossa Valley Grenache (\$28).



Strain lobster stock into large measuring cup. If necessary, return to pot and boil until reduced to 4 cups.

Cut lobster meat into 1-inch pieces. Melt 1 tablespoon butter in heavy large saucepan over medium heat. Add lobster pieces; sauté until just opaque in center, about 5 minutes. Place sieve or colander over reserved stock. Pour lobster mixture from skillet into sieve, draining all juices into stock. Chill lobster pieces.

Melt 2 tablespoons butter in large saucepan over medium heat. Whisk in flour; cook 1 minute. Whisk in lobster stock mixture and cream. Bring to boil, whisking constantly. Boil until reduced to 4 cups, about 7 minutes. Whisk in tarragon and cayenne; season sauce to taste with salt and pepper.

**FOR FILLING:** Cook squash in large pot of boiling salted water until just tender, about 10 minutes; drain. Add squash, peas, and lobster pieces to sauce; blend gently. Chill until cold. **DO AHEAD** *Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and chill.*

Place 1 pastry sheet on work surface. Sprinkle with tarragon. Top with second pastry sheet. Roll out to 18x18-inch square; cut out eight 6-inch squares. Arrange squares on baking sheets; pierce with fork. **DO AHEAD** *Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover; chill on baking sheets.*

Preheat to 450°F. Arrange eight 1¼- to 1½-cup casseroles on large rimmed

baking sheet. Divide lobster filling among casseroles and cover each with foil.

Brush pastry squares with egg glaze. Bake until crisp and golden, about 12 minutes. Bake filling until heated through, about 15 minutes. Remove foil from casseroles; place on plates. Top each with pastry square and serve.

### Frisée and Fresh Herb Salad with Kumquats and Shiitake Mushrooms

8 SERVINGS

- ¼ cup white balsamic vinegar
- 1 large shallot, minced
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 6 ounces small fresh shiitake mushrooms, stemmed
- 8 cups (lightly packed) torn frisée
- 1 cup fresh Italian parsley leaves
- ½ cup coarsely chopped fresh chives
- 6 kumquats, sliced into rounds, seeded (optional)

Combine vinegar and shallot in large bowl. Gradually whisk in ½ cup oil. Season dressing with salt and pepper. **DO AHEAD** *Can be made 6 hours ahead. Cover; chill. Bring to room temperature before using.*

Heat 2 tablespoons oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms; sprinkle with salt and pepper and sauté 5 minutes; cool. Add frisée, parsley, chives,

and kumquats (if using) to dressing; toss. Mix in mushrooms. Season with more salt and pepper, if desired, and serve.

### Port-Poached Pears with Vanilla Mascarpone Filling and Honey-Cayenne Pecans

Begin preparing this one day ahead.

8 SERVINGS

- 1 8- to 9-ounce container mascarpone cheese (Italian cream cheese)\*
- 1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise
- 2 tablespoons plus 1 cup sugar
- ½ teaspoon finely grated lemon peel
- 8 large Bosc pears, peeled, stems left intact
- 4 cups water
- 1 750-ml bottle ruby Port
- 2 2-inch-long strips lemon peel

Honey-Cayenne Pecans (see recipe)

Place mascarpone in bowl. Scrape in seeds from vanilla bean; reserve bean. Stir in 2 tablespoons sugar and grated lemon peel. Cover; chill up to 1 day.

Cut thin slice off bottom of each pear to make flat surface. Using small end of melon baller and working from bottom, remove core of each pear. Choose pot large enough to hold pears snugly side by side. Add 4 cups water, Port, lemon peel strips, reserved vanilla bean, and 1 cup sugar. Bring syrup to boil, stirring until sugar dissolves. Stand pears in syrup. Bring syrup to simmer; cover and simmer until pears are tender, about 30 minutes. Uncover; chill pears in syrup overnight.

Lift pears from syrup, draining well; place on sheet of foil. Working with 1 pear at a time, use small knife or spoon to pack mascarpone into pear cavity. Stand pears on plate. Boil syrup until reduced to 2 cups, about 30 minutes; transfer to small bowl. Cover pears and syrup separately. Chill until syrup is cold, up to 1 day.

Divide pears and syrup among plates. Press nuts around pear bottoms.

\*Available at many supermarkets and Italian markets. ■

#### [ ONE RECIPE, THREE WAYS ]

## Honey-Cayenne Pecans

Jake uses these super-easy nuts in many different ways—as a bar snack, ground with pine nuts and mixed with Triple Sec for a quick pie crust, and as a sweet-spicy-crunchy garnish for the poached pears in this menu.

For 2¼ cups of pecans: Line a baking sheet with foil. Melt ¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter in medium nonstick skillet over medium-low heat. Add ½ cup (packed) golden brown sugar, 1 tablespoon honey, 1 tablespoon water, ½ teaspoon (scant) salt, and ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper. Stir until sugar dissolves. Increase heat to medium-high. Add 2 cups raw pecans (about 8 ounces) and stir constantly until caramel turns deep brown, bubbles vigorously, and coats nuts, about 5 minutes. Pour nut mixture onto prepared sheet; cool 1 hour. Coarsely chop pecans. **DO AHEAD** *Can be made 3 days ahead. Store airtight at room temperature.*