

CHEESECAKE, FULLY



THE COOKFUL

Edited by Christine Pittman

Cheesecake, Fully

Among my family and friends I'm known for not having much of a sweet tooth. I'm also known for having a huge cheese tooth. So it might come as no surprise that the cheesy, but not usually overly sweet, dessert of cheesecake is one of my favorites. As we head towards Thanksgiving and Christmas when desserts are such a focus, it seemed like the perfect time to turn our attention to that beloved dessert.

I know you're going to love this ebook. I'm so excited about it. There are a ton of amazing cheesecake recipes, from classics like, well, the Perfect Classic Cheesecake and Chocolate Cheesecake to fun twists like S'mores Cheesecake, Pecan Pie Cheesecake, Lemon Meringue Cheesecake and so much more. We also have a "Skinny" Cheesecake if you're trying to curb your holiday caloric intake. We get that. And then there are our usual tips and tricks. So many of them this time. You're going to learn so much and have all the cheesecake recipes you'll ever need.

Happy holiday season and enjoy those cakes!

Christine



THE COOKFUL

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Top Ten Tips for Perfect Cheesecake

By Amy Bowen

Cheesecake is the dessert of dreams but it can be persnickety. From cracked tops to being stuck in the pan, making a cheesecake can be a nightmare.

Fear not. We rounded up 10 tips for making a perfect cheesecake.

TIP 1

Follow directions. I know this seems like a no-brainer, but seriously, read the directions carefully, more than once, and then follow them. The cheesecake creator gods know their stuff!

TIP 2

Speaking of following directions, you know how recipes call for softened cream cheese? This is a must. Softened cream cheese prevents a lumpy cheesecake. Let it soften on the counter for at least an hour before starting.

TIP 3

Cheesecake isn't a diet food. Use full-fat cream cheese. It adds flavor and texture.

TIP 4

Whip your filling for a couple minutes more than the recipe recommends. The filling will be velvety.

TIP 5

Add a bit of flour or cornstarch to your batter. This helps the cheesecake bake evenly and can prevent cracks.

Top Ten Tips for Perfect Cheesecake

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TIP 6

Always, always, always use a springform pan. Cheesecakes will fall apart if you don't use one. Butter the bottom and sides of the pan to make it easier to remove the cake.

TIP 7

Use a water bath when cooking. The hot water steam helps the cheesecake bake evenly.

TIP 8

Cheesecakes crack. It happens. If your perfect cheesecake cracked during baking, just spread sour cream over the top of your cooled dessert. No one will know.

TIP 9

Don't overbake your cake. You want it to be set along the edges and slightly jiggly in the center. It will continue to set as it cools.

TIP 10

Don't rush cutting and serving. Many recipes call for letting a cheesecake come to room temperature before cutting. This absolutely makes it easier to cut and improves the taste. For best results, pour more coffee and wait an additional half an hour (1.5 hours total) before digging in.

Best Seven Tips for the Perfect Graham Crust

By Amy Bowen

A graham cracker crust can make or break a cheesecake. Here's how to make a winning crust every time.

Fear not.

Now that we've shared our top ten tips for making a perfect cheesecake, let's focus on the graham cracker crust.

TIP 1

Ever wonder how many sheets of graham crackers you need to grind up for your crust? I have, and so this tip is super helpful. Ten full graham cracker sheets equal 1 and 1/2 cups of crumbs.

TIP 2

Use a glass measuring cup to help press the graham cracker crust down into the pan and smooth out any bumps so it is compact and holds together well. Start pressing the mixture with your fingers. Once it's all pressed in a layer in your pan, use the measuring cup to press it down more and to make it smooth.

TIP 3

If your graham crust is for a cheesecake, or if you will want to remove the dessert from the pan completely and in one piece before serving, use a springform pan. This prevents the crust and the filling from falling apart when you try to get it out of the pan.

Best Seven Tips for the Perfect Graham Crust

Continued from previous page

TIP 4

No worries if your crust falls from the sides during baking. You can fix it using your trusty measuring cup to shape it again as long as you do so while the crust is hot from the oven. Once you smooth it out, set it aside to cool.

TIP 5

Prebake your crust before adding the cheese filling. I am a firm believer in this tip because it prevents a soggy bottom and the flavor versus taste is more complex. The great thing about prebaking a graham cracker crust is that it only takes 10 minutes at 350°F.

TIP 6

Use real butter and not margarine in your crust. The flavor really makes a difference. I prefer unsalted butter here.

TIP 7

Add some extra flavor to your crust. Which flavor you choose depends on the filling. If it's a rich-style filling, try adding 1/4 teaspoon of cinnamon. If it's a fruit filling, go with 1 tablespoon of lemon or orange zest. Almost any filling goes with chocolate so go ahead and add two teaspoons of cocoa powder. Vanilla bean seeds, or the handier vanilla paste, are also great additions with any flavor of filling.



Classic Cheesecake Recipe

By Jaime Silva

Cheesecake is always the right answer when you're looking for a delicious dessert to serve family or guests.

Making cheesecake can sometimes feel overwhelming. Maybe even frustrating and stressful too. But you never want your dessert game to suffer all because you're too afraid of making cheesecake, and once you make it a couple times you'll wonder what the fuss was for. Making deliciously, creamy cheesecakes should never have a bad reputation. Thankfully, I've mastered the art of cheesecake-making so you never have to live without it. I'm sharing a few of my favorite tips for making the perfect cheesecake every time.

Room temperature all the things. For a perfectly smooth cheesecake without lumps, the cream cheese, eggs and sour cream must be at room temperature. Similarly, you want to bring the cheesecake to room temperature after cooling and before serving.

Classic Cheesecake Recipe

Continued from previous page

Just say no to cracks. There are a few ways to avoid cracks in your cheesecake and achieve that smooth consistency we all want.

- + First, using a tablespoon of cornstarch in your cheesecake batter firms it up, giving it less of a chance to form cracks.
- + Second, baking the cheesecake in a water bath creates steam and keeps the cheesecake from drying out in the oven. A dry cheesecake is sure to form cracks. Wrap your springform pan in foil to prevent leaks and then place it in the middle of a roasting pan that has a couple inches of hot water in it.
- + Lastly, don't over mix, overbake or cool too fast. If you over mix, you will let air into the batter. If you overbake or cool too fast, cracks may form.

Let the cheesecake do its thing. I have a habit of being impatient and opening the oven for a peek at how things are going but when it comes to baking cheesecakes, that's a big no-no. If you let any steam out of the oven, you risk cracks forming or the cheesecake actually sinking in. The whole 'toothpick in the middle to see if it's done' thing is also a big no-no here. A cheesecake is done when the outer rim looks set but the middle jiggles when you gently shake the pan. It will continue to cook from the residual heat while it cools on the counter.

If all else fails, make the best of it. In the event you do happen to see cracks or something else goes wrong (like you didn't grease your pan and can't get the cheesecake out), don't fret. The cheesecake will probably still taste delicious! Just add some sour cream or another topping to cover up cracks and/or grab a fork and dig in.

As the saying goes, "slow and steady wins the race". Be mindful of the time it takes to make the perfect cheesecake and plan accordingly. To give you an idea, a cheesecake needs to bake for an hour, needs to cool for another hour on the counter, chill for four hours in the fridge then come to room temperature for about 30 minutes before slicing. Making cheesecake may appear as a test of patience but I promise it will be worth the wait.

Classic Cheesecake Recipe

Continued from previous page

Yield: 8-10 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 60 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour and 20 minutes

Ingredients:

Graham Cracker Crust

12 full-sheet graham crackers, crushed
1/4 cup butter, melted
1 Tbsp. sugar

Cheesecake Filling

3 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, room temperature
1 cup sugar
1 Tbsp. cornstarch
Pinch of salt
1/2 cup sour cream, room temperature
1 tsp. vanilla extract
4 large eggs, room temperature

Crust

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease the springform pan and wrap the outside of the pan in foil. Set aside.
2. In a bowl, mix crushed graham crackers, melted butter and sugar. Transfer to the pan and press evenly into the bottom using the bottom of a glass. Place the crust in the oven and bake for 10 minutes until the crust is slightly brown around the edges. Remove from oven and let it cool.

Cheesecake Filling

3. In a bowl, mix the cream cheese, sugar, cornstarch and salt until combined and creamy. Stir in sour cream and vanilla then mix until combined. Add one egg at a time and stir to combine. Make sure to scrape the sides of the bowl and mix until smooth, creamy and silky.
4. Pour the cheesecake batter over the cooled crust. Transfer the springform pan to the middle of a large roasting pan. Carefully fill the roasting pan with about an inch of hot water. This will help the cheesecake remain creamy without cracks. Bake the cheesecake until set at the edges but still a bit jiggly in the middle when you shake the pan, about 55-60 minutes.
5. Remove cheesecake from oven. Let the cheesecake cool completely on a cooling rack. This step is crucial for achieving the perfect cheesecake. Place in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours or up to 72 hours. Add toppings, if desired. Slice and serve!

Skinny Classic Cheesecake

By Tawnie Kroll

No need to sacrifice when you're looking for a lightened up dessert. This skinny cheesecake is crave-worthy with way fewer calories!

Cheesecake is one of those desserts people often avoid making, especially when they want to make something lightened up. However, it's really simple if you follow a few key important steps.

You'll want to bake your skinny cheesecake in a springform pan so you can remove the cheesecake easily by releasing the sides. Trust me, it will make your life that much easier.

To make this skinny cheesecake lighter without sacrificing texture and flavor, I use Greek yogurt because it's nice and creamy while adding a little extra protein. Then I swap cream cheese out for Neufchâtel cream cheese because it's lower in fat but still gives the cheesecake the proper consistency.

Just be sure you don't start mixing your cheesecake batter until the eggs, Greek yogurt and Neufchâtel cream cheese are all at room temperature so it mixes together smoothly. No one likes lumps in their cheesecake, right?!

The next step you want to remember is to bake your cheesecake in a water bath. I use a roasting pan. This is done to prevent any cracks from forming on the top of the cheesecake. But hey, sometimes cracks still happen. If they do, top your cheesecake with a smear of Greek yogurt and some fresh raspberries and no one will notice.

Lastly, when the cheesecake finishes baking in the oven, don't put it in the fridge right away to cool. Set it on a baking rack and slowly bring down the temperature of the cheesecake. Be patient, no one will sneak in with a fork without you catching them.



Skinny Classic Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

Yield: 8-10 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour and 40 minutes

Total Time: 2 hours

Ingredients:

Crust

10 sheets of graham cracker
(or 1 and 1/2 cups)
1/3 cup granulated sugar
1/3 cup butter, melted
Pinch of salt
Pinch of cinnamon

Filling

3 (8 oz) pkg. Neufchâtel
cream cheese, room
temperature so it's
softened
1 cup granulated sugar
1/3 cup Greek yogurt, room
temperature
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 Tbsp. lemon juice
1 tsp. lemon zest
1 tsp. vanilla extract
4 eggs, separated, room
temperature

Crust

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a standard 9-inch springform pan with baking spray or line with parchment paper. Then wrap springform pan with foil on bottom and up around the edges.
2. In a food processor, pulse breadcrumbs until crumbled. Add in melted butter, sugar, salt and cinnamon and pulse until moistened. Firmly press graham cracker mixture evenly into bottom of springform pan and bake for 5 minutes. Once done, set aside and begin cheesecake filling.

Cheesecake Filling

3. In a stand mixer, cream together the softened cream cheese and sugar using the paddle attachment. Then add in flour, yogurt, lemon juice, lemon zest and vanilla. Be careful not to overmix. Lastly, beat in the egg yolks one by one.
4. In a hand mixer, beat egg whites until they form a soft peak. Fold egg whites into the cream cheese mixture then pour on top of crust.
5. Place cheesecake into a water bath by putting springform pan into another larger pan and adding hot water until it is 1-2 inches up the side of the springform pan.
6. Bake for 40 minutes. Do not open oven door when baking. After the 40 minutes, turn oven off and let cheesecake sit in oven for 30 minutes. Then crack the oven door open ever so slightly and let it cool in oven for another 30 minutes. Cool on the counter for another 30 minutes.
7. Place in fridge for 8 hours, or overnight. Serve with fresh fruit.



Red Velvet Cheesecake

By Jamie Silva

Combine two iconic desserts into one with a decadent Red Velvet Cheesecake.

Now that you've mastered a Classic Cheesecake, you're going to add a couple ingredients and make this Red Velvet Cheesecake. Red Velvet Cake and cheesecake are favorites for family celebrations. Now no one has to choose between the two because you can make everyone's favorite cake all in one. Everyone gets the best of both worlds with a red velvet cheesecake and you only need to make one dessert.

Red velvet cheesecake starts with a crunchy chocolate cookie crust, then we add a creamy, deep red chocolate cheesecake filling and finish it off with the deliciously rich cream cheese frosting that red velvet cake is known for. It delivers everything you could want in a dessert.

And if it seems the least bit intimidating, I can assure you that making this red velvet cheesecake is easier than you think. Trust me. Let's go!

Red Velvet Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

Yield: 8-10 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Total Time: 1 hour and 20 minutes

Ingredients:

Chocolate Cookie Crust

18 chocolate sandwich cookies, crushed
1/4 cup butter, melted
1 Tbsp. sugar

Cheesecake Filling

3 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, room temperature
1 cup sugar
3 Tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder
1 Tbsp. cornstarch
Pinch of salt
1/2 cup sour cream, room temperature
1 oz. red food coloring
1 tsp. vanilla extract
4 large eggs, room temperature

Cream Cheese Frosting

4 oz. cream cheese, room temperature
1/4 cup butter, softened
2 cups confectioners sugar
1 tsp. vanilla extract

Chocolate Cookie Crust

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease the springform pan and wrap the outside of the pan in foil. Set aside.
2. In a bowl, mix crushed cookies, butter and sugar. Transfer to the pan and press evenly into the bottom using the bottom of a glass. Place the crust in the oven and bake for 10 minutes until the crust is slightly brown around the edges. Remove from oven and let it cool.

Cheesecake Filling

3. In a bowl, mix the cream cheese, sugar, cocoa powder, cornstarch and salt until combined and creamy. Stir in sour cream, red food coloring and vanilla then mix until combined. Add one egg at a time and stir to combine. Make sure to scrape the sides of the bowl and mix until smooth, creamy and silky. Pour the cheesecake batter over the cooled crust.
4. Transfer the springform pan to the middle of a large roasting pan. Carefully fill the roasting pan with about an inch of hot water. This will help the cheesecake remain creamy without cracks. Bake the cheesecake for 55-60 minutes.

Frosting

5. In the meantime, make the frosting. Mix together cream cheese, butter, confectioners sugar and vanilla until thick and well combined. Set aside.

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Red Velvet Cheesecake

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6. Remove cheesecake from oven. The cheesecake is done when the outer rim looks set but the middle jiggles when you gently shake the pan. Let the cheesecake cool completely on a cooling rack. This step is crucial for achieving the perfect cheesecake. Then place in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours or up to 72 hours.
7. Top cooled cheesecake with cream cheese frosting. Slice and serve.



S'mores Cheesecake

By Jaime Silva

Forget the campfire. You can make a S'mores Cheesecake right in your oven.

Who needs a campfire when you can have s'mores in the form of a cheesecake? My love for s'mores knows no bounds and even though some say they are only to be enjoyed during the summer months, I'm Team S'mores any day.

This S'mores Cheesecake is made with a buttery, chocolate-lined graham cracker crust, which I could eat by itself, and the creamy cheesecake filling I use in Classic Cheesecake. Then it's topped with toasty marshmallows, melted chocolate chips and crushed graham crackers. Is this for real?

Believe the hype, this S'mores Cheesecake is real and it's happening! Oh, and you won't believe how easy it is. Everyone will think it took you forever to make. We promise not to give away your secret.

S'mores Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

Yield: 8-10 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Total Time: 1 hour and 20 minutes

Ingredients:

Graham Cracker Crust

10 full-sheet graham crackers, crushed (plus more for garnish)
1/4 cup butter, melted
1 Tbsp. sugar
3/4 cup chocolate chips, melted (plus more for topping)

Cheesecake Filling

3 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, room temperature
1 cup sugar
1 Tbsp. cornstarch
Pinch of salt
1/2 cup sour cream, room temperature
1 tsp. vanilla extract
4 large eggs, room temperature

Topping

2 cups mini marshmallows
Chocolate chips (as desired)

Crust

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease the springform pan and wrap the outside of the pan in foil. Set aside.
2. In a bowl, mix crushed graham crackers, butter and sugar. Transfer to the pan and press evenly into the bottom using the bottom of a glass. Pour melted chocolate on top of crust. Set aside.

Cheesecake Filling

3. In a bowl, mix the cream cheese, sugar, cornstarch and salt until combined and creamy. Stir in sour cream and vanilla then mix until combined. Add one egg at a time and stir to combine. Make sure to scrape the sides of the bowl and mix until smooth, creamy and silky.
4. Pour the cheesecake batter over the cooled crust. Transfer the springform pan to the middle of a large roasting pan. Carefully fill the roasting pan with about an inch of hot water. This will help the cheesecake remain creamy without cracks. Bake the cheesecake for 55-60 minutes.
5. Remove cheesecake from oven. The cheesecake is done when the outer rim looks set but the middle jiggles when you gently shake the pan. Let the cheesecake cool for an hour on a cooling rack.

Topping

6. Turn broiler on in the oven. Add marshmallows and chocolate chips on top of the cheesecake. Place cheesecake back in the oven and broil for 1-2 minutes, just enough to toast the marshmallows and melt the chocolate chips. Be careful not to burn!

S'mores Cheesecake

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7. Remove the cheesecake from oven and add crushed graham crackers on top, if desired, then let it cool completely on a cooling rack. This step is crucial for achieving the perfect cheesecake. Then place in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours or up to 72 hours.



Dulce de Leche Cheesecake

By Jamie Silva

Rich creamy cheesecake swirled with silky smooth dulce de leche delivers a twist on caramel cheesecake.

If you've never heard of dulce de leche, allow me to introduce you to what just might be the best thing on earth. Dulce de leche is a thick and creamy caramel sauce that pretty much tastes like heaven. It isn't as thin as the topping on salted caramel cheesecake since it's actually sweetened condensed milk that's simmered for several hours, but it's just as delicious as you can imagine. You can make your own but it's easy to buy it.

Add that to our smooth and creamy Classic Cheesecake filling and you're in for the treat of your life. Not only do you add dollops of dulce de leche into the batter to form a marble swirl but you also finish the cheesecake with a thin layer of dulce de leche on top making this the most velvety, sweet cheesecake you've ever had. Now hold that thought, I'm going back for seconds.

Dulce de Leche Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

Yield: 8-10 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Total Time: 1 hour and 20 minutes

Ingredients:

Graham Cracker Crust

10 full-sheet graham crackers,
crushed
1/4 cup butter, melted
1 Tbsp. sugar

Cheesecake Filling

3 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese,
room temperature
1 cup sugar
1 Tbsp. cornstarch
Pinch of salt
1/2 cup sour cream, room
temperature
1 (13 oz.) can dulce de leche
1 tsp. vanilla extract
4 large eggs, room
temperature

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease the springform pan and wrap the outside of the pan in foil. Set aside.
2. In a bowl, mix crushed graham crackers, butter and sugar. Transfer to the pan and press evenly into the bottom using the bottom of a glass. Place the crust in the oven and bake for 10 minutes until the crust is slightly brown around the edges. Remove from oven and let it cool.
3. In a bowl, mix the cream cheese, sugar, cornstarch and salt until combined and creamy. Stir in sour cream and vanilla then mix until combined. Add one egg at a time and stir to combine. Make sure to scrape the sides of the bowl and mix until smooth, creamy and silky.
4. Into another bowl, pour 1 cup of the cheesecake batter and mix with the dulce de leche. Make sure it is all well combined. Set aside.
5. Pour the remaining cheesecake batter over the cooled crust then add a few dollops of the dulce de leche mixture over the cheesecake batter. Using a knife, gently make about 3-4 swirls to give a marble effect. Save any leftover dulce de leche mixture to frost the cheesecake once cool.
6. Transfer the springform pan to the middle of a large roasting pan. Carefully fill the roasting pan with about an inch of hot water. This will help the cheesecake remain creamy without cracks. Bake the cheesecake for 55-60 minutes.
7. Remove cheesecake from oven. The cheesecake is done when the outer rim looks set but the middle jiggles when you gently shake the pan. Let the cheesecake cool completely on a cooling rack. This step is crucial for achieving the perfect cheesecake. Frost the cheesecake with remaining dulce de leche then place in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours or up to 72 hours.



Best Chocolate Cheesecake

By Jamie Silva

Chocoholics rejoice! We've got the best Chocolate Cheesecake recipe you'll ever find.

Cheesecake is a dessert that everyone loves and it's great for any occasion. But this cheesecake is for a true chocolaholic (or someone who wants to become one). Cheesecake doesn't get much more indulgent than this.

We start with a rich chocolate cookie crust and pair it with a velvety smooth and creamy chocolate cheesecake filling. Top it with whipped cream, sliced fruit or [chocolate ganache](#) if desired, but honestly, it's pretty irresistible as-is. Just a warning, the chocolate lovers in your life will be begging you to make it again and again.

Best Chocolate Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

Yield: 8-10 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Total Time: 1 hour and 20 minutes

Ingredients:

Chocolate Cookie Crust

18 cream-filled chocolate sandwich cookies, crushed
1/4 cup butter, melted
1 Tbsp. sugar

Cheesecake Filling

3 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, room temperature
1 cup sugar
1 Tbsp. cornstarch
Pinch of salt
1/2 cup sour cream, room temperature
2 cups dark chocolate chips, melted
1 tsp. vanilla extract
4 large eggs, room temperature

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a springform pan and wrap the outside of the pan in foil. Set aside.

Chocolate Cookie Crust

2. In a bowl, mix crushed cookies, butter and sugar. Transfer to the pan and press evenly into the bottom using the bottom of a glass. Place the crust in the oven and bake for 10 minutes until the crust is slightly brown around the edges. Remove from oven and let it cool.

Cheesecake Filling

3. In a bowl, mix the cream cheese, sugar, cornstarch and salt until combined and creamy. Stir in sour cream, melted chocolate and vanilla then mix until combined. Add one egg at a time and stir to combine. Make sure to scrape the sides of the bowl and mix until smooth and creamy. Pour the cheesecake batter over the cooled crust.
4. Transfer the springform pan to the middle of a large roasting pan. Carefully fill the roasting pan with about an inch of hot water. This will help the cheesecake remain creamy without cracks. Bake the cheesecake for 55-60 minutes.
5. Remove cheesecake from oven. The cheesecake is done when the outer rim looks set but the middle jiggles when you gently shake the pan. Let the cheesecake cool completely on a cooling rack. This step is crucial for achieving the perfect cheesecake. Place in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours or up to 72 hours.



Best Strawberry Cheesecake

By Jamie Silva

Strawberries and cheesecake are a match made in heaven so we're keeping it fresh and simple here.

Impress your friends and family with a rich and creamy cheesecake topped with strawberries and an easy-to-make strawberry sauce! This cheesecake truly celebrates fresh strawberries because not only are they piled on top with the strawberry sauce, but they're also finely chopped inside the cheesecake batter. It's strawberry flavor overload in the best way possible. I recommend topping each slice with whipped cream and even more strawberries.

This cheesecake is so easy to make that you just might decide to make another cheesecake to go along with it. You won't even have to choose between the two because what goes better with strawberries than chocolate? That's right - you get to have a slice of each! Ha!

Best Strawberry Cheesecake

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Yield: 10-12 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Total Time: 1 hour and 20 minutes

Ingredients:

Graham Cracker Crust

12 full-sheet graham crackers, crushed
1/4 cup butter, melted
1 Tbsp. sugar

Cheesecake Filling

3 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, room temperature
1 cup sugar
1 Tbsp. cornstarch
Pinch of salt
1/2 cup sour cream, room temperature
1/2 cup fresh strawberries, washed, hulled, finely chopped
1 tsp. vanilla extract
4 large eggs, room temperature

Strawberry Sauce

1 and 1/2 cup fresh strawberries, washed, hulled, divided
2 Tbsp. sugar

Crust

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9-inch springform pan and wrap the outside of the pan in foil. Set aside.
2. In a bowl, mix crushed graham crackers, butter and sugar. Transfer to the pan and press evenly into the bottom using the bottom of a glass. Set aside.

Cheesecake Filling

3. In a bowl, mix the cream cheese, sugar, cornstarch and salt until combined and creamy. Stir in sour cream, chopped strawberries and vanilla then mix until combined. Add one egg at a time and stir to combine. Make sure to scrape the sides of the bowl and mix until smooth, creamy and silky.
4. Pour the cheesecake batter over the cooled crust. Transfer the springform pan to the middle of a large roasting pan. Carefully fill the roasting pan with about an inch of hot water. This will help the cheesecake remain creamy without cracks. Bake the cheesecake for 55-60 minutes.
5. Remove cheesecake from oven. The cheesecake is done when the outer rim looks set but the middle jiggles when you gently shake the pan. Let the cheesecake cool for an hour on a cooling rack. This step is crucial for achieving the perfect cheesecake.

Topping

6. While the cheesecake cools, make the strawberry sauce. In a food processor, add 1 cup of the strawberries and pulse until smooth. Pass the pureed strawberries through a fine sieve into a small bowl. In the bowl, whisk in 2 tablespoons sugar then pour strawberry sauce over cheesecake. Slice remaining 1/2 cup of strawberries and place on top of cake. Put cheesecake in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours or up to 72 hours.

Pumpkin Cheesecake Bars

By Tawnie Kroll

Who doesn't love a triple layer cheesecake bar, especially if pumpkin is involved?! You'll NEED these bars at your next gathering.

If you want to serve cheesecake at your next fall gathering but need to serve a crowd, then pumpkin cheesecake bars are just what you need. (If you want to make two desserts, another fall crowd-pleaser is [this Pumpkin Slab Pie](#), which goes deliciously with a big batch of [Slow Cooker Hot Chocolate](#).)

Making cheesecake bars is all 'round easy. The preparation process is easier than regular cheesecake. For instance, you don't need a springform pan and you don't have to worry about the top cracking since you're going to cut them into squares anyway. Plus, the layered look of these bars is just plain pretty.

The main trick in making any type of cheesecake is warming your ingredients to room temperature and being sure your cream cheese is softened. It takes planning and patience, but it's so worth the wait. You need to do this step for these cheesecake bars as well.

I like making these bars during the holidays because it makes a good amount of bars for a party and people love finger-food desserts. You can cut them into smaller bars too for bite-sized fun!

If you haven't made cheesecake bars before, you'll want to start with this recipe. It won't let you down! Happy baking!

P.S. Note: This recipe uses vanilla bean paste for an intense vanilla flavor. You can substitute with the same amounts of vanilla extract though and get pretty close to that flavor. It's definitely a cool ingredient. It's essentially the seeds from vanilla pods that have been scraped out and put into a jar for you, ready to be scooped out when needed.



Pumpkin Cheesecake Bars

Continued from previous page

Yield: 24 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 45 minutes

Total Time: 5 hours

Ingredients:

Crust

2 cups graham crackers,
crumbled (about 16
crackers)
1/3 cup granulated sugar
1/3 cup butter, melted
Pinch of salt
Pinch of cinnamon

Filling

4 (8 oz) pkg. of cream cheese,
softened
1 and 1/2 cups granulated
sugar
4 eggs, at room temperature
1 and 1/2 cup pure pumpkin
puree
1 Tbsp. vanilla bean paste
2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice

Swirl topping

8 oz. cream cheese, softened
1 cup sour cream, at room
temperature
2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
2 Tbsp. granulated sugar
1 tsp. vanilla bean paste
1 tsp. vanilla extract

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line a 9x13 baking dish with parchment paper and set aside.

Crust

2. In a food processor, combine all ingredients for the crust and pulse until nicely incorporated. Press crust into the bottom of baking dish.

Cheesecake Filling

3. Next, make the vanilla bean cheesecake filling. In a stand-up mixer, combine cream cheese and sugar until mixed well. (Be sure to use the paddle attachment). Add in vanilla bean paste and mix again. Then mix in the eggs, one by one.
4. Pour half of this mixture on top of the crust.

Pumpkin Filling

5. With the remaining half of the filling, mix in the pumpkin puree and pumpkin pie spice. Pour this on top of the vanilla cheesecake layer.

Swirl Topping

6. Lastly make the swirl on top. Microwave the cream cheese for 45 seconds, but do it in 15 second increments – mixing it a little after each 15 seconds.
7. Whisk in the remaining ingredients. Dollop this on top of the pumpkin layer and swirl it in using a butter knife or tooth pick.
8. Bake for 45 minutes. Then turn the oven off and let it cool in oven, with the door closed, for another 30-45 minutes. Then place in fridge for 3 hours, or overnight, before cutting in to it. Enjoy with whipped cream!

The Ultimate Pumpkin Cheesecake Recipe

By Lauren Keating

Goodbye pumpkin pie, hello new traditions. This Pumpkin Cheesecake will rule your dessert table. It's everything you want from a pumpkin cheesecake with a couple extra tweaks to make it better than ever.

At our house, Thanksgiving dinner used to always include pumpkin pie. And I'm a sucker for that classic. However, these days our dinner isn't over until the pumpkin cheesecake rolls out. It's basically the ideal fall dessert. Part classic cheesecake, part pumpkin pie – what's not to love?

This version of pumpkin cheesecake gets kicked up a notch with a glug of bourbon in the filling and chopped pecans in the crust. Together, they give the cheesecake a warm, nutty flavor that's extra cozy and really highlights the pumpkin flavors so much.

Place a dish of water in the bottom of your oven while the cheesecake bakes to help prevent the top from cracking. But if you do get a crack or two, it's no big deal. Hide them under a mound of whipped cream and no one needs to be the wiser.

FYI: If you're serving a large crowd and are in the pumpkin mood try this amazing Pumpkin Slab Pie. Happy Holidays!



The Ultimate Pumpkin Cheesecake Recipe

Continued from previous page

Yield: 9 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour and 10 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour and 30 minutes

Ingredients:

Crust

1 cup graham cracker crumbs
1/4 cup chopped pecans
1 Tbsp. sugar
1/3 cup butter, melted

Cheesecake Filling

2 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
1 egg white
1/4 cup flour
1 can (15 oz.) pumpkin
1 Tbsp. pumpkin pie spice
2 Tbsp. bourbon
Whipped cream, for serving

1. Heat your oven to 325°F. Grease a 9-inch springform pan and wrap the outside with foil to prevent leaks.

Crust

2. In a small mixing bowl, combine the graham cracker crumbs, pecans, 1 tablespoon sugar and melted butter. Mix well. Press into the bottom of the pan. Bake for 10 minutes, then let cool.

Cheesecake Filling

3. Using a stand mixer or electric beaters, beat the cream cheese until soft. Beat in the remaining 1 cup sugar until smooth. Mix in the eggs and egg white until incorporated, being sure to scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl if necessary. On low speed, beat in the flour, pumpkin, pumpkin pie spice and bourbon. Pour the filling onto the cooled crust.
4. Place into the oven on the middle shelf. Set a pan of water on the bottom shelf. Bake for about 1 hour, or until the center of the cheesecake jiggles slightly and the edges begin to pull away from the pan.
5. Cool in the pan on a wire rack for 1 hour; cover and refrigerate overnight. To serve, run a knife along the edge of the pan to loosen the edges. Remove the sides of the pan and cut the cake into 9 slices. Top with whipped cream.

No-Hassle Oreo Cheesecake

By Rebecca Clyde

Oreo Cheesecake takes a childhood staple and turns it into a dinner party dessert. You won't believe how easy this one is.

Cheesecakes are one of the most decadent and delicious desserts you can make. Some people also think they're one of the most overwhelming desserts. That's why we devoted a whole cheesecake series to showing you how to make the perfect cheesecake.

Despite all those tips and tricks, we also wanted to come up with some really easy cheesecake recipes for you. Here we go! This Oreo cheesecake is surprisingly simple to make. In fact, we threw out (most) of our own rules to make it, but make sure to follow the rules we do have. You don't need a water bath, special ingredients, or anything else. You do need a springform pan and a baking sheet to catch any melting butter and keep the crust from burning. You also need to remember to leave the cream cheese and eggs out to warm to room temperature.

This recipe got rave reviews from everyone who taste-tested it, and while it may not turn out quite as beautiful as a cheesecake that's baked in a water bath, you can slather it in whipped cream and cover it in cookie crumbles so nobody will ever know. Bonus, the cheesecake filling is really versatile because you can switch out the Oreos for any add-in to make a wide variety of flavored cheesecakes or skip them to make a plain cheesecake that's equally delicious.



No-Hassle Oreo Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

Yield: 12 servings

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Total Time: 40 minutes

Ingredients:

Crust

36 Oreo cookies (or 3 sleeves)
1 stick butter, melted

Cheesecake Filling

2 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese,
at room temperature
1 cup sugar
4 eggs, at room temperature
1 tsp. vanilla
1 Oreo sleeve (12-13 cookies)

Topping

Whipped cream
Oreos

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Make crust: Mix 3 sleeves of Oreos and butter in food processor. Mix until there are no large cookie chunks. Pour into springform pan, pat down with spatula or your fingers.
2. Make cheesecake filling: Mix together cream cheese, sugar, eggs and vanilla with hand or stand mixer. Beat until well incorporated and there are no lumps.
3. Break apart 12 Oreos and add to cheesecake filling. Mix until Oreos are well distributed.
4. Pour cheesecake filling over crust. Place springform pan over baking sheet and place in the oven. Bake for 30 minutes.
5. Cheesecake is done when sides pull away from pan. Middle will be a bit wiggly (it won't be completely set), but that's fine. Turn oven off and leave cheesecake in oven with the door open until cheesecake comes to room temperature.
6. Refrigerate and then top with whipped cream and extra crushed Oreos before serving.

NOTE:

Cream cheese needs to be at room temperature or else it gets lumpy as it's mixed.

Make sure to bake cheesecake on top of a cookie sheet or the butter may drip from the springform pan and light your oven's element on fire.

If you're looking for something a little lighter, try Neufchatel cheese. It's labeled 1/3 reduced fat cream cheese and is honestly indistinguishable from regular cream cheese flavor and texture wise.



Pecan Pie Cheesecake

By Rebecca Clyde

No one will miss the pie once they take a bite of this delicious Pecan Pie Cheesecake. It's easy to make too!

Until now, Chocolate Cheesecake was my favorite. Followed up by Mocha Cheesecake. Pecan Cheesecake wasn't even in the running. No way. But today's recipe won me over and is now one of my favorite cheesecakes ever. It's tangy, sweet and has a touch of toasted nuttiness - perfect!

It doesn't get much simpler than this. The cheesecake filling has only four simple ingredients and the cheesecake is super smooth and delicious. Usually I think more complicated recipes yield the best results, but this simple recipe made with a simple cooking technique is easy enough for any home cook. Really, no water bath, no special tenting, no fuss at all for such a delicious cheesecake.

You can use store bought caramel or you can use the simple caramel recipe below that doesn't even need a candy thermometer.

Pecan Pie Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

The only special thing you need, really, is a springform pan like this one. It's the only way to get a cheesecake out of the pan and still have it looking nice. Trust me on that. I found out the hard way!

Yield: 12 servings

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Total Time: 45 minutes

Ingredients:

Crust

2 sleeves honey graham
crackers

1 stick unsalted butter, melted

Cheesecake Filling

2 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese,
at room temperature

1 cup sugar

4 eggs, at room temperature

1 tsp. vanilla

Toppings

1 cup pecans

1 cup caramel sauce
(homemade or store
bought)

1/2 cup heavy whipping
cream

3/4 cup brown sugar, packed

4 Tbsp. unsalted butter

1 tablespoon real vanilla
extract

Crust

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Make crust: Mix 2 sleeves of graham crackers and butter in food processor. Mix until there are no large cookie chunks. Pour into springform pan, pat down with spatula or your fingers.

Cheesecake Filling

2. Make cheesecake filling: Mix together cream cheese, sugar, eggs and vanilla with stand or hand mixer. Beat until well incorporated and there are no more lumps.
3. Pour cheesecake filling over crust. Place springform pan over baking sheet (to make sure butter doesn't drip out of springform and cause burning or fire in your oven) and place in the oven. Bake for 30 minutes.
4. Cheesecake is done when sides pull away from pan. Middle will be a bit wiggly (it won't be completely set in the middle), but that's fine. Turn oven off and leave cheesecake in oven with the door open until the cheesecake is room temperature. Refrigerate for 4 hours.

Topping

5. About 10 minutes before serving, or once cheesecake is cooled, make caramel sauce: Add heavy whipping cream, brown sugar, butter and vanilla to a pot. Cook over medium-low heat.
6. While caramel sauce is cooking, put pecans in skillet over medium-low heat. Set timer for 7 minutes.

Pecan Pie Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

7. Alternate stirring caramel and pecans to ensure neither burns. Caramel will have consistent bubbles and will thicken up a bit. Check caramel at 7 minutes. If it's thickened then take off heat source. If not, cook up to 2 more minutes. .
8. Pour caramel over cheesecake. Sprinkle with toasted pecans.

Peanut Butter Cup Cheesecake

By Rebecca Clyde

I spy with my little eye something that is...Peanut Butter Cup Cheesecake. Holy Yum!

Chocolate and peanut butter is one of the greatest dessert flavor combinations on this earth. Salty creamy peanut butter plus chocolate is so satisfying every time.

Adding this flavor combination to tangy and silky smooth cheesecake just takes it to the next level. To make it even better, use dark chocolate in the ganache and garnish the whole thing with dark chocolate peanut butter cups. Your taste buds (and your family) will thank you.

This recipe starts out with a simple five-ingredient filling but don't let the simplicity of it fool you. Peanut butter, chocolate and cheesecake are a match made in dessert heaven, but don't take our word for it. Test it out on your friends and family. We know they'll agree with us that it's amazing.



Peanut Butter Cup Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

Yield: 12 servings

Prep Time: 25 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Total Time: 55 minutes

Ingredients:

Crust

36 Oreo cookies (or 3 sleeves)
1 stick unsalted butter, melted

Cheesecake Filling

2 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese,
at room temperature
1 cup sugar
4 eggs, at room temperature
1 tsp. vanilla
3/4 cup smooth peanut
butter

Chocolate Ganache Topping

1 cup heavy whipping cream
1 and 1/2 cups dark chocolate
chips

Garnish

peanut butter cups for
serving

Crust

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Mix 3 sleeves of Oreos and butter in food processor. Mix until there are no large cookie chunks. Pour into springform pan, pat down with spatula or your fingers.

Cheesecake Filling

2. Mix together cream cheese, sugar, eggs, peanut butter and vanilla with stand or hand mixer. Beat until well incorporated and there are no more lumps.
3. Pour cheesecake filling over crust. Place springform pan over baking sheet (so that butter doesn't escape from springform and cause burns or fire in your oven) and place in the oven. Bake for 30 minutes.
4. Cheesecake is done when sides pull away from pan. Middle will be a bit wiggly (it won't be completely set in the middle), but that's fine. Turn oven off and leave cheesecake in oven with the door open until cheesecake is room temperature. Refrigerate for 4 hours.

Topping

5. About 10 minutes before serving, make ganache: Pour heavy cream into sauté or frying pan, add chocolate chips. Cook over medium-low heat, stirring constantly until chocolate chips are melted and ganache is shiny.
6. Pour ganache over cheesecake. Top with peanut butter cups if desired.



Salted Caramel Cheesecake

By Sam Ellis

Think salted caramel is old news? Think again. You'll never look at it the same way once you've had a slice of homemade Salted Caramel Cheesecake.

What could be more decadent than Salted Caramel Cheesecake? I started with a simple cheesecake recipe then maxed it out by swirling in homemade salted caramel sauce. I know you'll be tempted to just drink (glug glug glug) the rest of the sauce, but resist. Please. When you're ready to serve the cheesecake, pour the remaining caramel over top. It's like a slice of cheesecake heaven, really.

We've got a foolproof cheesecake baking method for you below and if you've never made your own caramel before, prepare to be amazed at how easy it is. Really, this whole recipe is easy. You'll never feel intimidated by cheesecake again.

Salted Caramel Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

Yield: 10-12 servings

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour and 5 minutes

Total Time: 1 hours and 35 minutes

Ingredients:

Salted Caramel Sauce

5 Tbsp. softened butter,
divided

1 cup brown sugar

1/2 cup half and half

1 tsp. vanilla

Cheesecake

1 Tbsp. butter

1/4 cup graham cracker
crumbs

4 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese

1 and 1/3 cups sugar

4 eggs

1/4 cup sour cream

1 tsp. vanilla extract

1 and 1/2 tsp. sea salt

1. Before beginning, set all ingredients out to come to room temperature. This is very important because it ensures a creamy cheesecake.

Salted Caramel Sauce

2. Add 4 tablespoon of the butter, brown sugar, half and half and 1 teaspoon vanilla in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Allow the mixture to come to a boil, whisking occasionally. Let the mixture boil for about 8 minutes until it thickens. Remove from the heat and pour into a bowl to cool to room temperature.

Cheesecake

3. Preheat the oven to 325°F and put a large pot of water on to boil. When it reaches a boiling point, turn the heat to low and allow the water to simmer.
4. Grease a springform pan with butter and coat with the graham cracker crumbs. Wrap the springform pan with foil to make sure there are no water leaks. Place the pan in a large roasting pan.
5. Add the cream cheese to a bowl and beat with stand or hand mixer for 30 seconds until smooth. Add sugar and cream together for about 1 minute.
6. Crack the eggs into a separate bowl. Add the eggs one at a time to the cream cheese, beating and scraping the sides of the bowl after each addition.
7. Add 1/2 cup of the caramel, sour cream, remaining teaspoon of vanilla extract and the sea salt. Beat until everything is mixed well. Pour the cheesecake mixture into the springform pan that's sitting in the roasting pan.

Salted Caramel Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

8. Place the roasting pan with the cheesecake in the middle rack of the oven. Pour the hot water into the roasting pan, being careful not to splash water into the cheesecake. Slide the rack into oven and bake between 1 hour to 1 hour and 5 minutes. The cheesecake will be done when the sides look set but the center still jiggles slightly when the pan is nudged.
9. Turn the oven off and prop it open with a spoon. Allow the cheesecake to cool for an hour in the oven. After the hour has passed, remove the pan from the oven and lift the cheesecake from the water bath to cool to room temperature on a wire rack. Once it reaches room temperature, place it in the fridge to cool, for a least 6 hours, but preferably overnight.
10. When you're ready to serve, warm the remaining caramel sauce, pour over the top and slice with a sharp knife. Sprinkle each slice with a pinch more sea salt if desired.

Blueberry Cheesecake

By Allie McDonald

This lemony cheesecake is topped with a fresh blueberry sauce that brings a taste of summer to any time of year.

If there's one downside to cheesecake, it's that it can be too rich for certain occasions. We came up with a solution – Blueberry Cheesecake. Bright, fresh blueberries excite the taste buds and pair wonderfully with a touch of lemon folded into the creamy cheesecake batter, making this cheesecake light enough for any occasion.

I wanted to keep this cheesecake light and refreshing so I dusted the edges with graham cracker crumbs instead of making a heavier graham cracker crust. You might have noticed that we did something similar with the Salted Caramel Cheesecake. It's a great technique! Then it's baked using the water bath baking method to guarantee an ultra smooth, crack-free texture. If you somehow do get a crack in the top of the cheesecake, no worries – the blueberry sauce makes a perfect cover.

What dessert could be better for a picnic, shower, or garden inspired dinner party?



Blueberry Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

Yield: 10-12 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour and 5 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour and 25 minutes

Ingredients:

Crumb

1 Tbsp. softened butter
1/4 cup graham cracker
crumbs

Cheesecake Filling

4 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese
1 and 1/3 cups sugar
4 eggs
1/4 cup heavy cream
1/4 cup sour cream
zest of 1 lemon
2 tsp. vanilla extract

Topping

1 pt. blueberries
1/3 cup sugar
juice from 1 lemon

For baking

boiling water

1. Before starting, set all ingredients out to come to room temperature. This is very important because it ensures a creamy cheesecake.
2. Preheat the oven to 325°F and put a large pot of water on to boil. When it reaches a boiling point, turn the heat to low and allow the water to simmer.

Crust

3. Grease a springform pan with butter and coat with the graham cracker crumbs. Wrap the springform pan with foil to make sure there are no water leaks. Place it in a large roasting pan.

Topping

4. Wash and dry the blueberries and add them to a bowl with the lemon juice and 1/3 cup of sugar. Stir to combine, set the bowl aside and allow the blueberries to create their own sauce. Place in the fridge for later.

Cheesecake Filling

5. Add the cream cheese to a bowl and beat with a stand or hand mixer for 30 seconds or until smooth. Add the remaining 1 and 1/3 cup of sugar and cream together for about 1 minute.
6. Crack the eggs into a separate bowl. Add the eggs one at a time to the cream cheese, beating and scraping the sides of the bowl after each addition.
7. Add the heavy cream, sour cream, lemon zest and vanilla extract and beat until everything is mixed well. Pour the cheesecake mixture into the springform pan that's sitting in the roasting pan.

Blueberry Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

8. Place the roasting pan with the cheesecake on the middle rack of the oven. Pour the hot water into the roasting pan, being careful not to splash water into the cheesecake. Slide the rack into the oven and bake between 1 hour to 1 hour and 5 minutes. The cheesecake will be done when the sides look set but the center still jiggles slightly when the pan is nudged.
9. Turn the oven off and prop it open a little bit. Allow the cheesecake to cool for an hour in the oven. After the hour has passed, remove the pan from the oven and lift the springform pan from the water bath to cool to room temperature on a wire rack. Once it reaches room temperature, place it in the fridge to cool for a least 6 hours, but preferably overnight.
10. When you're ready to serve, pour the blueberry sauce over the top and slice with a sharp knife.

Mocha Cheesecake

By Amanda Powell

Coffee, chocolate and cheesecake in one decadent slice. You can't beat that.

Are you as obsessed with mocha as I am? Combining chocolate and coffee together usually wins over even the non-coffee drinkers among us. This combination is something most of us can't resist. I'm all about wearing my love of mocha on my sleeve and think you should too.

This mocha cheesecake breaks all the myths that making cheesecake is difficult. It's a fun and indulgent dessert that is simple to put together. We start off with an irresistible Oreo crust that, let's be honest, we could eat by the spoonful. Then we add rich chocolate and our favorite instant espresso for the signature mocha flavor. Using melted chocolate instead of cocoa powder gives us a fudgier chocolate flavor and adds to the rich dense texture of this cheesecake.

When you incorporate the chocolate, make sure you add the chocolate slowly so there are no lumps, which can keep the cream cheese from completely combining with the rest of the ingredients. It will still be tasty, but certainly not as pretty.

It's also important to remember to go low and slow. Beating the ingredients together too fast adds air to the batter which then increases the risk of your cheesecake cracking. You also need to hold yourself back from opening the oven door during baking or opening it more than a crack when the cheesecake just finishes baking. Again, this is to help prevent cracking in your cheesecake.

Lastly, go crazy with toppings! I love adding chocolate ganache, caramel and whipped cream to my cheesecake. And by the way, if your cheesecake does happen to crack, toppings cover all wrongs.



Mocha Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

Yield: 16 servings

Prep Time: 1 hour and
30 minutes

Cook Time: 65 minutes

Total Time: 2 hours and
35 minutes

Ingredients:

Crust

24 Oreos
2 Tbsp. granulated sugar
8 Tbsp. butter, melted

Cheesecake Filling

1/2 cup milk
2 cups semisweet chocolate
1 and 1/2 Tbsp. espresso powder
2 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, room temperature
8 oz. sour cream, room temperature
1 cup sugar
4 large eggs, room temperature
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1/4 tsp. salt
2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour

Toppings

3 Tbsp. chocolate sauce or chocolate ganache
2 Tbsp. caramel sauce
Whipped cream
Chocolate-covered espresso beans

Mocha Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

Crust

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease an 8-inch springform pan and set aside until needed.
2. Add the Oreos and 2 tablespoons of the granulated sugar to a food processor and process until the mixture becomes fine crumbs. Keep the food processor running as you drizzle in the melted butter. The mixture should resemble wet sand.
3. Take the springform pan and dump the Oreo mixture into it. Press the crumbs against the sides and bottom of the pan and bake in the oven for 10 minutes. Remove from the oven and, if the crust looks puffed, press the crumbs against the bottom and sides using the bottom of a measuring cup or glass cup. Set aside. Leave the oven on.
6. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, mixing well between each addition of egg until it is fully incorporated. Scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl as needed. Beat in the vanilla and salt until mixed in.
7. Beat the cream cheese mixture on low as you slowly drizzle in the chocolate mixture. Do not pour the chocolate in too fast or else you may end up with clumps in the batter. Carefully fold in the flour until just combined.
8. Pour the batter into the crust and bake for 45 – 50 minutes, or until the edges look just set. The center may still look slightly jiggly. Turn off the heat and crack open the oven door without opening it completely. You may need to use a wooden spoon stuck in the door to keep the door from closing completely. Leave the cheesecake in the oven for about an hour.

Cheesecake Filling

4. Place the milk in a medium bowl and heat in the microwave until it is hot and steaming, about 1 minute. Add the chocolate and espresso powder and allow to sit for about 5 minutes to melt the chocolate. Stir the mixture until it becomes a smooth consistency. Set aside.
5. In a mixer, beat the cream cheese and sour cream together until smooth and creamy. Add the one cup of sugar and beat until fully incorporated, approximately 1 – 2 minutes.
9. Remove the cheesecake from the oven and allow to cool to room temperature before transferring to the refrigerator. Refrigerate for 4 hours.

Topping

10. Once cooled, drizzle chocolate sauce and caramel over the top and top with whipped cream and chocolate-coated espresso beans.

Lemon Meringue Cheesecake

By Eileen Gray

It's a mash up of lemon meringue pie and cheesecake that gets you the total best of both worlds: Lemon Meringue Cheesecake!

If you're looking for something a little more lemony than our lemony Blueberry Cheesecake, then this Lemon Meringue Cheesecake is what you need. Seriously, if a cheesecake and a lemon meringue pie had a baby, this is what it would look like. A buttery tart crust is filled with luscious lemony cheesecake filling topped with lemon curd and then topped with billowy, toasted meringue. I mean, is that tempting or what?

The best part about this tart, well, besides the awesome flavor, is that you get all the rich, creamy goodness of a cheesecake with less fuss. To make a really great, perfectly creamy cheesecake you need to carefully mix the batter so you don't incorporate too much air, bake it, then chill the cake for hours before you can eat it. It's well worth the time.

I know you usually want to bake a cheesecake in a water bath, but because this is baked in a sweet cookie crust, you don't need to fiddle with a messy water bath. The crust will keep the filling from baking too fast. Also keep in mind you're going to want to use a 12-inch fluted tart pan instead of the traditional springform pan.

And while I know it might seem a bit unusual to have butter in a cheesecake filling, the extra fat from the butter not only makes for a super-creamy filling, it also means the filling is less likely to curdle and crack than a regular cheesecake filling. Plus, a little butter is always a good thing, am-I-right?

The cheesecake filling is also super-versatile. Instead of topping the tart with lemon curd and meringue, try arranging gorgeous fresh berries on top or keep the cheesecake simple and drizzle chocolate ganache over top. Go ahead, let your imagination run wild.



Lemon Meringue Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

Yield: 12 servings

Prep Time: 45 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour and 15 minutes

Ingredients:

Crust

1 stick plus 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
1/4 cup plus 1 Tbsp. granulated sugar
1 egg yolk
1 and 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 tsp. vanilla
1/4 tsp. salt

Cheesecake Filling

3/4 cup granulated sugar
1 stick unsalted butter, room temperature
1 lemon, zest (grated) and juice
1 tsp. lemon extract
8 oz. cream cheese, room temperature
2 large eggs
1 cup homemade or store-bought lemon curd

Meringue

1 Tbsp. cornstarch
1/3 cup cool water
4 large egg whites, room temperature
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1/2 tsp. vanilla

Lemon Meringue Cheesecake

Continued from previous page

Crust

1. In a medium bowl cream together butter and sugar. Stir in egg, flour, vanilla and salt.
2. Chill 1-2 hours.
3. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
4. Roll the dough out until large enough to line a 12" fluted tart pan. Put crust in pan. Bake until golden brown, 15 minutes. Set aside while you make the filling.

Cheesecake Filling

5. Cream sugar, butter, lemon zest, juice and extract until smooth. Scrape the bowl.
6. Add the cream cheese and mix.
7. Add the eggs, mix until combined.
8. Pour the filling into the tart shell and bake until set, about 15-20 minutes.
9. Cool 10 minutes. Spread lemon curd over the cheesecake filling. Set aside the tart while you make the meringue.

Meringue

10. Set a pot with a few inches of water over medium heat to simmer.
11. In a different pan, whisk together the cornstarch and water. Cook the mixture over low heat, stirring constantly, until it thickens and becomes translucent. Set aside to cool.
12. Combine the egg whites with the sugar in a heatproof mixing bowl. Set the bowl over the pan of simmering water and heat to 160°F, whisking constantly.
13. Remove the whites from the heat and whip to full peak. Beat in the cornstarch mix and vanilla. Spread the meringue onto the tart, swirling into pretty peaks and valleys.
14. Bake until the meringue is nicely browned, about 10 minutes.
15. Cool to room temperature then chill until cold before removing the pan.
16. Serve chilled.

Tiramisu Cheesecake

By Sam Ellis

Who knew Tiramisu Cheesecake could be even better than the Italian restaurant classic?

Cheesecake is one of my favorite desserts. There are so many ways to make it your own and this Tiramisu Cheesecake does just that. Tiramisu isn't the first classic dessert we're changing up and turning into cheesecake and it won't be the last, but it just might be my favorite. Decadent layers of coffee liqueur soaked lady fingers and mascarpone cheesecake filling are perfectly topped with coffee liqueur whipped cream and cocoa powder.

Tiramisu traditionally has lady fingers that have been soaked in coffee liqueur as the base so that was the obvious choice for this cheesecake. When taking a bite, you'll notice that delightfully soft tiramisu base unlike a traditional cheesecake with a harder crust. If you'd like a crunch with your cheesecake, try a graham cracker crust but still layer the lady fingers at the bottom. Since there are usually layers to tiramisu, you can also divide the filling in half and double the amount of lady fingers to create a layered cheesecake.

The coffee liqueur whipped cream really brings home the flavor of a tiramisu. If you don't feel like making whipped cream, try adding 2 tablespoons of coffee liqueur into the filling to add that same flavor.



Tiramisu Cheesecake

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Yield: 1 cheesecake

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 40 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour and 10 minutes

Ingredients:

Crust

1/2 cup coffee liqueur
12 lady fingers

Filling

2 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese,
room temperature
8 oz. mascarpone, room
temperature
1/2 cup sugar
2 eggs
1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
Coffee Liqueur Whipped

Cream

1 cup heavy whipping cream
1/4 cup coffee liqueur
1/2 cup powdered sugar
Optional: cocoa powder,
to top

Crust

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare a 9” springform pan by greasing and cutting parchment paper for the bottom. Set aside.
2. On a shallow plate, pour a little of the 1/2 cup coffee liqueur and put a few ladyfingers on the plate, rotating to get each side. Place in springform pan once covered. Continue until all are used and bottom of the pan is filled. Lady fingers may have to be broken in order to fit.

Cheesecake Filling

3. In a large bowl, cream together the cream cheese and mascarpone with a blender. Add in sugar and blend well. Add eggs and vanilla extract and blend until just incorporated. Pour into springform pan over lady fingers.
4. Bake for 35–40 minutes until edges are golden brown. If middle is still not set completely, turn oven off and open the door while letting the cheesecake cool slowly in the oven. Allow to cool completely.

Topping

5. While cheesecake is baking, blend together the whipping cream, 1/4 cup coffee liqueur and powdered sugar until hard peaks form. Set in refrigerator until ready to use.
6. Once cheesecake has cooled, frost with whipped cream and dust with cocoa powder.

Contributors

Many thanks to our writers for this edition of *The Cookful*.



Amy Bowen, editor

Amy admits that she had no clue how to cook until she became the food reporter for a daily newspaper in Minnesota. At 25, she even struggled with figuring out boxed mac and cheese. These days, Amy is a much better cook, thanks to interviewing cooks and chefs for more than 10 years. She even makes four cheese macaroni and cheese with bacon, no boxed mac in sight. Amy is also on the editorial team at The Cookful and is the primary editor for this ebook.



Christine Pittman, editor

» cookthestory.com

Christine is the Founder and Senior Editor of The Cookful. She also blogs at COOKtheSTORY where she specializes in easy healthy homemade recipes. Healthiness aside, she has been known to shred cheese onto a dinner plate, microwave it for 30 seconds, and then eat the messy goop with a spoon.



Heather McCurdy, editor

» realthekitchenandbeyond.com

Heather McCurdy is an editor and the food and travel blogger behind Real: The Kitchen and Beyond where she encourages readers to savor life around the table and on the road with any budget. She loves fresh produce, dark chocolate, and a good stout. The worst meal she ever ate was liver and onions her dad said would make a great childhood birthday dinner. Heather is also on the editorial team at The Cookful and is a supporting editor for this ebook.



Rebecca Clyde

» nourishnutritionblog.com

Rebecca is the registered dietitian and food blogger behind the scenes at Nourish Nutrition Blog. She loves to eat the rainbow and help others learn to enjoy a wider variety of foods. Although she loves so many different foods, one of her favorites is the good old-fashioned s'more, made with dark chocolate. And when a campfire is just out of reach, she'll use nearly anything to get that roasty goodness, except a scented candle which she learned the gross way.

Contributors

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Sam Ellis

» www.theculinarycompass.com/

Sam blogs at The Culinary Compass where she loves to try new recipes and ingredients from around the world. She thinks trying new dishes and spices is the easiest way to travel! She loves coffee so much that she often goes to bed excited for a fresh cup in the morning.



Eileen Gray

» baking-sense.com

Eileen blogs at Baking Sense, where she shares from-scratch baking recipes that focus on great ingredients and techniques. Eileen has been a pastry chef for 20+ years, but she's been a baking geek her entire life. Eileen wants to turn you into a baking geek too! She knows that anyone can bake if they have a good recipe and the helping hand of a seasoned baker.



Lauren Keating

» healthy-delicious.com

Lauren has been cooking for as long as she can remember and shares her recipes at Healthy-Delicious.com, where she features easy weeknight meals with an emphasis on fresh, seasonal ingredients. She completed the professional plant-based cooking certification from Rouxbe cooking school and enjoys using plant-based cooking techniques to incorporate more fruits, vegetables and grains into traditional recipes in unique ways. Food-obsessed from a young age, her first words included “cookie” and “eat meat!”



Tawnie Kroll

» krollskorner.com

Tawnie Kroll is a California based food blogger and healthy recipe developer. She is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist and a lover of cooking and baking! Follow her blog for recipes, healthy living tips and practical scientific evidenced-based advice to help you improve your health and wellbeing.

Contributors

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Allie McDonald

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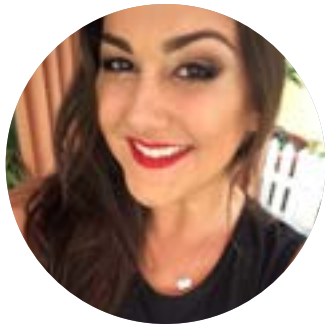
Allie is an avocado obsessed, hot pepper junky with a serious passion for food. When she isn't adding to her cowgirl boot collection, you can find her in the kitchen, with her apron covered in the day's creations. She's the blogger behind Miss Allie's Kitchen, a food blog dedicated to creating whole and healthy recipes to inspire home cooks.



Amanda Powell

» [blog](#)

Under the piles of cookies and slices of cake is Amanda Powell of A Cookie Named Desire, a dessert-obsessed baker and food photographer. She believes everyone is capable of learning out of the box baking with just a bit of patience and a willingness to get messy. While she loves baking seasonally with local produce, she also believes there is no such thing as too much chocolate!



Jamie Silva

» asassyspoon.com

Jamie is the blogger behind A Sassy Spoon, where she inspires you to celebrate the good things in life - food and travel! She shares accessible recipes ranging from easy everyday dishes, party food, and Cuban-inspired meals, as well as entertaining ideas and fun travel guides. Whether on a road trip or in the kitchen, she's always thinking of her next recipe, next party, or next trip.

About The Cookful

Do you love to geek-out over food and cooking? Then The Cookful is where you need to be.

We cook and write about one topic at a time, diving in deep to help you cook (and eat!) better than ever. Each topic comes with How-Tos, innovative recipes, and a bunch of interesting tidbits so that you can learn all about it. Some topics we've covered are Margaritas, Quick Soups and Popcorn. Head over to [The Cookful](#) to find out what our next topic is and then get ready to go off the deep end with us.



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