



Mascarpone Cheesecake

Serves 8

By Jeremy Niehuss

Crust

- ¼ pound graham crackers
- 1 cup almond slices, toasted
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ¼ cup granulated sugar

Filling

- 12 ounces mascarpone cheese, at room temperature
- 6 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- 1 cup baker's sugar
- 2 tablespoons light brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 4 large eggs at room temperature
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups sour cream

1. To make the crust, puree the graham crackers and almond slices together in a food processor, until they are finely pureed. Transfer to a small mixing bowl and add the salt. Melt the butter and sugar together over low heat until the sugar dissolves. Pour the melted butter mixture over the dry ingredients and stir to combine. Immediately press the crumb mix into the bottom and part way up the sides of a 9" spring-form pan. Cover and refrigerate the crust until the filling is prepared.
2. To make the filling combine the mascarpone and cream cheeses together in the bowl of an electric stand mixer. Use the flat paddle attachment and beat the cheeses at medium speed, until they are light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Add the baker's sugar, brown sugar and salt to the cheese mixture and mix thoroughly for an additional 2 minutes. With the mixer running at medium speed add the eggs 1 at a time, stopping after each addition to scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula. After the last egg is added continue to mix at medium speed until the mixture is smooth. Add the lemon juice, vanilla extract and sour cream and mix until well combined.
3. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Transfer the batter to the spring form pan with the crust. Place the spring form pan in a large baking dish with deep sides. Place the baking pan on the center rack of the oven and add hot water until it comes half way up the sides of the spring-form pan. This creates a water bath which will help mitigate the intense heat of the oven and keep the cheesecake from curdling and becoming grainy. Bake the cheesecake until it jiggles slightly when the pan is moved and the top is golden brown, about 1 hour and 15 minutes. Turn off the oven, open the door and allow the cheesecake to cool for 1 hour in the oven. This will help prevent cracking.
4. Remove the cake from the water bath, cover the top with plastic wrap or parchment paper and refrigerate for 6 hours to allow it to set.
5. To remove the cheesecake from the pan, dip a thin bladed knife into hot water and run the knife around the outside edge of the cake, separating it from the pan. Release the spring-form pan and cut the cake into the desired number of slices.



Blackberry Sauce

Makes 1 ½ cups

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2 cups blackberries
½ cup baker's sugar
1 teaspoon lemon juice
¼ teaspoon kosher salt

1. To make the berry sauce combine the berries, sugar, lemon juice and salt in a small sauce pan. Cook the berries over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until the mixture is thickened and reduced by ¼. Remove from the heat, strain through a fine mesh strainer into a shallow dish and refrigerate until cold.