



NEW YORK-STYLE CHEESECAKE

Makes one 9-inch cheesecake, serving 12 to 16. Published March 1, 2002.

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:

Our best New York–style cheesecake recipe started with a classic graham cracker crust. We used 2 1/2 pounds of cream cheese for adequate height, flavored the batter with 1 1/2 cups of sugar and 2 teaspoons each of lemon juice and vanilla for the perfect balance of sweetness and tang, and used six whole eggs plus two yolks for a texture that was dense but not heavy and firm but not rigid. Finally, we baked our cake New York–style: at 500 degrees for 10 minutes and then at 200 degrees for 90 minutes.

For the crust, chocolate wafers (Nabisco Famous) can be substituted for graham crackers; you will need about 14 wafers. The flavor and texture of the cheesecake is best if the cake is allowed to stand at room temperature for 30 minutes before serving. When cutting the cake, have a pitcher of hot tap water nearby; dipping the blade of the knife into the water and wiping it clean with a kitchen towel after each cut helps make neat slices.

INGREDIENTS

Graham Cracker Crust

- 1 cup graham cracker crumbs (4 ounces, 8 whole crackers, broken into rough pieces and processed in food processor until uniformly fine)
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted, plus additional 1 tablespoon melted butter for greasing pan

Cheesecake Filling

- 2 1/2 pounds cream cheese, cut into rough 1-inch chunks and left to stand at room temperature for 30 to 45 minutes
- 1/8 teaspoon table salt
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar (10 1/2 ounces)
- 1/3 cup sour cream (2 1/2 ounces)
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice from 1 lemon
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 large egg yolks
- 6 large eggs

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **For the crust:** Adjust oven rack to lower-middle position and heat oven to 325 degrees. Combine graham cracker crumbs and sugar in medium bowl; add 5 tablespoons melted butter and toss with fork until evenly moistened. Brush bottom and sides of 9-inch springform pan with most of remaining melted butter, making sure to leave enough to brush pan in step 3. Empty crumbs into springform pan and press evenly into pan bottom. Bake until fragrant and beginning to brown around edges, about 13 minutes. Cool on wire rack while making filling.
2. **For the cheesecake filling:** Increase oven temperature to 500 degrees. In standing mixer fitted with paddle attachment, beat cream cheese at medium-low speed to break up and soften slightly, about 1 minute. Scrape beater and bottom and sides of bowl well

with rubber spatula; add salt and about half of sugar and beat at medium-low speed until combined, about 1 minute. Scrape bowl; beat in remaining sugar until combined, about 1 minute. Scrape bowl; add sour cream, lemon juice, and vanilla, and beat at low speed until combined, about 1 minute. Scrape bowl; add yolks and beat at medium-low speed until thoroughly combined, about 1 minute. Scrape bowl; add whole eggs two at a time, beating until thoroughly combined, about 1 minute, and scraping bowl between additions.

3. Brush sides of springform pan with remaining melted butter. Set springform pan on rimmed baking sheet (to catch any spills if springform pan leaks). Pour filling into cooled crust and bake 10 minutes; without opening oven door, reduce oven temperature to 200 degrees and continue to bake until instant-read thermometer inserted into center of cheesecake registers about 150 degrees, about 11/2 hours. Transfer cake to wire rack and cool 5 minutes; run paring knife between cake and side of springform pan. Cool until barely warm, 2 1/2 to 3 hours. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap and refrigerate until cold, at least 3 hours. (Cake can be refrigerated up to 4 days.)

4. To unmold cheesecake, remove sides of pan. Slide thin metal spatula between crust and pan bottom to loosen, then slide cake onto serving plate. Let cheesecake stand at room temperature about 30 minutes, then cut into wedges and serve.



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