

**An Analytical Review of My Recipe
Recreation of Ancient Roman Cheesecake
(Savillum)**

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I chose to recreate the Roman Cheesecake(Savillum) for this final project due to its contextual relevance in ancient Roman history, as it was considered not only a delectable culinary dish but also a symbol of communal and social gatherings, usually consumed by all members, from the lower to the upper social stratification of that era.

The ancient Romans had access to the ingredients required to prepare the dish primarily from local markets, farms, and trade routes. These ingredients include; honey, eggs, cheese, flour, and seed grains. The cheese used in this meal was probably any variety of cow cheese, and honey would have been harvested from beehives. The eggs were obtained from domesticated poultry and the seeds and flour were from locally cultivated grains.

It was prepared by mixing fresh cheese, typically cow or goat cheese with eggs, honey, and white wheat flour to make a smooth and creamy batter. The mixture was then poured into a container and molded in the shape of a typical cheesecake which is usually elliptical. On some occasions, the cheesecake's taste was augmented with flavored spices like bay leaves, lemon zest, etc. In my recreation, I refrained from using spices to avoid obscuring the original taste of the cheesecake. Finally, the cheesecake is baked twice in a terracotta charcoal pot for around 10-15 minutes for each step with honey and seed grains like poppy seeds being added in between these steps. The final result is a cake with a golden-brown hue and a bold but sweet taste.

The demographic of people that would have gotten access to the dish would have been very wide as it would have been accessible to a range of people in ancient Roman society. Even though the exact ingredients and preparation methods would have been varied based on socioeconomic status, the meal was not exclusive to the affluent.<insert the thing from the citations> . Different variations of the cheesecake would have been enjoyed by urban and rural populations, leading to the treat being widely appreciated. As regards cultural context in that

period, Savillum was often associated with religious celebrations and communal gatherings or festivities. It was a versatile dish that was served during weddings, and banquets amongst other significant events.

For my recreation, I used almond flour, eggs, cow cheese, honey, and black poppy seeds. I had to make substitutions for white wheat flour and white poppy seeds as these ingredients were not readily available at my disposal. I started by combining five hundred grams of cheese along with a hundred grams of flour and fifty grams of honey. After mixing for a while to a homogenous combination, I coated the base of my baking pan with some olive oil and added the mixture to the pan. With the mixture in the baking pan, I molded the batter in the shape of an ellipse or circle and preheated the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit and put the batter for around ten minutes. Prior to the second step of the baking process, I added honey and sprinkled poppy seeds to the cake and placed the half-done cheesecake for another ten minutes. The final result was a golden cake with slightly browned edges that I ate with a friend that assisted with the cooking.

The final product was somewhat similar to the original cheesecake with the exception of the top of the cheesecake remaining uncooked and the edges turning completely golden brown. As for the challenges I encountered in my recreation process, besides from the ingredients I had to make substitution for, I had to factor in some adjustments to be made to the oven in order to replicate the baking process of the terracotta coal pot. If given the opportunity to do it differently, I would ensure I had access to the accurate ingredients and leave the batter to bake for a little longer than I did.

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