

Lemon Cheesecake Recipe

Lemon Cheesecake combines the creaminess of classic cheesecake with a burst of vibrant lemon. The rich and smooth filling is balanced by a hint of lemon zest and is topped with golden lemon curd. A buttery graham cracker crust provides the perfect foundation.



Author: Natasha Kravchuk **Servings:** 12 slices **Calories:** 581
Prep Time: 30 mins **Cook Time:** 1 hr 15 mins **Chilling Time:** 8 hrs
Total Time: 9 hrs 45 mins



Ingredients

For the Crust:

- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups graham cracker crumbs, from 14 whole crackers*
- 6 Tbsp unsalted butter, melted
- 2 Tbsp granulated sugar

For the Cheesecake:

- 2 lb cream cheese, room temperature (4 packages, 8 ounces each)
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 5 large eggs, room temperature
- 2 Tbsp sour cream
- 1 Tbsp lemon zest, from 2 lemons
- 2 Tbsp lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp vanilla extract

For the Toppings:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Lemon Curd, homemade or storebought
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 3 Tbsp powdered sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp vanilla extract

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F with a rack in the center. Dot the bottom of a 9-inch springform pan with butter and line it with a circle of parchment for an easier release.
2. In a medium bowl, combine graham cracker crumbs with sugar then stir in melted butter. Mix until moistened. Press crumbs into your prepared pan, going slightly up the sides. Bake for 8 minutes then transfer to a rack to cool to room temperature.
3. Increase the oven to 450°F. Place 2 sheets of extra-wide heavy-duty foil on the counter. Set the springform pan in the center and gently fold the foil up the sides of the pan ensuring there are no rips. Fan the foil out slightly at the tops to keep the rim clear for rising and to keep water splashes out.
4. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment (or using an electric hand mixer), beat cream cheese and 1 cup sugar on medium/high speed for 5 minutes until completely smooth, scraping down the bowl a couple of times.
5. Reduce speed to medium and add eggs, one at a time, allowing them to incorporate between each addition. Scrape down the bowl with a spatula as needed.

6. Reduce speed to low and add sour cream, lemon zest, lemon juice, and vanilla. Mix on low speed just until incorporated, scraping down the bowl as needed. Pour batter over the cooled crust.

How to Bake Cheesecake in a Water Bath

1. Boil a kettle of water (boil more than you think you'll need). Set your foil-wrapped cheesecake pan in a deep roasting pan. Pour hot water around the edges about 1 inch up the sides of the springform pan.*
2. Carefully transfer the cheesecake to the center rack of the oven and bake at 450°F for 15 minutes then reduce heat to 225°F and, without opening the door, bake an additional 60-65 minutes or until the center of the cheesecake wobbles slightly when you jolt the pan.
3. Remove the cheesecake from the oven and let it rest in the roasting pan with water for 45 minutes then discard the foil and set the springform pan on a wire rack to cool completely. Once fully cooled, cover the springform pan and chill in the refrigerator for at least 8 hours or overnight to fully set before serving.

To Top and Serve

1. In a large mixing bowl, beat together heavy cream, powdered sugar, and vanilla extract on medium/high speed until stiff peaks form. Transfer to a piping bag fitted with an open star tip and set aside (or refrigerate if not using right away).
2. Run a thin knife or spatula around the edges of the cheesecake to loosen it from the pan. Remove the springform pan and transfer the cake to a cake platter (you can slide off the parchment paper if desired).
3. Spread 1/2 cup of lemon curd over the surface of the cheesecake. Pipe a generous amount of whipped cream around the edge of the cake or design however you prefer. Garnish with small slices of fresh lemon if desired. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Notes

- **Graham Crackers:** You can crush these in a food processor or put them in a large zip bag and crush them with a rolling pin.
- **Roasting Pan:** If your roasting pan is unstable or not designed to carry hot water safely, it's best to pour the hot water into the pan after it's placed on the oven rack. I recommend using a kettle for this step to avoid splashing hot water on yourself or the hot oven door.
- **Baking Times:** For the best results, always fully preheat your oven and bake in a conventional oven (not convection). We highly recommend using an in-oven thermometer to ensure accurate temperature.