

The Ultimate Cheesecake



Make Ahead

Cheesecakes are perfect desserts to make ahead. Wrap an undecorated cake in foil and store in the refrigerator for up to 4 days.

Seasonal Idea

If fresh blueberries are in season, add a decorative berry border around the bottom edge of the cheesecake as an edible garnish.

Lighten Up

Cut the amount of fat and calories in this recipe by using low-fat cream cheese.

BAKING TIME
1 hour 35 minutes
plus standing

GOOD IDEA To spice up the crust, replace the graham cracker crumbs with an equal amount of crushed gingersnaps.

Variations

Fruit Rings

Arrange multicolored fruits in concentric rings around the cake. Start with peach slices, followed by overlapping pineapple, kiwifruit and grapes.



A Fruit Blossom

Create the look of a chrysanthemum blossom with overlapping mandarin orange sections and a mound of fresh raspberries.



You Will Need



FOR THE CRUST

- 1½ cups graham cracker crumbs
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter or margarine, melted

FOR THE FILLING

- 5 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened
- 1½ cups sugar
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 3 large eggs
- ½ cup sour cream
- 2 teaspoons finely grated lemon peel
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract

FOR THE TOPPING

- 1 egg white
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ½ cup sour cream
- ½ cup raspberry preserves
- ½ cup apricot preserves
- 1 cup assorted fresh fruit, chopped

SERVES 16

Kitchen Tips

Use a smooth measuring cup to help press crumbs evenly against sides and bottom of springform pan.

Step by Step

PREPARING THE CRUST

1. In a medium bowl, combine graham cracker crumbs and sugar. Add melted butter; stir to combine.
2. Press crumb mixture into a 9-inch springform pan. Chill 30 minutes. ▼



MAKING THE FILLING

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. In a large bowl, using an electric mixer set on medium speed, beat cream cheese for 2 minutes; add sugar.
2. Gradually add flour; mix until combined. On low speed, beat in eggs, one at a time, until just blended.
3. Add sour cream, lemon peel and vanilla; beat until just blended. Pour into crust. Bake for 1 hour 15 minutes. Remove cake from oven; cool for 15 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, beat egg white until frothy; add sugar and beat until soft peaks form. Fold in sour cream until blended. Spread on top of cake.

5. Return cake to oven; bake until topping is set, not browned, about 20 minutes. Turn off oven; let cheesecake sit for 1 hour with oven door ajar. Place cake on wire rack to cool completely.

MAKING THE TOPPING

1. Using tip of a knife, score a “ying-yang” design on top of cheesecake.
2. Place preserves in microwave-safe bowls. Microwave on HIGH until preserves are thin, about 45 seconds.
3. Spoon preserves onto each half of design. With back of a spoon, spread preserves to fill each section. ▼



4. Arrange fruit on top of cake. Chill until ready to serve. ▼

