

# Cheesecake: a dining out treat at home

Cheesecake is vying for top honors in the race for America's favorite dessert. In fact, it tied for first place with apple pie in the most recent Gallup Eating-Out Poll.

But you don't have to save your cheesecake craving for dining out. A new 15-minute cheesecake, ideal for busy cooks, has just been introduced. The creamy cheesecake, accented with semi-sweet chocolate pieces, has only a few ingredients, and can be oven-ready in 15 minutes. This rich cheese sets the standard for quality and is a favorite of restaurant chefs and home cooks alike.

The new cheesecake has a graham cracker crust and an easy filling combining three packages of cream cheese, sugar, eggs, miniature semi-sweet chocolate pieces and vanilla. The cheesecake can be varied by adding a topping of almond briclé chips before baking, or the crunchy candy can replace the more traditional chocolate pieces.

This basic cheesecake also can be baked and frozen, adding to its versatility. Wrap the cheesecake securely in moisture-vaporproof wrap, and keep in the freezer up to two weeks.

Here are some other cheesecake preparation tips from the home economists' kitchens:

- Cream cheese blends best when it has had a chance to soften. To soften cream cheese, allow to stand at room temperature 30 minutes. To soften in a microwave oven, remove foil wrapper. Microwave on Medium (50%) 30 seconds for each 8-oz. package.
- Crumbs for cheesecake crust can be made quickly with the use of a blender or food processor. When using a food processor, best results are achieved by using the shredding disc. When using a blender for crumb making, be sure to break the crackers before placing them in the blender, and process by turning the blender off and on.
- It is best not to open the oven door during baking, unless the recipe calls for it. Sudden changes in temperature may affect the baking process.

### 15-MINUTE CHEESECAKE

- 1 cup graham cracker crumbs
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 3 tablespoons margarine, melted
- 3 8-oz. pkgs. cream cheese, softened
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup mini semi-sweet chocolate pieces
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Combine crumbs, sugar and margarine; press onto bottom of 9-inch springform pan.

Combine cream cheese and sugar, mixing at medium speed on electric mixer until well blended. Add eggs, one at a time, mixing well after each addition. Blend in chocolate pieces and vanilla; pour over crust. Bake at 450 deg., 10 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 250 deg.; continue baking 35 minutes. Loosen cake from rim of pan; cool before removing rim of pan. Chill.

10 to 12 servings.  
Variations: Top with 6-oz. pkg. almond briclé chips before baking. Or omit chocolate pieces. Top with 6-oz. pkg. almond briclé chips before baking. NOTE: Leftover cheesecake may be frozen. Wrap securely in moisture-vaporproof wrap. Freeze up to two weeks.

• According to legend, small cheesecakes were given to the athletes of the first Olympic Games in 776 B.C. to give them energy.

• The earliest written cheesecake recipe may be found in the world's oldest cookbook which was written by a Greek and published in 228 A.D.

• Ancient recipes for cheesecakes usually called for cheese, eggs, cream, honey and spices. Countries around the world have adopted this recipe, coming up with their own versions. The French call them "Coeur a la Creme," and the English call them "cheesecake tarts."

• Cream cheese, the traditional cheesecake base in America, was invented in 1872 in upstate New York.




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### AAUW to meet

The public is invited to the April meeting of the Portland Branch of the American Association of University Women at the Hi Hat Restaurant, 11530 S.W. Barbur Blvd., Thursday, April 25 at 7:00 p.m.

Gladys Coburn, Parenting Consultant, will discuss "Parenting With Peace and Justice," including a videotape presentation, with small discussion group, especially appropriate for young families. Phone 777-7005 for reservations.

### OMSI plant sale

Is your Philodendron lonely? Is that poor fern or arborvitae begging for companionship?

OMSI's 12th annual plant sale may be just the thing they — and you — need. Featured May 3 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and May 4, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the front lobby, will be floral hanging baskets, outdoor potted flowers just in time for Mother's Day, plus hundreds of bedding and other plants.

Proceeds from the sale, sponsored by the OMSI Women's Auxiliary, go to support OMSI.

For more information, please call OMSI at 222-2828.



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