

Recipes excerpted from ***The Cheesecake bible*** by George Geary. Published by Robert Rose Inc., Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Copyright 2008. Reprinted with permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

Blue Ribbon Cheesecake

Serves 10 to 12

I have won numerous awards with this recipe, also affectionately called "Patty's Favorite Cheesecake" after my mom, my biggest fan.

Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C)

9-inch (23 cm) cheesecake pan, ungreased, or springform pan with 3-inch (7.5 cm) sides, greased

CRUST:

1-1/4 cups graham cracker crumbs	300 ml
1/4 cup unsalted butter	50 ml

FILLING:

4 packages cream cheese (8 oz/250g each)	4
1-1/4 cups granulated sugar	300 ml
4 eggs	4
3 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice	45 ml
1 tsp vanilla extract	5 ml

TOPPING:

1/2 cup sour cream	125 ml
1/4 cup granulated sugar	50 ml
1 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice	15 ml
1/2 tsp vanilla extract	2 ml

DECORATION:

2 cups fresh strawberries, sliced	500 ml
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1. **Crust:** In a bowl, combine graham cracker crumbs and butter. Press into bottom of cheesecake pan and freeze.

2. **Filling:** In a mixer bowl fitted with paddle attachment, beat cream cheese and sugar on medium-high speed until very smooth, for 3 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating after each addition. Mix in lemon juice and vanilla.

Blue Ribbon Cheesecake, (continued)

3. Pour over frozen crust, smoothing out to sides of pan. Bake in preheated oven until top is light brown and center has a slight jiggle to it, 45 to 55 minutes. Let cool on the counter for 10 minutes (do not turn the oven off). The cake will sink slightly.

4. **Topping:** In a small bowl, combine sour cream, sugar, lemon juice and vanilla. Pour into center of cooled cake and spread out to edges. Bake for 5 minutes more. Let cool in pan on a wire rack for 2 hours. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 6 hours before decorating or serving.

5. **Decoration:** Top with sliced strawberries when completely chilled.

Tips:

Zest lemons and limes before juicing and freeze the zest for another recipe.

This cheesecake freezes well for up to 4 months before decorating. Defrost in the refrigerator the day before use and then decorate.

Variation:

If fresh berries are not available, spread 1 cup (250 ml) strawberry preserves on top.