

The logo for Whisk features the word "Whisk" in a white, elegant serif font on a dark red banner. Below the text is a decorative flourish that resembles a whisk's handle.

— QUALITY KITCHENWARE —
COOKING CLASSES & CULINARY INSPIRATION

WAVERLY PLACE (UPPER LEVEL) • 316 COLONADES WAY
CARY, NC 27518 • 919.322.2458

Pumpkin Cheesecake with Gingersnap Crust and Caramel Praline Topping

Makes 12 servings

Full of classic autumn flavors, we think this cheesecake will soon be replacing pumpkin pie on Thanksgiving tables everywhere! It has a spectacular look when served, and delicious tastes spanning pumpkin, nuts, caramel, and several autumn spices – all in one bite! The cheesecake is built in three layers, a gingersnap crust, the dense pumpkin portion, and a sour cream topping that smoothes over any top imperfections. Each slice is generously garnished with a dollop of whipped cream and caramelized pecans. You'll definitely want to save room for this dessert!

Crust Ingredients:

2 cups ground gingersnaps (about 8 oz.)
1/2 cup pecan halves
1/4 cup brown sugar, packed
8 tablespoons butter, unsalted, melted

Pumpkin Filling Ingredients:

24 oz. (3 pkg.) cream cheese, room temperature
1 cup brown sugar, packed
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon allspice
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
1/4 teaspoon salt
(Or, substitute 2 teaspoons pumpkin spice for the above 5 spices)
5 eggs
1/2 cup heavy cream
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1 15 oz. can pumpkin puree

Top Filling Ingredients:

1-1/2 cup sour cream
1/4 cup powdered sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Praline Garnish Ingredients:

1/4 cup granulated sugar
2 tablespoons water
2 tablespoons butter
1 cup pecan halves

Cinnamon-spiced Whipped Cream Ingredients:

1 cup heavy cream
1/4 cup powdered sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/8 teaspoon cinnamon

Directions:

Prepare the Crust:



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(1) Preheat the oven to 325°F. Place broken gingersnaps and the pecan halves in a food processor and pulse until an even fine crumb is formed. Add the brown sugar and pulse to combine. Add the melted butter and pulse once again. Prepare a 9-inch springform pan by placing a circle of parchment paper on the bottom of the pan. Cut the parchment so that it just fits the bottom without interfering with the pan's ring. Pat the crumb mixture into the pan by lining the bottom and patting the crumbs 2 inches up the side. Bake in the oven for 10 minutes or until the edges just begin to brown. Remove from the oven and allow the crust to cool in the pan.

Prepare the Pumpkin Filling:

(2) Mix the cream cheese, sugar, spices, and salt together with a hand or stand mixer until smooth and the spices evenly distributed. Continue beating until the mixture becomes slightly fluffy, about 3 minutes. Add the eggs, one at a time, until just incorporated. Add the cream, vanilla extract, and pumpkin puree, beating until just combined; do not overbeat.

(3) Prepare the springform pan with the baked crust inside by wrapping the exterior in aluminum foil. This will form a barrier around the pan when it sits in a water bath during baking. Pour the filling into the baked, prepared crust. Carefully place the filled pan into a larger pan. Place in a 325°F oven. Fill the outer pan with hot water until it reaches halfway up the side of the pan. Bake for 1 hour and 45 minutes. The center will be set though will quiver when moved.

Prepare the Top Filling:

(4) In a small bowl, whisk together the sour cream, powdered sugar and vanilla. Pour over the freshly baked cheesecake. Return to the 325°F oven for 10-12 minutes. Remove from the oven and carefully lift the springform pan from the water bath to a cooling rack. Allow the cheesecake to cool to room temperature. Cover and refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight.

Prepare the Praline Garnish:

(5) In a saucepan, combine the granulated sugar and water. Heat and stir until the sugar is dissolved. Add the butter and pecan halves, stir to coat, and cook until the nuts have toasted and the sugar has just turned amber. Spread in a single later on a plate and cool.

Prepare the Cinnamon-spiced Whipped Cream:

(6) Mix together the cream, powdered sugar, vanilla extract, and cinnamon in a small bowl. Stir to dissolve the sugar, then whip the cream to soft peaks.

Prepare to Serve:

(7) With a warm knife, run it around the edge of the pan to loosen the outer ring from the chilled cheesecake. Carefully remove the ring. Transfer the cheesecake to a serving platter by sliding the cheesecake from the bottom of the pan to the platter. (It's ok to leave the bottom parchment liner in place underneath the cheesecake.) Dollop or pipe the spiced whipped cream onto the cheesecake, and place the caramelized pecans on top. Cut the cheesecake into 12 slices Serve and enjoy.