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martha stewart new york cheesecake recipe

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Martha Stewart''s New York Cheesecake Recipe: A Classic Made Simple

When it comes to indulgent desserts that combine silky texture, rich flavor, and a hint of buttery crumb, no name stands out like Martha Stewart. Her New York style cheesecake is a perennial favorite for celebrations, family gatherings, or a comforting treat after a long day. This article walks you through every step of the recipe, offers insider tips for a flawless result, and suggests creative variations that will keep your guests coming back for more.

Why Choose Martha Stewart’s New /York Cheesecake?

Martha Stewart’s version of the New York cheesecake is beloved for its balance of tangy cream cheese, airy eggs, and a crisp graham cracker base. The recipe has stood the test of time because it uses simple ingredients that are easy to find, yet the technique ensures a professional level finish. Whether you’re a seasoned baker or a kitchen novice, this recipe delivers a dessert that looks as good as it tastes.

Ingredients

Below is a comprehensive list of what you’ll need to create a luscious cheesecake that will impress even the most discerning palates.

- Crust:
- 1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

- 4 (8 ounce) packages cream cheese, softened (32 /oz total)
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup heavy cream
- 4 large eggs, at room temperature
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon lemon zest (optional, for a bright citrus note)

- 1 cup fresh berries (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries)
- 1/2 cup chocolate ganache or caramel sauce
- Whipped cream, for serving

Tools & Equipment

Having the right tools can make all the difference. Here’s what you’ll need:

- 9 inch springform pan (preferably non stick)
- Large mixing bowl
- Electric hand mixer or stand mixer
- Rubber spatula
- Measuring cups and spoons

- Water bath setup (large pot, oven safe tray)
- Cooling rack
- Plastic wrap or parchment paper

Step by Step Instructions

1. Prepare the Crust

1. Preheat your oven to 325 /°F (160 /°C).
2. In a medium bowl, combine graham cracker crumbs, sugar, and melted butter. Mix until the crumbs are evenly coated.
3. Press the mixture firmly into the bottom of the springform pan, creating an even layer. Use the back of a spoon or the bottom of a glass to smooth it out.
4. Bake for 10 minutes, then remove from the oven and allow to cool while you prepare the filling.

2. Make the Filling

1. In a large bowl, beat the softened cream cheese on medium speed until it’s smooth and creamy. This usually takes about 2–3 minutes.
2. Add sugar and continue to beat until fully incorporated and the mixture is light and fluffy.
3. Stir in sour cream, heavy cream, vanilla extract, and lemon zest (if using). Mix until just combined.
4. Introduce eggs one at a time, beating on low speed after each addition. Make sure each egg is fully incorporated before adding the next. Overmixing can introduce air and cause cracks.
5. Pour the batter over the cooled crust, smoothing the top with a spatula.

3. Bake Using a Water Bath

1. Place the springform pan in a larger baking dish.
2. Fill the larger dish with hot water until it reaches about halfway up the side of the springform pan. This helps regulate temperature and prevents the cheesecake from cracking.
3. Carefully transfer the entire setup to the preheated oven.
4. Bake for 50–60 minutes. The cheesecake is done when the edges are set but the center still has a slight wobble. This is key to a creamy interior.
5. Turn off the oven, crack the door open slightly, and let the cheesecake sit inside for 1 hour. This gradual cooling prevents sudden temperature changes that could cause cracks.

4. Cool Completely & Refrigerate

1. Remove the cheesecake from the water bath and let it cool on a wire rack at room temperature for about 30 minutes.
2. Wrap the pan loosely in plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 4 hours, preferably overnight. A cold cheesecake sets properly and enhances flavor.

5. Serve & Garnish

1. Remove the cheesecake from the springform pan. If the edges lift easily, you’re good to go. If not, run a knife around the perimeter to loosen.
2. Slice with a hot, wet knife for clean cuts. Serve chilled, topped with fresh berries, a drizzle of chocolate ganache, or a dollop of whipped cream.

Tips for the Perfect Cheesecake

- Room Temperature Ingredients: Allow eggs and cream cheese to reach room temperature before mixing. This ensures a smooth batter and reduces the risk of lumps.

- Low Heat Baking: Baking at 325 /°F is essential. A lower temperature allows the cheesecake to cook evenly without over browning the edges.
- Water Bath: This technique keeps the batter from expanding too quickly, preventing cracks and ensuring a velvety finish.
- Cool Gradually: The hour long cool down in the oven, followed by refrigeration, is crucial to avoid condensation that can create a watery surface.
- Use a Silicone Baking Mat: Lining the bottom of your springform pan with a silicone mat can help release the cheesecake more easily.
- Flavor Variations: Add a tablespoon of espresso powder for a mocha twist or a splash of Grand Marnier for a citrusy kick.

Serving Ideas & Presentation

While the classic plain cheesecake is always a winner, you can elevate the experience with creative toppings and plating techniques.

- Berries & Cream: Scatter fresh blueberries, raspberries, and sliced strawberries over the top, then add a light swirl of whipped cream.
- Chocolate Ganache: Melt dark chocolate with a splash of heavy cream, pour over the cheesecake, and allow it to set for a glossy finish.
- Caramel Drizzle: Warm caramel sauce until it's pourable, then drizzle in a zig zag pattern for a decadent touch.
- Edible Gold Leaf: For a special occasion, place a small piece of edible gold leaf on the center of each slice.
- Chocolate Shavings: Use a vegetable peeler to create thin chocolate ribbons that float on top.

Variations to Keep the Classic Fresh

1. Strawberry Swirl Cheesecake

Fold a few spoonfuls of strawberry jam into the batter before pouring into the crust, or swirl a fresh strawberry puree after baking for a marbled effect.

2. Lemon Zest Cheesecake

Increase the lemon zest to 2 tablespoons and add 1 tablespoon of lemon juice. The bright citrus balances the richness.

3. Salted Caramel Cheesecake

Replace half the sugar with caramel sauce, add 1 teaspoon of sea salt, and top with caramelized pecans for crunch.

4. Chocolate Cheesecake

Add 1 cup of melted dark chocolate to the batter, reduce the sugar by ¼ cup, and serve with chocolate shavings.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can I use a different type of crust?

A: Absolutely. A graham cracker crust is classic, but you can try digestive biscuits, Oreo crumbs, or even a shortbread base for a buttery twist.

Q: How long can I store the cheesecake?

A: Refrigerated, the cheesecake keeps well for up to 5 days. Wrap tightly to avoid absorption of other odors.

Q: Will it freeze?

A: Yes, but it’s best to freeze the cheesecake before baking. Once baked, the texture can change upon thawing.

Q: What if my cheesecake cracks?

A: Cracking is often caused by temperature shocks or over baking. Ensure you cool slowly and keep the oven door slightly ajar after baking.

Conclusion

Martha Stewart’s New York cheesecake recipe is more than a dessert; it’s an experience that blends creamy indulgence with a comforting familiarity. By following the steps outlined above, you’ll achieve a cheesecake that’s silky inside, perfectly set, and ready to be dressed up with your favorite toppings. Whether you’re celebrating a milestone or simply craving something sweet, this classic recipe will satisfy cravings and earn you the admiration of friends and family alike. Happy baking!

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