

Vanilla Bean Cheesecake with Walnut Crust

Food and Wine



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cups **walnut** pieces
- 1 3/4 cups **sugar**
- 4 tablespoons **unsalted butter**, melted
- 2 cups **sour cream**
- 1 tablespoon pure **vanilla extract**
- 2 pounds **cream cheese**, softened
- 1 **vanilla bean**, split lengthwise, seeds scraped
- 4 large **eggs**, at room temperature
- 1/4 teaspoon pure **lemon extract**
- Lemon rind**
(1/2 cup heavy cream)

Cookie-Crumb Crust

10 oz Nabisco's Barnum's Animal Crackers (5 Boxes)
6T sugar
10T melted unsalted butter, melted and kept warm

Preheat oven to 325

In a food processor:

1. *Cookies 30 sec till 1 cup of even crumbs.*
2. *Add sugar w/2-3 pulses*
3. *Add butter w/10 pulses*

Bake for 15-18 minutes
Cool on rack for 30 min

STEPS:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°. Butter a 10-inch springform pan. In a food processor, pulse the walnuts with 1/4 cup of the sugar until finely ground. Add the butter; pulse until the mixture resembles moist sand. Press the crumbs into the bottom of the pan. Bake for 12 minutes, or until browned around the edges.

2. In a small bowl, mix the sour cream with 1/4 cup of the sugar and 1 teaspoon of the vanilla.

3. Reduce the oven temperature to 300°.

4. In a standing electric mixer fitted with a paddle or using a handheld electric mixer, beat the cream cheese at low speed with the remaining 1 1/4 cups of sugar and the vanilla seeds just until combined. Beat in the eggs, 1 at a time, scraping down the bowl between additions. Add the remaining 2 teaspoons of vanilla and the lemon extract.

Slowly beat in the cream until smooth. Pour the cheesecake batter into the pan and bake for 65 to 70 minutes, until lightly golden and slightly jiggly in the center.

5. Immediately pour the sour cream topping over the cheesecake and smooth the surface. Return the cheesecake to the oven and bake for 5 minutes longer. Transfer to a rack and let cool to room temperature. Run a sharp, thin-bladed knife around the cake and remove the ring. Refrigerate the cake for 3 hours, then cover loosely with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight before serving.