

MIXED BERRY CHEESECAKE PIE

INGREDIENTS

for the crust

1 1/4 cups graham cracker crumbs
4 tablespoons granulated sugar
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

for the cheesecake filling

4 eggs, room temperature
4 tablespoons (one stick) unsalted butter, room temperature
3/4 cup granulated sugar
1 cup mascarpone, room temperature
2 8-ounce packages cream cheese, room temperature
1 tablespoons cornstarch
1 teaspoons lemon extract
1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon grated lemon zest

For the topping

a total of 3 cups of raw, fresh berries

(I used strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, red and champagne currants and jostaberries)

3 tablespoons granulated sugar

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350F. Prepare a 9-inch pie plate with cooking spray.

In a medium bowl, combine the graham cracker crumb and granulated sugar. Stir to combine. Add the melted butter, and mix together until well blended. Pour the graham cracker mixture into the pie plate, and using your hands, press into the pan and up the sides. Bake crust for 10-12 minutes, or until light golden brown. Remove from oven and allow to cool.

Reduce the oven temperature to 300F.

In the work bowl of your stand mixer, beat the cream cheese and butter until it is smooth and there are no lumps. Add the mascarpone, sugar, cornstarch, lemon extract, juice, and zest to the bowl and beat on medium-low speed until combined and creamy. Scrape down the beater and sides of the bowl with a spatula. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating slowly until everything is combined. Pour into the graham cracker pie shell and place in a roasting pan large enough to prevent the sides from touching. Bring a few cups of water to a boil and pour the water into the roasting pan, being careful not to splash any water onto the cheesecake. Fill the pan to reach halfway up the sides of the pie plate.

Bake for 2 hours, 15 minutes, or until the cake is very lightly colored and a toothpick inserted in the center emerges clean. Turn off the oven and crack the door open. Let the cheesecake cool slowly for two to three hours, then remove to the refrigerator for a minimum of 6 hours. I do this overnight. This step is crucial for letting the cheesecake set and achieving perfect cheesecake texture — don't rush it.

To garnish: place about half of the berries in a work bowl, sprinkle with sugar and toss very gently. You can to coat the berries, but avoid bruising them. Spread this evenly over the pie. Artfully garnish the top of the pie with the remaining berries -- you've gone through all this effort, so just don't dump them on (I placed nearly each one individually.) Keep chilled until ready to serve.