

No-Bake Cheesecake Parfaits

Young Chefs, 2015

Makes 20 snack-size servings

No time for baking and chilling to prepare a classic cheesecake? Wow your friends and family with this perfectly refreshing dessert featuring the traditional flavor profile and satisfaction of cheesecake in a very attractive parfait-style presentation that requires no oven. What's not to love?



INGREDIENTS

CRUMB MIXTURE

- 5 graham crackers (2.7 ounces/to make a little less than $\frac{3}{4}$ cup graham cracker crumbs)
- 3 tablespoons (1.4 ounces) packed brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon each cinnamon and freshly grated nutmeg (be generous with both measurements)
- Generous pinch salt
- 3 tablespoons (1.5 ounces) butter, melted OR refrigerator cold (see directions)

DIRECTIONS

Prepare the crumbs: Place the **graham crackers** in a heavy-quality quart or gallon zipclose bag. Using a rolling pin, roll over the bag to crush the **graham crackers**. Combine the **graham crumbs, brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt** and **melted butter** in a bowl; stir with a spatula to combine. Set in the refrigerator until ready to assemble the parfaits.

Alternate method to prepare the crumbs: Place the **graham crackers, brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg** and **salt** in the work bowl of a food processor, OR mini-prep food processor, fit with the metal knife blade. Process briefly with long on/off pulses until the **crackers** are reduced to crumbs. Stop the processor; scrape the sides. Cut the **refrigerator cold butter** into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch slices; evenly distribute around the work bowl of the food processor over the **crumb mixture**. Process with long on/off pulses to incorporate the cold **butter**; stop mixing just before the mixture begins to form small clumps. Transfer the crumb mixture to a mixing bowl; set in the refrigerator until ready to assemble the parfaits.

CHEESECAKE CREAM

- 2 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon orange zest, finely grated
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (5.25 ounces) granulated sugar
- 4 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups (1 pint/16 ounces) heavy whipping cream, refrigerator cold

Prepare the cheesecake cream: Combine the **cream cheese, lemon juice, orange zest, salt, sugar** and **vanilla** in the mixing bowl of a stand mixer OR a large mixing bowl. If preparing with a stand mixer, use the **paddle blade** OR use a hand-held electric mixer; beat the **ingredients** on medium-high to high speed until smooth and light in texture, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping once or twice to scrape the bottom and sides with a flexible spatula. Add the **whipping cream**; begin beating on low speed (the cream may splash around the bowl at first). As the **cream** begins to thicken, raise the mixer speed to medium speed; beat until the mixture thickens to a creamy, light, silky smooth texture. **Do not beat until stiff** OR until the mixture begins to have a slightly grainy texture. ➡

FRUIT

2 pounds fresh or frozen fruit, such as:

Strawberries, sliced

Blueberries

Raspberries

Bananas, peeled and sliced

Oranges, peeled and sliced

Mangoes, peeled and sliced

OR a combination of any of the above fruits

Clean the fruit: Rinse the fruit under cool running water; pat dry.

If using berries, *do not rinse berries under running water*; the pressure of the water can damage the delicate berries. Clean/rinse berries by placing them in a colander, set the colander of berries in a bowl of cool water; gently swish the berries around to allow the sand and dirt to fall to the bottom of the bowl. Remove the berries; place on a towel-lined counter OR towel-lined tray in a single layer to drain. Place a towel over the berries to pick up surface moisture, *very gently* pat dry.

Prepare the fruit: Peel (if applicable) and slice/cut the fruits into bit-sized pieces, as desired. If using frozen fruit, defrost the fruit at room temperature for about 1 hour before preparing the parfaits.

Assemble the parfaits: Have ready a stack of 20 5-ounce clear plastic cups *plus* one or two trays to set the finished parfaits on. Assemble the ingredients for the parfaits in one location:

- bowl of seasoned graham cracker crumb mixture,
- bowl of cheesecake cream, and
- bowl(s) of prepared fruit.

Assemble a parfait in the following order:

1. Place a tablespoonful of graham cracker mixture in the bottom;
2. Next, add a dollop of about 2 tablespoons cheesecake cream;
3. Top with several pieces of the fresh or frozen sliced fruit.

Repeat these layers one more time to complete the parfait - the fruit layer becomes the decorative garnish on the top of the parfait.

Complete assembly; serve: Continue this assembly line process until all of the parfaits are assembled. If there is any graham cracker crumb mixture left, sprinkle evenly over the tops of the parfaits as additional garnish. Serve immediately OR chill until ready to serve.
