

The Ultimate Chocolate Cheesecake

Super creamy & very chocolatey cheesecake with vanilla cream & fresh berries

Author: Elisa | Inthekitchenwithelisa

INGREDIENTS

- 320g digestive cookies (I use the whole wheat ones) or butter cookies
- 50g cacao (unsweetened)
- 130g butter

- 4pkg (175g each) greek style philadelphia cream cheese or any other similar cream cheese
- 150g sugar
- 2 eggs + 2 egg yolks (or 3 whole eggs)
- 200g smetana or sour cream (20% fat)
- 200g good quality dark chocolate (70% cacao)

- 50g good quality dark chocolate (70% cacao)
- 50g whipping cream (30% fat)

- 100-200g whipping cream
- 1tsp vanilla paste

- fresh berries of your choice



DIRECTIONS

1. Crush the cookies in a blender or put them into a freezer bag and crush with a rolling pin. Make sure you don't have any big cookie pieces left in your crumb. Add the cacao powder to the cookie crumb and mix for a little.
2. Melt the butter and allow it to cool.
3. Add the cooled butter to the cookie crumb and mix well until you have a smooth paste like consistency. You can test whether the cookie crumb is ready by taking a little of it into your hand and squeezing it together, if it forms a ball that sticks together it is ready, if it crumbles and falls apart add some more melted butter. (See video)
4. Cover a 20cm baking tin with parchment paper. Take about half of the cookie base and press it into the bottom of the baking tin so that you have a smooth base for the cheesecake. Then add the rest of the cookie crumb along the edges of the baking tin and press against the walls of the baking tin to form the sides of the cheesecake. (See video for detailed instructions)

5. Refrigerate the base for the time you are preparing the filling.
6. Chop 200g of dark chocolate into small pieces and melt in a microwave or in a hot water bath. Then leave aside to cool lightly.
7. To make the filling make sure all ingredients are at room temperature. Add cream cheese and the sugar to a large bowl and whisk with a hand mixer for one minute.
8. Add eggs to the cream cheese filling one at a time, mixing for at least one minute in between additions.
9. Add the smetana/sour cream and mix for another minute.
10. Start adding the melted chocolate slowly while whisking on low, then continue mixing on medium to high for one minute.
11. Take the base out of the refrigerator and pour the filling over the base. Smoothen the top and tap the cake tin onto the table a couple of times to release any air bubbles.
12. Turn the oven to 180°C bottom top heat. Then lower the temperature to 160°C just before putting the cake in the oven. Boil about 1.5 liters of water, put an oven proof casserole dish in the oven and pour the hot water into it. Then add an oven rack on top of it and place the cheese cake there.
13. Bake the cheesecake for 60-70 minutes, before turning off the oven. Check by shaking the cheesecake lightly, that the cheesecake has set from the sides. You want the sides to be set and not shaky at this point, but the middle to still be a little shaky. Then open the oven door just slightly (you can put two oven mittens in between the oven door) and allow the cheesecake to still be in the oven for about 30-40 minutes. Remove the cheesecake from the oven and allow to cool completely before cooling it in the refrigerator. Preferably cool the cheesecake in the refrigerator over night before serving.
14. To make the chocolate layer, chop 50g of chocolate. Then you can either add the 50g of cream to the chocolate and melt it in a heatproof bowl in a microwave (you want to do this in short 15 second intervals checking when the chocolate has melted and then stop heating it) or you can alternatively heat the cream on the stove until it starts steaming (do not boil), then add it on top of the chocolate, leave aside for 30 seconds and then give it a mix until the chocolate has completely melted. Allow the chocolate to slightly cool for couple of minutes before pouring it on top of the cheesecake.
15. Pour the slightly cooled chocolate layer on top of the cheesecake and smoothen it out with a spatula. Then if you have time allow it to set in room temperature or if you are in a rush then you can also cool it in the refrigerator for 5-10 minutes until the chocolate has set.
16. Whisk the cream and the vanilla paste until stiff and transfer to a piping bag with a closed star nozzle.
17. Decorate the cheesecake with cream on top and finally decorate with the fresh berries of your choice.

TIP. Before serving the cheesecake take it out from the refrigerator 30 minutes before serving as that is when the cheesecake is the creamiest.