

PJ'S WILDBERRY CHEESECAKE

This is a decadent, special occasion dessert often requested by my family. You can make this in a regular pie dish instead of a springform pan, but it won't be nearly as thick, and you will have leftover batter. When I'm making this for the family I keep the fruit topping in a bowl instead of mounding it on top as it lasts longer this way.

Crust

2 c graham cracker crumbs
1/4 c sugar
1/2 c unsalted butter, melted and cooled

Filling

2 lbs cream cheese, room temperature
1 c sugar
2 T lemon juice
2 t vanilla extract
4 large eggs, room temperature

Topping

1 1/2 c sour cream
3 T sugar
1/3 c seedless raspberry preserves
1 c strawberries, stems removed and sliced
1/2 c raspberries
1/2 c blueberries

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Crust - Mix together crumbs, sugar, and melted butter until the crumbs begin to stick together. Press firmly into the bottom and 2" up the sides of a 9" springform pan. Wrap aluminum foil around the outside of the pan to catch leaks. Bake for 10 minutes. Let cool. Leave oven set at 350°F.

Filling - In large bowl combine cream cheese, sugar, lemon juice and vanilla extract. Using an electric mixer set on medium, beat until well blended. Add the eggs, beating after each addition just until combined. Pour the filling into cooled crust. Bake until the edges are set but the center still quivers slightly when the pan is shaken--about 1 hour and 10 minutes.

Topping - In a bowl stir together sour cream and sugar. When the cheesecake is done, spoon the mixture over the top and return to oven for 5 minutes.

In a pan over medium heat stir preserves until melted. Remove from heat. Add berries and mix until coated. Mound berries atop cheesecake just before serving.

When cooled, run a knife around the edges to loosen. Remove the foil from the pan and release pan sides. place pan on a plate and cut into wedges.

Serves 12