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Rustic Tavern's Mason Jar Mascarpone Cheesecake



Photo provided

Pastry Chef Nicolette Selvig was kind enough to share her recipe for her mascarpone cheesecake, which she says is "the world's most labor-intensive cheesecake!"

Yield: 12 half-pint mason jars

Time: 1.5 hours

INGREDIENTS

1 lb. cream cheese
 10.5 oz mascarpone
 5 oz creme fraiche
 8 oz sugar
 4 large eggs
 7 egg yolks
 1 teaspoon lemon juice
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Note from Pastry Chef Nicolette Selvig: At the restaurant we like to use what is fresh and available. We make our own creme fraiche, but if we are in between batches I always substitute sour cream. This recipe is great for entertaining and can be topped with fresh fruit or jam.

Nicole also tops the cheesecake with a quinoa granola to give a texture somewhat like a graham cracker crust, but allows those with gluten allergies to partake!

Note from Susie: I made this recipe and the flavor was amazing, but because I was away from my own kitchen

and all I had was a hand-held beater, I think I fell into the trap of allowing too much air into the batter. My cheesecake turned out just a little bit grainier and less smooth and creamy than I would have liked, as it seemed to 'souffle' rather than bake into a custard. Now, I am anxious to try it at the restaurant, so I can see how it is supposed to turn out!

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. It is very important that all of your ingredients are at room temperature (around 65 degrees) including eggs and lemon juice.
2. Remove lids from jars and place jars in an oven proof baking dish with sides at least two inches high.
3. Put the cream cheese and sugar in the mixing bowl of a Kitchenaid mixer with the paddle attachment. Turn to low speed stopping the mixer occasionally to scrape the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula.
4. Continue mixing on low until most of the lumps are out of the cream cheese. Do not turn mixer up because it will incorporate air and the cheesecake will souffle in the oven.
5. Add the mascarpone and mix on low to incorporate.
6. Scrape the bowl again and add the creme fraiche, lemon juice, and vanilla. Mix on low.
7. Combine the eggs and egg yolks and add to the mixer in three additions scraping the bowl in between each one.
8. Strain your batter through a fine mesh sieve to remove any remaining chunks of cream cheese. It should be of pourable consistency.
9. Ladle the batter into the mason jars leaving a half inch to an inch of space from the top.
10. Wipe the rims of the jars where any batter might have spilled.
11. Place the baking dish in the oven then, using a pitcher fill around the jars until the water reaches halfway up the baking dish. I fill my water baths in the oven so I don't have to carry it to the oven full of water and risk splashing some in the cheesecake.
12. Seal tinfoil tightly around the baking dish and bake for 35 minutes. Do not rotate.
13. They should be slightly more firm around the edges and softer in the middle. When you tap the side of the jar, if the whole surface is loose it may need a couple more minutes. The cheesecakes are a custard so when you pull them out of the oven they will be VERY loose. This is perfect.
14. Immediately remove cheesecakes from the water and place in the refrigerator to chill. I do this by covering my hand with a towel. Oven mitts are too large and I have dropped more jars than not trying to use them.
15. Chill uncovered for two hours then store covered for up to two days.

*If your cheesecakes shrank at all around the edges after chilling they were a little bit over baked.

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[back](#)

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