

PUMPKIN SWIRL CHEESECAKE

You can't go wrong with cheesecake, and this one is especially good in the fall and around the holidays.

INGREDIENTS:

1 ½ cups Ginger Snaps, finely crushed
½ cup Pecans, finely chopped
5 Tablespoons Butter, melted

4 packages (8 oz.) Cream Cheese, softened
¾ cup Sugar
1 teaspoon Vanilla
4 Eggs

1 cup Pumpkin (NOT the whole can!)
¼ cup Sugar
2 teaspoons Cinnamon
½ teaspoon Nutmeg
¼ teaspoon Ginger
¼ teaspoon Cloves, ground (duh!...but you never know)

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees.

Mix the ginger snaps and pecans in a food processor until they are ground finely. If you don't have a food processor, put the cookies in a zip lock bag and roll them with a rolling pin until you have the desired texture and chop the pecans as finely as you can. Melt the butter, then combine with the cookie/nut mixture and press into the bottom and up the sides of your spring form pan about ¾ of an inch, pressing firmly. Bake in the oven for 10 minutes.

Beat the cream cheese, ¾ cup sugar, and vanilla in an electric mixer until very well blended. Add the sugar ¼ cup at a time mixing well on high speed, then scrape the bowl before adding the next ¼ cup. When it's well blended, add the eggs and mix on medium-low speed until just blended.

Take 1 ½ cups of this batter and place it in a small bowl.

To the batter that is still in your electric mixer bowl, add the pumpkin, ¼ cup sugar and the spices and mix until well blended on medium speed.

Spoon ½ of the pumpkin batter into the crust. Top with spoonfuls of half of the reserved plain batter. Now pour the rest of the pumpkin batter on that, then spoon the rest of the plain batter on the top. Cut through the batters with the rubber spatula you have been using several times in several directions for a swirl effect, trying not to over do it.

Bake for 50 minutes, or until the center is almost set.

Cool completely, then refrigerate for a minimum of 4 hours, preferably overnight.

Happy Holidays!