

Merry Cheesecakes

A family holiday favorite. Mini-cheesecakes!

Ingredients for Merry Cheesecakes:

1 cup unbleached, all purpose flour
1/3 cup butter
1/2 cup light brown sugar
1/2 cup chopped walnuts
8 ounces cream cheese
1/4 cup sugar
1 large egg
2 tablespoons milk
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon vanilla



NOTES: Best when served cold. Try using 2 tablespoons of fresh key lime juice in place of the lemon juice-- they're extra delicious.

Directions:

1. **Prepare the baking pan.** Preheat oven to 350(F). Line the bottom of an 8×8" baking pan with wax paper or non-stick foil and make "handles" for easy removal from the pan after baking.
2. **Make the crust.** With an electric mixer, cream butter and brown sugar. Add flour. Blend until incorporated and add chopped walnuts. Mixture will have the consistency of very coarse crumbs. Reserve 1 cup of mixture for topping. Press remaining mixture into pan. Bake at 350(F) for 8-10 minutes or until golden brown. Allow to cool.
3. **Make the filling.** In another bowl, combine cream cheese and sugar. Mix until smooth, then incorporate the egg, milk, lemon juice and vanilla. Beat until smooth. Spread mixture evenly over baked crust. Sprinkle the reserved 1 cup crust mixture over filling. Bake until topping is golden brown and filling is set, 25-30 minutes.
4. **Cool. Chill. Cut. Enjoy.** Allow to cool completely on a rack, then chill in the refrigerator until ready to serve. Use wax paper "handles" to remove from pan. Cut into bite-sized squares and enjoy!