



CARAMEL CHEESECAKE with PRAIRE HARVEST PEPPERNUT CRUST

Here's a New York style cheesecake that can be garnished with your favorite fruit topping, if you prefer. This cheesecake generously serves 8, or you may want to cut it into 12 smaller portions since it's so decadent. If you don't care for the flavor of anise, be sure to use the [Anise-Free Prairie Harvest Peppernuts](#) instead of the traditional.

Crust

2 cups finely ground [Prairie Harvest Traditional Peppernuts](#)

1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted

Filling

32 oz. cream cheese, room temperature

1 cup sour cream

1 cup granulated sugar

4 eggs, room temperature

2 tsp. vanilla extract

Topping

12-15 caramels, unwrapped

1-2 Tbs. whipping cream

1/2 cup [Prairie Harvest Traditional Peppernuts](#)

In a mixing bowl, combine the crust ingredients together until mixture comes together evenly. Spray a 9-inch springform pan with non-stick baking spray, then firmly press the mixture over the bottom and slightly up the sides of the pan, using your fingers to press out evenly and firmly.

Meanwhile, prepare the filling by beating the cream cheese with an electric mixer set on low for 2 minutes until nicely smooth; add the sour cream and sugar, and beat another minute until creamy, scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed. Add the eggs, one at a time, slowly beating in between each addition; stir in the vanilla, taking care not to over mix cheesecake batter. Pour batter into the prepared springform pan over the prepared crust, smoothing the top with a spatula.

Place prepared cheesecake onto a set of heavy-duty aluminum foil sheets placed on top of each other, tightly wrapping foil up the sides of the pan all around to keep water from seeping into the sides and bottom of the springform pan. Place wrapped cheesecake pan into a large roasting pan; pour boiling water into the roasting pan until water is about halfway up the sides of the cheesecake pan, creating a water bath.

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F. Carefully place cheesecake in water bath onto center rack of oven and bake, uncovered, for 1 hour and 25 minutes. Cheesecake will still jiggle a bit at the center, but this will firm up when cheesecake chills. Remove cheesecake from water bath; loosen cheesecake edges from pan by running a thin metal knife around interior of pan wall at the outside edge. Let cheesecake cool for 1 hour, then place into refrigeration, loosely covered, for 6-8 hours.

To prepare topping, combine caramels with cream in a small bowl and heat on full power in 30 second intervals until caramels are melted and mixture is smooth, stirring in between. Let caramel mixture cool slightly, then pour over top of cheesecake; top caramel with peppernuts. To serve cheesecake, slice with a knife that has been dipped in hot water and wiped dry, cleaning knife after each slice.

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