

Creamy Pumpkin Cheesecake

recipe by Jeff Baldwin

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Inactive Prep Time: 8 hours

Cook Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

Yield: 12 servings

Crust:

2 packages honey graham crackers (about 20 rectangles)

1 C walnuts or pecans

1 ½ sticks butter, melted

Filling:

2 ½ pounds cream cheese

1 C sugar

4 large eggs, lightly beaten

3 egg yolks, lightly beaten

2 tsp cinnamon

3 Tb all-purpose flour

1 tsp ground cloves

1 tsp ground ginger

1 C heavy cream

1 Tb pure vanilla extract

1 (15-ounce) can pumpkin

Heavy cream whipped with brandy, for serving

1 C Cranberry Orange Sauce (see separate recipe)

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.

For the crust: Put the graham crackers in a food processor and process until all the pieces are broken down to a sand-like consistency. Add the nuts and process until they are completely combined with the graham crackers. With the processor on, pour the butter in a slow, steady stream, until the mixture looks bound together. Press the crust into the bottom and a little up the sides of a 9-inch springform pan. Set aside.

For the filling: In a large bowl, mix together: cream cheese, sugar, eggs, and yolks. Add cinnamon, flour, cloves, and ginger. Blend together. Add cream and vanilla, and blend well. At this point, reserve ¼ cup of the mixture. Add the pumpkin and blend until the color is even.

Pour the pumpkin filling into the prepared crust. Take the reserved mixture and create a design on top; a swirl, or pour thin lines across, from top to bottom, then take a knife and working perpendicular to the lines of white filling, run the knife through in similarly spaced lines.

Place on the middle rack of the oven and bake for 15 minutes. Reduce temperature to 275 degrees F and bake for 1 hour more. Cool, and then chill in the fridge overnight.

Serve with brandied whipped cream and cranberry orange sauce spread throughout center.