

New York Style Cheesecake - Light

(Makes 16 servings)

Ingredients:

For Crust

- 9 whole graham crackers (5 ounces), broken into rough pieces and processed in a food processor to fine crumbs (about 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups)
- 4 tablespoons Smart Balance spread, melted
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon Splenda Blend sugar substitute

For Filling

- 1 pound 1% cottage cheese
- 1 pound light cream cheese, at room temperature (not Neufchatel which is higher in fat; fat free cream cheese can be used but cheesecake will be firmer)
- *8 ounces yogurt cheese (not the block style cheese used for sandwiches, but rather in a tub with a thick yogurt or cream cheese consistency – see directions below if you are unable to find yogurt cheese ready made at your grocery) or 1 pint non fat or low fat plain yogurt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon table salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ -1 cup Splenda blend sugar substitute
- $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 teaspoon lemon zest (could use orange zest)
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- Vegetable cooking spray

Directions:

**How to make yogurt cheese, if necessary:*

Needed: 1 pint (2 cups) non fat or low fat plain yogurt.

- 1) Line a strainer with a coffee filter, cheesecloth, or paper towels and place over a bowl. Put the yogurt in the strainer and refrigerate for at least four hours or overnight. The longer the yogurt drains, the thicker the “cheese” becomes. Draining overnight will give you a soft cream cheese-like consistency. Yogurt cheese should be stored in the refrigerator and will keep for about a week. 1 pint (2 cups) yogurt yields approximately 1 cup (8 ounces) yogurt cheese.

Make crust:

- 1) Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 325 degrees. Mix the graham cracker crumbs, melted butter, and sugar together in a medium bowl. Transfer mixture to a 9” springform pan and press evenly into the pan bottom. Bake the crust until fragrant and beginning to brown, 8-10 minutes. Let cool on a wire rack while preparing the filling.

Make filling:

- 1) Increase the oven temperature to 500 degrees. Line a medium bowl with a clean dishtowel or several layers of paper towels. Spoon the cottage cheese into the bowl and let drain for 30 minutes.
- 2) Process the drained cottage cheese in a food processor until smooth and no visible lumps remain, about 1 minute, scraping down the work bowl once or twice. Add the cream cheese and yogurt cheese and process until smooth, 1-2 minutes, scraping down the work bowl once or twice. Add the salt, sugar substitute, lemon zest, and vanilla and continue to process until smooth, about 1 minute, scraping down the work bowl once or twice. With the processor running, add the eggs, one at a time and process until smooth.
Being careful not to disturb the baked crust, spray the sides of the springform pan with vegetable oil spray. Set the springform pan on a rimmed baking sheet. Pour the filling into the cooled crust and bake 10 minutes. Without opening the oven door, reduce the oven temperature to 200 degrees and continue to bake until an instant read thermometer inserted into the center of the cheesecake reads 150 degrees, about 1 to 1 ½ hours. (Baking time varies depending upon how slowly the oven temperature drops from 500 degrees to 200 degrees. Check after 1 hour.)
- 3) Transfer the cake to a wire rack, and run a paring knife around the edge of the cake. Let cool until barely warm, 2 ½ to 3 hours, running a paring knife around the edge of the cake every hour or so. Wrap the pan tightly in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until cold, at least 3 hours, but preferably overnight.
- 4) To unmold the cheesecake, wrap a hot kitchen towel around the springform pan and let stand for 10 minutes. Remove the sides of the pan and blot any excess moisture from the top of the cheesecake with paper towels. Let the cheesecake stand at room temperature for about 30 minutes, then cut into wedges.

Nutritional Analysis: (per serving)

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| ▪ Calories: 190 | ▪ Carbohydrates: 16 g |
| ▪ Total Fat: 9 g | ▪ Dietary Fiber: 0 g |
| ▪ Saturated Fat: 4 g | ▪ Cholesterol: 70 mg |
| ▪ Trans Fat: 0 g | ▪ Sodium: 350 mg |
| ▪ Protein: 9 g | ▪ Potassium: 85 mg |

Source:

From Decadent Low Fat Desserts Class with Donna Hann of the Culinary Artist, and Melissa Ohlson, MS, RD, LD, Nutrition Projects Coordinator, Preventive Cardiology & Rehabilitation.

Dietitian's Notes:

- Using whole-wheat graham crackers (e.g., Mi-Del) adds more dietary fiber and a wonderful, rich taste. Compared to traditional high-fat cheesecake, you shave off 44% of the total fat, 37% saturated fat, and 27% calories!

A word from the Dietitian, Melissa Ohlson:

- As we strive to reduce our risk for heart disease (and our waistlines), we often forego some of our most beloved foods, like dessert! While this is a good strategy to follow most of the time (there are a lot of calories in dessert you know!), there is no need to exclude desserts entirely from your life. In fact, rich, decadent desserts can fit into a heart-healthy eating plan, especially when a little culinary know-how and portion control is adopted.
- Chef Donna and Melissa have teamed up to show you how simple recipe substitutions can result in mouthwatering masterpieces that will fool your biggest dessert skeptics. Although most of our desserts can't be coined "low-fat," they have certainly been altered to significantly reduce the total fat, saturated fat and trans fat levels to help promote a heart-healthy lifestyle and give a little oomph to your next dessert or dinner party.

Chef Donna's Tips

- This cheesecake would be delicious set on a pool of raspberry coulis and topped with some fresh berries and a mint sprig. You may also choose to use low fat graham crackers in the crust.