

## The Hansen Girls Cheesecake

This is my favorite cheesecake. I got the recipe from my friend Pat, may she rest in peace, who got it from her daughters. I don't know the origin. It is plain and simple with a slight lemon and almond flavor—not overpowering at all. The texture is soft and creamy, not dry and cakey. The crust is my own variation on the standard graham cracker crumb crust.

### The pan

- Butter liberally a 9 inch springform pan
- Dust with graham cracker crumbs (about ¼ cup—dump out the extra)

### The crust

Mix together the following dry ingredients and nuts then the melted butter. Press into the bottom of the springform pan and set aside.

- 2 cups of graham cracker crumbs
- 3 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon
- Pinch of salt
- 1/2 cup roughly chopped pecans
- 2/3 cup melted butter (unsalted)

### The cake part 1

With a hand mixer cream together all of the following ingredients, spoon into the springform pan and flatten out. You don't have to make it perfectly flat. Just be sure it is evenly distributed in the pan.

- 2 pounds cream cheese (that's 4, 8 ounce packages)
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract

Put the pan in the center of a cold oven—no water bath or anything fancy. Turn the oven up to 350° and bake for 30 minutes. THAT'S RIGHT: DO NOT PREHEAT THE OVEN.

### The cake part 2

While the cake is in the oven mix these ingredients in the same bowl you used for the cheesecake. You can even scrape up any cheesecake leftovers in the bowl and mix into these ingredients. When the cake has been in the oven for 30 minutes open the oven, pull out the shelf and spread this mixture evenly over the cake. Bake for another 10 minutes.

- 2 cups sour cream
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon almond extract

Take the cake out of the oven and let it rest at room temperature for 15 minutes then refrigerate for at least 2 hours before serving. You can make this days in advance. It should last for at least a week—if you can keep people from eating it.