

Marbled Chocolate-Espresso Cheesecake

Laura Frankel

This cheesecake reminds me of a delicious Tiramisu. Each bite has just enough chocolatey-espresso flavor to keep me coming back for more. For another variation, substitute white chocolate for the milk chocolate in the recipe.

for the crust

1 1/2 cups chocolate wafer crumbs or graham cracker crumbs

6 tablespoons melted butter

1/4 cup sugar

1 1/2 teaspoons instant espresso powder

For the filling:

1 1/2 ounces milk chocolate, very finely chopped

3/4 teaspoon instant espresso or coffee powder

1 1/2 tablespoons simmering coffee or water

1 1/2 pounds cream cheese, at room temperature

1/2 cup sugar

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

2 large eggs, at room temperature

Position a rack in the lower third of the oven and preheat to 350° F. Grease an 8-inch springform pan.

1. In a medium bowl, use a fork to mix the cookie crumbs, melted butter, sugar, and instant espresso powder. Press mixture evenly over the bottom and about halfway up the sides of the pan.
2. Prick bottom of the crust and bake for 10 to 12 minutes, until crust is fragrant and dry. Cool on a rack before filling. Grease the sides of the pan above the crust level to prevent the filling from sticking to the pan in case it rises higher than the crust.
3. Lower oven temperature to 325° F. Place milk chocolate in a medium bowl with coffee powder. Pour coffee or boiling water over it and stir until smooth. Set aside.
4. In a medium mixing bowl, beat cream cheese just until smooth, about 30 seconds.

Scrape the bowl and beaters. Add the sugar and vanilla and beat just until smooth and creamy, 1 to 2 minutes. Add 1 egg and beat just until incorporated. Scrape the bowl and beaters. Beat in second egg.

5. Stir 1 cup of the batter into the bowl of melted chocolate. Pour remaining plain batter into prepared crust. Pour or spoon pools or ribbons of milk chocolate batter over the plain batter, making sure to leave some plain batter showing. Jiggle the pan gently to level the batters. Marble the batters with a small spoon by gently stirring in small loopy circles until the colors are intermingled but not blended.
6. Place the pan on a baking sheet. Bake 35 to 45 minutes, or until the edges of the cake are puffed but the center looks moist and jiggles when tapped. Remove the cake from the oven. If the filling is touching the sides of the pan, above the height of the crust, slide a thin paring knife carefully around the edges of the pan to detach the cake, but do not remove the pan sides.
7. Place the pan on a rack and cover the pan and the rack with a large inverted bowl or pot so that the cake cools slowly. Cover and refrigerate the cooled cake at least 5 hours, but preferably 24 hours, before serving.