

Candied Fig Cheesecake with Port Reduction

Serves 12

Tawny port brings its rich flavor and striking color to this fabulously decadent cheesecake.

Ingredients

Candied Figs

1 cup figs, chopped
1½ cup tawny port
6 whole cloves

Crust

18 ea. vanilla wafer cookies
1 cup hazelnuts, toasted, skins removed
4 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted

Filling

32 oz. cream cheese, room temperature
1½ cups sugar
4 large eggs
2 tsp. vanilla extract
¼ tsp. orange oil
1 tsp. orange zest
1 cup sour cream
3 Tbsp. sugar

Port Reduction

2 cups tawny port
½ cup sugar
1 Tbsp. water
2 Tbsp. cornstarch

Method

Oven Temperature: 350-375 degrees

- *To make the candied figs*, combine the figs, port, and cloves in a heavy-bottomed medium saucepan. Place the pan in the searing/sauté zone and bring to a boil. Once boiling, cover the pan and move it to the finishing zone. Simmer for 20 minutes, remove lid, and continue to simmer until the liquid evaporates, about 40 minutes. Cool the figs and discard cloves. Set aside.
- *To make the crust*, combine the cookies and hazelnuts in a food processor and grind finely. Slowly add the melted butter until moist crumbs form. Press the crumbs into a 9-in. springform pan. Freeze the crust for 20 minutes.
- *To make the filling*, combine the cream cheese and sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer. Beat until smooth. Add 1 egg at a time, beating just until blended. Mix in the vanilla and orange oil. In a separate bowl, combine the sour cream and sugar. Set aside.
- *To assemble the cheesecake*, spoon the candied figs onto the crust and distribute evenly. Pour the cream cheese mixture over the figs.
- Place the springform pan in a water bath in a roasting pan. Place the roasting pan in the raw landing zone, away from the flame and cook for 65 minutes, or until the filling cooks to 150 degrees. Remove the roasting pan from the oven and gently spread the sour cream mixture over the top of the cheesecake. Return pan to the raw landing zone and bake for 10 minutes more. Remove the pan from the oven. Cool slowly, then refrigerate overnight.
- *To make the port reduction*, combine the port and sugar in a saucepan and bring to a boil in the finishing zone. Boil until the port is reduced by half, about 10 minutes. In a separate bowl, combine the cornstarch and water. Whisk the cornstarch mixture into the port reduction to thicken.
- Just before serving, drizzle the port reduction over the cheesecake.



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