Carrot-Date Savory Cheesecake

1 savory 20 cm/8 in cheesecake, cut into 10 small wedges | Active 35 min | Cook 90 min | Total 410 min

Ingredients

- 250 g/9 oz peeled carrots, cut into 1 cm/3/8 in pieces
- Water for boiling carrots; drain away
- 120 g/4 1/4 oz plain dry breadcrumbs
- 40 g butter (about 3 tablespoons), melted
- 500 g/1 lb 2 oz thick drained ricotta
- 150 g/5 1/4 oz plain cream cheese
- 3 large eggs, 150 g without shells
- 40 g/1 1/2 oz pitted dates, finely chopped
- 30 g/1 oz Parmesan, finely grated
- 10 ml lemon juice (2 teaspoons)
- 1 g ground cumin (1/2 teaspoon)
- 1.5 g fine salt (1/4 teaspoon)
- 0.5 g black pepper (1/4 teaspoon)

Set out

Oven, 20 cm/8 in springform tin, at least 6 cm/2 1/3 in deep and 1.8 L usable capacity, Parchment base, Rimmed baking tray, Saucepan and colander, Potato masher, Two bowls and whisk, Spatula, Food thermometer, Cooling rack, Refrigerator with space for the tin, Knife and covered cake carrier

Allergens

Milk, Egg, Wheat. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat the oven to 325°F/165°C. Line the tin base with parchment and set the tin on the rimmed tray. Boil carrots in water 10-12 minutes until very tender after the water reaches a boil. Drain well, mash and spread in a bowl to cool 15 minutes.

2. Mix breadcrumbs with all the melted butter. Press into an even base in the tin, not up its sides. Bake 10 minutes while the carrots cool.

3. Beat ricotta and cream cheese until smooth. Beat in eggs one at a time, then fold in all the carrot, dates, Parmesan, lemon, cumin, salt and pepper. Scrape into the tin, leaving at least 2 cm/3/4 in below the rim.

4. Bake 50-60 minutes until the outer filling is set, the center has only a slight wobble and reaches 160°F/71°C. A liquid center needs more time. Turn off the oven and remove the cake; there is no prolonged warm-oven holding stage.

5. Cool on the rack 30 minutes, then refrigerate in the tin at 40°F/4°C or below for at least 4 hours. Cover once chilled. Loosen the edge and remove the ring. Cut 10 small wedges with a clean knife.

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Bring it

Chill fully before packing in a rigid carrier inside an iced cooler, at 40°F/4°C or below. Do not transport it still warm and hope the cooler will finish chilling it. Combined unchilled travel/display is limited to 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C.

Finish at the gathering

No oven is needed. Request a refrigerator or an ice-supported serving tray, and bring the knife and server. Put out half the wedges first, leaving the rest chilled for replenishment.

Make it yours

This is a savory starter or side, so place it with the savory dishes and label the cumin and dates. The orange filling supplies its own winter color without sweet icing.

Ingredient labels

Ricotta, cream cheese, Parmesan and butter contain milk; breadcrumbs contain wheat. Check bread, cheese and dried-fruit labels for additional ingredients.

A useful detail

The 410-minute total includes carrot preparation and cooling, a 10-minute crust bake, up to 1 hour filling bake, 30 minutes on the rack and at least 4 hours chilling. Plan ahead; the chilling time is part of the recipe.

Another way

Replace dates with 40 g finely chopped dried apricots; the filling remains savory.

Use 1 g ground coriander instead of cumin for a different spice note.

Keep it well

Keep the cake at 40°F/4°C or below and use within 2 days, or an earlier ricotta/cream-cheese deadline. Refrigerate reserved portions promptly and keep to the Bring it handling limits. Freezing can make this ricotta filling grainy, so make only the stated cake.