

BUTTER PECAN CHEESECAKE

Ingredients

For the crust:

- 1 & 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, cold and cut into 1/2-inch cubes

For the pecans:

- 2 cups pecan halves and pieces
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 3 tablespoons granulated sugar

- pinch of salt

For the filling:

- 16 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup heavy cream

Directions

To make the crust:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Combine the flour, sugar, and salt. Add the butter, and mix with a pastry blender, a fork, or your fingers until thoroughly combined. The mixture will be crumbly but should hold together when pinched.
3. Press the crust mixture into the bottom and up the sides of a 9-inch tart pan with a removable bottom. *
4. Bake 20 to 25 minutes, or until the crust is lightly browned. Do not overbake, or the crust will become too hard. Set aside to cool.

To make the pecans:

1. Melt 2 tablespoons of butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the pecans, sugar, and salt.
2. Continue cooking over medium heat, stirring frequently, until the pecans are toasted and the sugar sticks to them (about 7 or 8 minutes). Set aside to cool.
3. If desired, set aside some of the pecans for garnish. (I used about 20 pecan halves for the garnish you see in the above photos.) Once cooled, roughly chop the remaining pecans.

To make the filling:

1. Using an electric mixer on medium speed, beat the cream cheese, sugar, brown sugar, and vanilla until thoroughly combined and smooth.
2. In a separate bowl, use an electric mixer with a whisk attachment to whip the cream until soft peaks form.
3. Fold about a third of the whipped cream into the cream cheese mixture. Then gently fold in the remaining whipped cream.
4. Stir in the chopped pecans.
5. Spread the filling evenly in the cooled crust. Garnish as desired. Refrigerate at least 4 hours before serving.

