

(V, GF, LS)

NO-CHEESE CHERRY CHEESECAKE

I saved the best for last. This is that little sliver of something you need to finish a meal perfectly. Also, everything in it is actually good for you! It is decadent without being heavy and easy to make, since there is nothing to cook or bake. Perfect for a hot summer's day.

You throw around the terms raw and vegan when talking about a dessert and some people may groan. So just think of this as a cheese-less cheesecake. Or sell it to your guests as the “ultimate cherry cream pie.” The combination of puréed cashews, fresh lemon juice and coconut oil will give you that same luscious cream cheese cheesecake consistency. Very nutrient dense, so a little of this goes a long way.

Another one of the many reasons why I love this recipe is that it can also be served right out of the freezer on a hot day, like a layered ice cream cake.

SOAK TIME 2 hours

PREP TIME 30 minutes

SET TIME 2 hours

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT NEEDED springform pan, food processor and/or a good blender

CRUST

1 cup (250 mL) walnuts,
almonds or hazelnuts

¼ cup (60 mL) unsweetened
flaked or shredded coconut

¼ cup (60 mL) hemp hearts
(seeds)

Pinch of salt

½ cup (125 mL) packed
pitted Medjool dates
(about 6)

NO-CHEESE CHEESECAKE

3 cups (750 mL) cashews,
soaked in water for 2 hours

½ cup (125 mL) fresh lemon
juice

½ cup (125 mL) maple syrup

½ cup (125 mL) coconut oil,
melted

1 vanilla bean, seeds only or
2 tsp (10 mL) Pure Vanilla
Extract (see p. 14)

2 cups (500 mL) pitted
cherries (if frozen, thaw)

1. Grease a springform pan with coconut oil and line with a parchment circle to fit the bottom.
2. In a food processor, pulse the walnuts, coconut, hemp hearts and salt until coarsely ground. Add in dates and continue to pulse 1–2 minutes, or until you have a wet sandy mixture that sticks together when pressed with fingers. Transfer crust mixture to the bottom of the

pan and with fingers or the back of a spoon press to make into a single, even layer.

3. To make the cheesecake, drain and rinse soaked cashews. Add cashews and all other ingredients except the cherries into a blender or food processor. Blend until smooth.
4. Pour two-thirds of this mixture onto the crust and level with a small offset spatula or the back of spoon.
5. Add cherries to the leftover cashew mixture and blend until smooth. Pour onto cheesecake and level to make an even layer.
6. Cover cake with plastic wrap and freeze for at least 2 hours. Remove cake from springform pan sides when frozen. Let sit in the fridge to thaw for at least 30 minutes before serving. Can also be served frozen.

NO-CHEESE CHEESECAKE TIPS

- No cherries? Just substitute with 2 cups (500 mL) of any other fruit that's in season.
- If you want to get fancy, like in this photo, take a third of the vanilla-cashew mixture and reserve, then blend the remainder with the cherries. Reserve ½ cup (125 mL) of this cherry mixture for decoration and use the rest as your bottom cherry layer. Freeze until set, about an hour. Carefully pour and level the vanilla-cashew layer next. Pipe dots of the cherry mixture on top and swirl with a toothpick to your liking.