

# THE CULINARY

## Playground



### Individual Cheesecakes

*Makes 6 mini cheesecakes*

2 full and 1 half cinnamon graham crackers

1 tablespoon of butter, melted

1 (8oz) brick of full fat cream cheese

$\frac{1}{3}$  cup + 1T granulated sugar

1T corn starch

$\frac{1}{2}$ T pure vanilla

1 XL egg

$\frac{1}{8}$  cup whipping cream

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Line 6 cupcake tins with paper liners. Using an 8.5 x 11” pan, fill with 1” of water to create a “water bath” which the cupcake tin will sit in. Cheesecakes need to cook in a water bath to avoid cracking and drying out. Set the water bath aside.

Place graham crackers in a ziplock bag and crunch using the bottom of a glass or the flat side of a meat mallet. Crush crackers into fine crumbs. Mix melted butter and graham cracker crumbs until well blended. Place 1 tablespoon of cracker mixture into each lined cup. Press mixture with the back of the spoon so it is compacted. Bake crusts (not in water bath) for 4 minutes, remove and set aside.

In a handled bowl, add the cream cheese, sugar and the cornstarch. Using a hand mixture, mix well, on low, until creamy for 3 minutes. Add vanilla and beat 2 more minutes. Scrape bowl often.

Beat in egg. Add whipping cream until blended ~ do not overmix!

Place the muffin tin into the water bath. Divide mixture amongst the crusted muffin cups.

Fill to the top of the liner.

Place the cheesecakes (inside the water bath) into the preheated oven. Bake for 30-40 minutes or until the cheesecakes are set in the center. Remove from oven. Remove from water bath and place cupcake tins on cooling racks. Let cool slightly before removing from the pans.

If desired, add prepared pie filling, whipped cream or a berry compote to the tops and serve.

## **Berry Compote**

*Enough to garnish 6 individual cheesecakes*

1/2 heaping cup fresh or frozen fruit

1/2 T orange juice

1 shake of cinnamon

1/2 t granulated sugar

Mix all ingredients together in a small, 1 quart saucepan. Cook on low heat, stirring occasionally, until berries break down. Simmer compote for 3-5 minutes then let cool. Taste and adjust. Compote will thicken upon standing. If needed, transfer to a separate bowl and place in the refrigerator to chill.

Top each cheesecake with approximately 1 teaspoon of compote.