

MAPLE PUMPKIN CHEESECAKE

SERVES 12 TO 16

This is a stunning cheesecake, perfect for the fall holidays. To get a leg up on your holiday baking, you can make this well ahead and freeze it (cheesecakes freeze really well). But don't be a crazy person and try to make your own pumpkin puree—canned puree is always perfect and consistent. Serve the cheesecake with a dollop of [Cinnamon Whipped Cream](#) (make only 1/2 recipe). If you can get it, use Grade B or D maple syrup (see Insider Tip, opposite page) for a much deeper flavor.

Graham Cracker Crust with 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon added

4 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, at room temperature

1½ cups sugar

5 large eggs

¾ cup sour cream, at room temperature

¼ cup heavy cream, at room temperature

3 tablespoons dark maple syrup

2 cups canned pumpkin puree (not pumpkin pie filling)

2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

¼ cup all-purpose flour

1 tablespoon grated lemon zest

Prepare and bake the crust as directed. Set aside to cool. Leave the oven on.

In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the cream cheese on medium speed until creamy, about 2 minutes. Beat in the sugar, eggs, sour cream, heavy cream, maple syrup,

pumpkin puree, pumpkin pie spice, vanilla, flour, and lemon zest until blended. Stop and scrape the bowl often.

Choose a roasting pan that will hold the springform pan. Place the roasting pan on a pulled-out rack in the oven. Place the springform pan in the center of the roasting pan and carefully pour in the batter. Pour hot water into the roasting pan (staying well away from the springform, so you don't get any water into the cheesecake batter) to come halfway up the sides of the springform pan. Gently slide the rack back into place and close the oven door.

Bake until the center slightly jiggles, about 1 hour 20 minutes. Turn off the oven and leave the cheesecake inside to completely cool, about 6 hours. Take it out of the water bath, cover, and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight.

Remove the pan sides and cut into slices.

INSIDER TIP • THE SYRUP COUNTS

Did you know that maple syrups are graded? The typical supermarket syrup is usually Grade A, but you can also find Grade B (and sometimes Grade D). These are much stronger in their maple flavor, and really worth seeking out (and spending some extra money for). But if you can't find those—they're definitely available in maple syrup country, and in high-end gourmet shops—be sure that you buy "pure" maple syrup. The syrups that are simply labeled "pancake syrup" are maple imposters. They're really just sugar syrups dressed up with maple flavor and some caramel coloring. That said, if the cute little lady-shaped bottle is all you have on hand, by all means use it, but just add in a bit more to get more maple flavor.