

Decadent Black Forest Cheesecake with Chocolate Cookie Crust (Perfect Holiday Dessert)

The Ultimate Black Forest Cheesecake: A Decadent Chocolate-Cherry Showstopper



OVEN
325°F

TIME
30 min

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INGREDIENTS

Swaps and Notes:

Cookie Crust: You can substitute the chocolate cookies with chocolate graham crackers, but you may need to adjust the amount of melted butter slightly.

Chocolate: For a truly dark and intense flavor, swap the semi-sweet chocolate chips for dark chocolate (70% cacao or higher).

Dairy-Free: I have not tested a completely dairy-free version, but you can try using vegan cream cheese blocks, a non-dairy sour cream alternative, and a high-quality vegan butter for the crust.

Kirsch: If you can't find kirsch or prefer to omit alcohol, you can use $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of almond extract in the cherry layer for a similar depth of flavor.

Directions: How to Make Black Forest Cheesecake:

Step 1 - Prepare the Crust:

Preheat your oven to 325°F (160°C).

Mix the crushed chocolate cookies and melted butter until they resemble wet sand.

Press the mixture firmly and evenly into the bottom of a 9-inch springform pan.

Bake for 10 minutes, then remove and let it cool completely while you prepare the filling.

Step 2 - Make the Cheesecake Batter:

In a large mixing bowl, use an electric mixer to beat the softened cream cheese and granulated sugar

until the mixture is completely smooth and fluffy, with no lumps (about 3-4 minutes).

Beat in the sour cream and vanilla extract.

Add the eggs one at a time, mixing only until just combined after each addition. Do not overmix once the eggs are in, as this introduces too much air and can cause cracks.

Step 3 - Assemble the Layers:

Divide the cheesecake batter exactly in half.

To one half, mix in the melted and cooled chocolate and the cocoa powder. Stir until you have a smooth, rich chocolate batter.

Pour the chocolate mixture over the cooled crust and smooth the surface with a spatula.

Carefully spoon the plain (vanilla) cheesecake mixture on top of the chocolate layer. Use gentle motions to smooth the surface without disturbing the bottom layer.

Step 4 - Bake Using a Water Bath:

Wrap the outside bottom of your springform pan tightly with heavy-duty aluminum foil to prevent water seepage.

Place the foil-wrapped springform pan inside a larger roasting pan.

Carefully pour hot water into the larger roasting pan, filling it halfway up the sides of the springform pan (the water bath method).

Bake for 55-65 minutes. The center should be mostly set but still have a slight jiggle (like firm gelatin).

Turn off the oven, crack the door open, and let the cheesecake cool slowly inside the oven for 1 hour. This prevents drastic temperature changes and cracking.

Remove the cheesecake from the water bath, cool on a wire rack for 30 minutes, then chill overnight (at least 6 hours) in the refrigerator.

Step 5 - Add Cherry Layer and Decorate:

Stir the kirsch (if using) into the cherry pie filling.

Gently spread the cherry mixture evenly over the top of the chilled cheesecake.

Whip the heavy cream and powdered sugar until stiff peaks form. Pipe or dollop the whipped cream around the border or over the top of the cheesecake.

Garnish with dark chocolate shavings and fresh cherries just before serving.

Tips for Success:

Room Temperature is Mandatory: Your cream cheese and eggs must be fully at room temperature. Cold ingredients will result in a lumpy batter, which ruins the texture. Take them out at least an hour before starting.

Prevent Cracking: The water bath is your best friend. It insulates the cheesecake and keeps the oven air moist, ensuring an even bake and preventing the top from drying out and cracking.

DIRECTIONS

1. Prep : Time: 30 minutes | Bake Time: 1 hour | Chill Time: 6 hours minimum | Serves: 10-12
2. Step 1 - Prepare the Crust: Preheat your oven to 325°F (160°C).
3. Mix the crushed chocolate cookies and melted butter until they resemble wet sand.
4. Press the mixture firmly and evenly into the bottom of a 9-inch springform pan.
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10. To one half, mix in the melted and cooled chocolate and the cocoa powder. Stir until you have a smooth, rich chocolate batter.
11. Pour the chocolate mixture over the cooled crust and smooth the surface with a spatula.
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19. Step 5 - Add Cherry Layer and Decorate: Stir the kirsch (if using) into the cherry pie filling.
20. Gently spread the cherry mixture evenly over the top of the chilled cheesecake.
21. Whip the heavy cream and powdered sugar until stiff peaks form. Pipe or dollop the whipped cream around the border or over the top of the cheesecake.
22. Garnish with dark chocolate shavings and fresh cherries just before serving.
23. Tips for Success: Room Temperature is Mandatory: Your cream cheese and eggs must be fully at room temperature. Cold ingredients will result in a lumpy batter, which ruins the texture. Take them out at least an hour before starting.
24. Prevent : Cracking: The water bath is your best friend. It insulates the cheesecake and keeps the oven air moist, ensuring an even bake and preventing the top from drying out and cracking.
25. Don't : Rush the Chill Time: Cheesecake needs time for its texture to fully set. The overnight chill is non-negotiable for a perfect slice.

SWAPS & NOTES

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TIPS FOR SUCCESS

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