

Amaretto and Almond Cheesecake

PREP TIME: 20 minutes

COOK TIME: 1 hour

CHILL TIME: 4 hours (or overnight)

TOTAL TIME: 5 hours 20 minutes

FOR THE CRUST:

1 1/2 C almond cookie crumbs (such as amaretti or almond biscotti)

1/4 C granulated sugar

1/2 C unsalted butter, melted

FOR THE CHEESECAKE FILLING:

24 oz cream cheese, softened

1 C granulated sugar

3 lg eggs

1 t vanilla extract

1/4 C amaretto liqueur

1/2 C sour cream

1/3 C brewed Almond Amaretto tea (2 T tea steeped in 1/3 C hot water, strained, then cooled)

1/2 C finely chopped almonds

FOR THE TOPPING:

1 C heavy cream

2 T powdered sugar

1/4 C amaretto liqueur

1/4 C sliced almonds, toasted

PREPARE THE CRUST:

Preheat your oven to 325°F (163°C). In a medium bowl, combine the almond cookie crumbs, granulated sugar, and melted butter. Mix until the crumbs are evenly coated. Press the mixture into the bottom of a 9-inch springform pan, creating an even layer. Bake for 10 minutes, then set aside to cool.

MAKE THE CHEESECAKE FILLING:

In a large mixing bowl, beat the softened cream cheese until smooth. Add the granulated sugar and continue to beat until well combined. Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Mix in the vanilla extract, amaretto liqueur, sour cream, and cooled almond oolong tea until fully incorporated. Fold in the finely chopped almonds.

ASSEMBLE AND BAKE:

Pour the cheesecake filling over the cooled crust. Smooth the top with a spatula. Bake in the preheated oven for 50-60 minutes, or until the center is set and the edges are lightly golden. Turn off the oven and let the cheesecake cool in the oven with the door slightly open for 1 hour. Transfer the cheesecake to the refrigerator and chill for at least 4 hours, or overnight.

PREPARE THE TOPPING:

In a medium bowl, whip the heavy cream with the powdered sugar until soft peaks form. Gently fold in the amaretto liqueur. Once the cheesecake is fully chilled, spread the whipped cream topping over the top. Sprinkle with toasted sliced almonds.