

Parmesan Cheesecake

Serves: 10-12

Crust:

2 tablespoons unsalted butter, 1 tablespoon melted
1/2 cup crackers (I use a buttery round cracker like Ritz.)
5 tablespoons freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Cheese Cake:

4 packages of cream cheese, softened (2 pounds)
4 eggs
1/2 cup heavy cream
4 cups freshly grated white Cheddar cheese
1 cup freshly grated Gouda cheese
1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
1/3 cup chopped chives
1/4 teaspoon cracked red pepper

Preheat oven to 300°.

Coat the inside of a 9 X 3 inch springform pan with 1 tablespoon of butter. Combine cracker crumbs, Parmesan cheese and melted butter until the crumbs bind together. Reserve 1/3 cup of the crumbs. Press the remaining crumbs onto the buttered springform pan sides and bottom. Place in the refrigerator until ready to use.

In the bowl of an electric mixer, place the cream cheese, eggs and heavy cream and beat on medium until smooth. (about 5 minutes) Remove the bowl and mix in the Cheddar, Gouda, Parmesan, chives and crushed red pepper with a rubber spatula until thoroughly combined and smooth. Pour into the prepared springform pan. Smooth out the top. Sprinkle the reserved cracker crumbs over the top of the mixture.

Place the springform pan on a baking sheet and place on center rack of oven. Bake for 1 1/2 hours and then reduce the temperature to 200° and bake for 30 more minutes.

Turn off oven and leave cheesecake in warm oven for an additional 30 minutes.

Remove from oven and let cool for 20 minutes on counter then release the springform pan. Cheesecake can be refrigerated until use. Slice and serve warmed or at least at room temperature.