HOLIDAY RECIPE GIFT

Creamy Pumpkin Spice Cheesecake Cups

6 DESSERT CUPS • 25 MIN ACTIVE + CHILLING

A creamy, no-bake holiday dessert sweetened with Medjool dates.

INGREDIENTS

CRUST LAYER

- ¾ cup raw pecans
- ½ cup almond flour
- 4 Medjool dates, pitted
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- Pinch of sea salt

PUMPKIN CHEESECAKE FILLING

- 1 cup pumpkin purée (not pie filling)
- 1 cup raw cashews, soaked in hot water 30–60 min and drained
- 8 Medjool dates, pitted and softened
- ½ cup full-fat unsweetened coconut cream
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1½ teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- Pinch of sea salt
- 2–4 tablespoons water or unsweetened almond milk, only if needed

OPTIONAL GARNISH

- Toasted pecans, cinnamon, or unsweetened coconut flakes

HOW TO MAKE IT

1. Pulse pecans, almond flour, 4 dates, cinnamon, and salt in a food processor until coarse and sticky.

2. Divide crust evenly among six small jars or dessert glasses. Press lightly.

3. Blend drained cashews, pumpkin purée, 8 softened dates, coconut cream, lemon juice, vanilla, pumpkin spice, and salt until smooth and creamy. Add a little water or almond milk only if needed.

4. Taste; for a sweeter result, blend in one additional softened date.

5. Spoon the filling over each crust. Refrigerate at least 4 hours, preferably overnight.

6. Garnish just before serving.

CHEF'S TIP

Choose thick coconut cream, not thin coconut milk, for a cheesecake-like texture.

HOLIDAY RECIPE GIFT

Southern-Style Sweet Potato Pie

ONE 9-INCH PIE • 350°F OVEN + CHILLING

A cozy, date-sweetened holiday classic with a gluten-free almond crust.

INGREDIENTS

GLUTEN-FREE CRUST

- 1½ cups finely ground almond flour
- ¼ cup melted coconut oil
- 2 tablespoons date paste
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- 1–2 tablespoons cold water, as needed

SWEET POTATO FILLING

- 2 cups cooked, mashed sweet potatoes (about 2 medium-large)
- 8–10 soft Medjool dates, pitted
- ½ cup full-fat unsweetened coconut milk
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch or arrowroot starch
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1½ teaspoons cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

HOW TO MAKE IT

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.

2. Mix almond flour, melted coconut oil, date paste, and salt. Add cold water gradually until mixture holds together when pressed.

3. Press crust firmly into a 9-inch pie dish. Bake 10 minutes, then cool slightly.

4. Soak pitted dates in hot water for 10 minutes; drain.

5. Blend mashed sweet potatoes, softened dates, coconut milk, starch, vanilla, spices, salt, and lemon juice until completely smooth.

6. Pour filling into crust and smooth the surface. Bake 40–50 minutes, until edges are set and center has a slight wobble.

7. Cool fully, then refrigerate at least 4 hours before slicing.

CHEF'S TIP

Roast the sweet potatoes instead of boiling. Roasting concentrates sweetness and adds richer flavor.

HOLIDAY RECIPE GIFT

Southern-Style Candied Yams with Medjool Date Caramel

HOLIDAY SIDE DISH • 350°F OVEN

Tender sweet potatoes coated in a glossy orange-spiced date caramel.

INGREDIENTS

SWEET POTATOES

- 3 pounds orange-fleshed sweet potatoes (often sold as yams)
- 2 tablespoons coconut oil or vegan butter
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt

DATE CARAMEL GLAZE

- 10–12 large Medjool dates, pitted
- ½ cup fresh orange juice
- ½ cup warm water
- 2 tablespoons coconut oil or vegan butter
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground allspice
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- 1 teaspoon fresh orange zest

OPTIONAL TOPPING

- ½ cup chopped toasted pecans
- Cinnamon and fresh orange zest

HOW TO MAKE IT

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Peel and cut sweet potatoes into ½-inch rounds. Arrange in a lightly greased 9 × 13-inch baking dish.

2. Soak dates in hot water for 10–15 minutes; drain. Blend with orange juice, warm water, 2 tablespoons oil or butter, lemon juice, vanilla, cinnamon, allspice, salt, and zest until smooth.

3. Drizzle the sweet potatoes with 2 tablespoons melted oil or butter. Sprinkle with cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, and salt. Add date glaze and gently turn slices to coat.

4. Cover tightly with foil. Bake 40–45 minutes until nearly fork-tender. Remove foil and spoon glaze over the potatoes.

5. Bake uncovered another 15–25 minutes, basting once or twice, until tender and glossy. Add a splash of water if glaze gets too thick or starts to scorch.

6. Rest 10–15 minutes before serving. Add pecans and orange zest, if desired.

CHEF'S TIP

For traditional flavor, use vegan butter; keep slices thick, don't skip orange juice, and let the uncovered glaze reduce. Briefly warming dates before blending adds depth, but do not burn them.