

Mayan Chocolate & Orange Potato Cheesecake

SPUDSTITUTION: This recipe replaces traditional whipping or sour cream with potatoes!

Densely rich, this cheesecake is dark and mysterious with the spicy fruit flavour of the Maya Gold chocolate (Maya Gold bittersweet chocolate is made by Green & Black's Organic and has a blend of orange and spices in it; if unavailable, use a high-quality bittersweet chocolate).

2-3/4 cups (675 mL) chocolate cookie crumbs
1/4 cup (50 mL) ground almonds
1/2 tsp (2 mL) cinnamon
1/4 tsp (1 mL) freshly grated nutmeg
2/3 cup (160 mL) butter, melted

Filling:

2 pkgs (8oz/250 g each) light cream cheese, softened
1 cup (250 mL) granulated sugar
1-1/2 cups (375 mL) mashed Ontario potatoes, cooled
3 eggs
10 oz (300 g) chopped Maya Gold bittersweet chocolate, melted and cooled
1 tbsp (15 mL) grated orange rind
pinch pepper
2 tbsp (25 mL) spiced rum or amaretto
2 cups (500 mL) whipped cream (optional)
chocolate-covered almonds (optional)

In bowl, stir together cookie crumbs, almonds, cinnamon and nutmeg. Drizzle with butter and stir until well moistened. Press mixture onto bottom and up sides of 9-inch (23-cm) springform pan. Centre pan in large piece of heavy-duty foil and wrap bottom and sides. Bake in 350 F (180 C) oven 10 minutes or until firm. Let cool completely.

Meanwhile, in large bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until fluffy. Beat in mashed potato until smooth. Beat in eggs, adding one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add melted chocolate, orange rind and pepper and beat slowly until combined and smooth. Beat in rum. Pour mixture into pan and smooth top.

Place springform in larger pan and add hot water to come halfway up sides of springform pan. Bake in 325 F (160 C) oven 50 minutes or until set around edges but still jiggly in centre. Turn oven off and let cool in oven 1 hour. Remove from oven and water bath and let cool completely on rack. Place in refrigerator 4 hours or until cold.

Remove sides from springform pan and garnish with whipped cream and almonds.

Per serving: 410 calories, 7 g protein, 24 g fat, 41 g carbohydrates, 3 g fibre, 290 mg sodium

