SPICED PUMPKIN-PECAN CHEESECAKE BARS



Creamy Pumpkin Cheesecake • Buttery Graham Cracker Crust • Crunchy Pecan Streusel

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All the cozy flavors of pumpkin pie meet rich, creamy cheesecake in these irresistible dessert bars. Finished with a buttery pecan crumble, they're perfect for Thanksgiving dinner, holiday parties, and sharing with family and friends.
PREP TIME: 35 minutes
BAKE TIME: 55 minutes
CHILL TIME: 5 hours 20 minutes
TOTAL TIME: Approximately 6 hours 50 minutes
SERVINGS: 16 bars

YOU'LL NEED

1. Graham Cracker Crust

- 2 cups graham cracker crumbs
- ½ cup finely chopped pecans
- 2 tablespoons light brown sugar
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- ¼ teaspoon salt

2. Pumpkin Cheesecake Filling

- 24 oz full-fat cream cheese, softened
- 1¾ cups pure pumpkin puree (not pumpkin pie filling)
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- ½ cup sour cream
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cloves
- ½ teaspoon salt

3. Pecan Streusel Topping

- 1 cup coarsely chopped pecans
- ⅓ cup all-purpose flour
- ⅓ cup light brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cubed
- ¼ teaspoon salt

4. Optional Garnishes

- 1 cup whipped cream
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- ¼ cup toasted pecans

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO

STEP 1 - PREPARE THE PAN
Preheat your oven to 350°F. Line a 9 × 13-inch baking pan with parchment paper, leaving some extra paper hanging over the sides. This makes it easier to lift out the cheesecake later.
Allow the cream cheese, eggs, and sour cream to come to room temperature.

STEP 2 - MAKE THE CRUST
In a mixing bowl, combine the graham cracker crumbs, chopped pecans, brown sugar, and salt.
Pour in the melted butter and stir until the crumbs are evenly moistened.

STEP 3 - BAKE THE CRUST
Transfer the crumb mixture to the prepared pan. Press it firmly and evenly into the bottom using the back of a measuring cup.
Bake for 10 minutes at 350°F. Remove and let it cool for about 5 minutes.

STEP 4 - MAKE THE PUMPKIN CHEESECAKE FILLING
Beat the softened cream cheese and granulated sugar with an electric mixer on medium-low speed until smooth.
Add the pumpkin puree, sour cream, flour, vanilla, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, cloves, and salt. Mix until combined.
Add the eggs one at a time, mixing on low speed just until incorporated. Do not overmix.

STEP 5 - ADD THE FILLING
Pour the pumpkin cheesecake mixture over the prepared crust.
Spread it evenly into the corners using a spatula. Gently tap the pan on the counter to release any large air bubbles.

STEP 6 - START BAKING
Bake at 350°F for 20 minutes.
While the cheesecake begins to bake, prepare the pecan streusel topping.

STEP 7 - MAKE THE PECAN STREUSEL
In a small bowl, combine the chopped pecans, flour, brown sugar, and salt.
Add the cold cubed butter. Rub it into the mixture with your fingertips until coarse crumbs form.
The topping should look like a mixture of small and medium-sized crumbs.

STEP 8 - ADD THE PECAN TOPPING
Carefully remove the cheesecake from the oven after the first 20 minutes.
Sprinkle the pecan streusel evenly over the top. Do not press it into the filling.
Return the pan to the oven and bake for another 30-35 minutes.
The edges should look set while the center should still have a slight gentle wobble.

STEP 9 - COOL AND CHILL
Turn off the oven and leave the door slightly open. Let the cheesecake cool inside for 20 minutes.
Transfer the pan to a wire rack and cool for another hour.
Cover loosely and refrigerate for at least 4 hours, preferably overnight. This helps the cheesecake become firm enough to cut into neat bars.

STEP 10 - SLICE AND SERVE
Once completely chilled, lift the cheesecake out of the pan using the parchment paper.
Cut into 16 squares with a sharp knife, wiping the blade clean between cuts.
Top with whipped cream, a little maple syrup, and extra toasted pecans if desired.
Serve chilled and enjoy!

HELPFUL BAKING TIPS

- **Use pure pumpkin puree:** Avoid pumpkin pie filling, which already contains sugar and spices.
- **Soften the cream cheese:** Room-temperature cream cheese makes a smoother filling.
- **Don't overmix:** Mix the eggs gently to help prevent cracks.
- **Keep the butter cold:** Cold butter gives the pecan topping its lovely crumbly texture.
- **Be patient with chilling:** Refrigerating overnight gives the cleanest slices.
- **Watch the topping:** If the pecans brown too quickly, loosely cover the pan with foil.

MAKE-AHEAD & STORAGE

Make ahead: Prepare these cheesecake bars up to 2 days before Thanksgiving. Keep covered in the refrigerator.
Refrigerator: Store in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

Freezer: Freeze tightly wrapped buttery crumbs, and crunchy pecans make every bite feel like autumn.ars for up to 1 month. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator before serving.

Serving tip: Add whipped cream and maple syrup just before serving.