May 2012: Berries

Mini Ricotta Cheesecakes with Berries

Serves 12

Ingredients for mini cheesecakes:

2 cups part-skim ricotta cheese

1 cup light cream cheese

½ cup plain 2% Greek style yogurt or plain yogurt

½ cup maple syrup

3 large egg whites

1 large egg

2 tbsp. pure vanilla extract

Cooking spray

Ingredients for berry compote:

1 cup blackberries

1 cup blueberries

1 cup raspberries

2 tbsp. sugar

Preheat oven to 325°. For cheesecakes: coat 12 muffin holders with cooking spray. Add all ingredients to a blender, and blend until smooth. There will be 5 cups of batter. Divided batter in holders. The batter will come to the top of the cups. Bake for 20 minutes. Cool completely. Chill completely before removing from pans. For compote: place berries and sugar in medium saucepan. Cook 5 minutes. To serve, place 2 cheesecakes on each plate. Top with compote.

Seductive Strawberry Zabaglione

Makes 2

Ingredients:

10 to 12 fresh strawberries, thinly sliced

2 large egg yolks

2 tbsp. sugar

2 tbsp. sweet Marsala wine

Water

Fresh mint, for garnish

Divide the sliced strawberries evenly between two martini glasses. Set aside. In a large metal or glass bowl, vigorously whisk the egg yolks, sugar, and wine until combined. Place the bowl over a saucepan filled with 1 to 2 inches of simmering water, making sure the bottom of the bowl does not touch the water. Continue to whisk until doubled in volume and thick, for about 4 to 5 minutes. Spoon over the berries. Garnish with fresh mint and serve.

Chocolate Zabaglione

Makes 6

Ingredients:

¼ cup whipping cream or heavy cream

½ cup semisweet chocolate chips

8 large egg yolks

2/3 cup sugar

½ cup dry Marsala

Pinch salt

1 lb. fresh strawberries, hulled and quartered

Add cream and chocolate to a heavy small saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring often, until the chocolate chips are melted and smooth. Set aside and keep warm. Whisk the egg yolks, sugar, Marsala, and salt in a large glass bowl until blended. Set the bowl over a saucepan of simmering water, but do not allow the bottom of the bowl to touch the water. Whisk the egg mixture over the simmering water until it is thick and creamy, about 4 minutes. Remove from the heat. Using a large rubber spatula, fold the melted chocolate mixture into the egg mixture. Divide the strawberries among 6 coupe dishes. The zabaglione over the strawberries and serve.

Cranberry Relish

Ingredients:

2 3oz Jell-O Strawberry and Raspberry

1 cup sugar

1 ½ cup boiling water

1 tbsp. orange rind

1 tbsp. lemon juice

1 bag of frozen cranberries, chopped

1 can crushed pineapple with juice

1 can mandarin oranges, drained

1 cup nuts, chopped, your choice

Mix Jell-O with sugar and orange rind; add boiling water and stir until dissolved. Add lemon juice. After chopping cranberries and nuts, add rest if ingredients and mix. Fill in desired container for desserts or in a bowl. Let set at least overnight.

Berry Cream Pie

1 baked pie crust

8 oz. cream cheese

1 egg

1/3 cup sugar

¼ tsp. salt

1 can berry pie filling, or make your own

Fill pie crust with cream cheese and top with berry pie filling. Bake at 375° for 30 minutes.

Strawberry Bread

1 cup flour

½ cup whole wheat flour

2 tsp. ground cinnamon

½ tsp. salt

½ tsp. baking soda

Combine in a medium bowl. Set aside.

1 ¼ cup strawberries, mashed

¾ cup sugar

2/3 cup oil

2 eggs

Mix together in a large bowl. Stir in dry ingredients until just combined. Pour into greased 8 inch loaf pan and bake in preheated oven at 350° until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 1 hour.

Chilled Strawberry Soup

Serves 6

1 cup apple juice

¾ cup water

2/3 cup sugar

½ tsp. ground cinnamon

1/8 tsp. ground cloves

Combine in saucepan and bring to boil over medium heat. Remove from heat cool.

3 cups strawberries

¼ cup water

Puree until smooth in blender. Pour into a large bowl.

2 cups plain yogurt

1 tsp. vanilla

2 drops red food coloring, optional

Add to pureed strawberries with apple juice mixture. Cover and refrigerate until well chilled. Garnish with additional strawberry halves.

Ricotta Berry Blast

4 cup whole milk Deli style Ricotta cheese

1 cup blackberries

1 cup blueberries

1 cup strawberries cut in half

2 cup raspberries

½ cup sugar, or replace with sweetener

Mix sugar with ricotta. Puree raspberries. Mix all other berries. Layer berries, ricotta, and repeat. Top with raspberry sauce.

Fresh Ricotta Cheese

Makes 1 ½ cups

Ingredients:

8 cup whole milk

1 tsp. salt

3 tbsp. fresh lemon juice

Line colander with four layers of cheesecloth; set in sink. Bring milk and salt to simmer in a large, heavy saucepan over medium high heat. Stir in lemon juice. Let simmer until curds form, about 1 to 2 minutes. Using finely slotted spoon or skimmer, scoop curds from pan and transfer to cheesecloth-lined colander. Let drain for 1 minute, curds will still be a little wet. Transfer to medium bowl. Cover and chill until cold, 3 minutes. Can be made two days ahead. Keep chilled.

Strawberries and Cream Cheesecake Tarts

Makes 24 mini cheesecakes

Ingredients for crust:

1 package Duncan Hines strawberry supreme cake mix

¼ cup butter, melted

Ingredients for filling:

2 8oz packages cream cheese, softened

3 eggs

¾ cup sugar

1 tsp. vanilla extract

Ingredients for topping:

1 ½ cup dairy sour cream

¼ cup sugar

12 fresh strawberries

Preheat oven to 350°. Place liners in 24 muffin cups. For crust: combine cake mix and melted butter in large bowl. Beat at low speed with electric mixer for 1 minute. Divide mixture into cups. For filling: combine cream cheese, eggs, sugar, and vanilla extract in medium bowl. Beat at medium speed. Spoon evenly into muffin cups. Bake for 20 minutes or until mixture is set. For topping: combine sour cream and sugar in small bowl. Spoon evenly over cheesecakes. Return to oven for 5 minutes. Cool. Garnish each with strawberry half. Refrigerate before serving.

Mixed Berry Parfait

Strawberries

Blueberries

Blackberries

Strawberry Jell-O

Vanilla Pudding

Layer from bottom of list to top.

Cheese Cake

Crust:

½ stick butter, melted

1 cup crushed graham crackers

3 tbsp. sugar

Mix together and press into 9 inch pie plate

Cream together:

12 oz. cream cheese

Pinch of salt

2/3 cup sugar

Add and beat until well blended:

2 eggs

1 tsp. vanilla

Pour into prepared crust. Do not prebake crust. Bake at 325° for 25 minutes. Check for doneness with a toothpick.

Strawberry Chiffon Pie

Ingredients:

1 baked pastry shell

1 envelope unflavored gelatin

¾ cup sugar

1/3 cup water

3 egg yolks, beaten

3 tbsp. lemon juice

Dash salt

2 ½ cup fresh strawberries, crushed

¾ cup whipping cream

Halved fresh strawberries, optional

Prepare baked pastry shell; set aside. In a small saucepan, combine gelatin and sugar. Stir in water, egg yolks, lemon juice, and salt. Cook and stir over medium heat until boiling; remove heat. Transfer gelatin mixture to a large bowl; stir in crushed strawberries. Cover and chill for 1 to 1 ¼ hours or until mixture is partially set (consistency of unbeaten egg whites), stirring occasionally. In a chilled large mixing bowl, beat the whipping cream with an electric mixer until stiff peaks form. Fold whipped cream into strawberry mixture. If necessary, cover and chill for about 20 minutes or until mixture mounds when spooned. Spoon filling into cooled crust. Cover and chill at least for 4 hours or until filling is firm. If desired, garnish with halved strawberries.

Polka-Dot Angel Food Cupcakes

Makes 12

Ingredients:

1 ½ cup egg whites

1 cup sifted cake flour

½ cup sugar

1 ½ tsp. cream of tartar

1 tsp. vanilla

½ tsp. almond extract

½ tsp. salt

¾ cup sugar

1 cup assorted fresh raspberries, blueberries, blackberries, and strawberries, sliced

In a very large mixing bowl, allow egg whites to stand. Sift cake flour and ½ cup sugar together 3 times; set aside. Line muffin cups. Preheat oven to 350°. Add cream of tartar, vanilla, almond extract, and salt to egg whites. Beat until soft peaks form. Gradually add sugar, about 2 tbsp. at a time, until stiff peaks form. Sift ¼ of cake flour mixture over beaten egg white by fourths. Fill cups halfway with batter, then berries, and repeat. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes or until golden brown. Cool.

Fruit Smoothie No-Bake Cheesecake

Makes 16

Ingredients:

1 ½ cups graham cracker crumbs

½ stick butter, melted

2 tbsp. sugar

4 8oz packages Neufchatel cheese, softened

½ cup sugar

12 oz. package frozen mixed berries, strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, and blackberries, thawed, drained

8 oz. tub whipped topping, thawed, divided

Line 9x13 baking pan with foil, with ends of foil extending over sides of pan. Mix graham crumbs, butter, and 2 tbsp. sugar; press firmly onto bottom of prepared pan. Refrigerate while preparing filling. Beat cheese and sugar in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until well blended. Smash drained berries with fork; stir into cheese mixture. Gently stir in 2 cups of whipped topping. Spoon over crust; cover. Refrigerate for at least four hours.