

# Deluxe Pumpkin Cheesecake

1 cup crushed gingersnap cookies (about 20)  
1/3 cup finely chopped pecans  
1/4 cup butter, melted  
Four 8-ounce packages cream cheese, softened  
1 1/2 cups sugar, divided  
2 Tbsp. cornstarch  
4 large eggs  
2 tsp. vanilla extract  
1 cup canned pumpkin puree  
2 tsp. ground cinnamon  
1 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg

Optional garnishes:

chocolate syrup, caramel ice cream topping, whipped topping, additional crushed gingersnap cookies

1. Place a greased 9-inch springform pan on a double thickness of heavy-duty foil (about 19 in. square). Securely wrap foil around pan.
2. In a small bowl, combine the cookie crumbs, pecans and butter. Press onto the bottom of prepared pan. Place on a baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees F. for 8 to 10 minutes or until set. Cool on a wire rack.
3. For filling, in a large bowl, beat the one package of cream cheese, 1/2 cup sugar and cornstarch until smooth, about 2 minutes. Beat in remaining cream cheese, one package at a time. Add remaining sugar. Add 2 eggs; beat on low speed just until combined. Add vanilla and remaining eggs, beating on low speed just until combined.
4. Place 2 cups filling in a small bowl; stir in the pumpkin, cinnamon and nutmeg. Remove 3/4 cup pumpkin filling; set aside. Pour remaining pumpkin filling over crust; top with remaining plain filling. Drop reserved pumpkin filling by spoonfuls over cheesecake; cut through with a knife to swirl.
5. Place springform pan in a large baking pan; add 1 inch of hot water to larger pan. Bake at 350 for 55-65 minutes or until center is just set and top appears dull. Remove springform pan from water bath. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Carefully run a knife around edge of pan to loosen; cool 1 hour longer. Refrigerate overnight.
6. Garnish with chocolate syrup, caramel sauce, whipped topping and additional crushed gingersnaps if desired.

Serves: 12