

## NY-Style Cheesecake with Spiced Cran-Cherry Topping – Comfort du Jour

This turned out to be one of the tastiest and prettiest desserts I have made at home, and I did find a way to adapt it to the flavors of the season. My husband requested cherry topping, and I spiked it with fresh cranberries and real cinnamon. We both loved it, and the cranberries are making it a festive dessert option all the way through the holiday season.

Adapted from [NY Cheesecake | King Arthur Baking](#)

### INGREDIENTS (CRUST)

1 sleeve honey graham crackers  
1 handful ginger snap cookies (I used Trader Joe's Triple Ginger cookies)  
1/2 stick unsalted butter, melted  
Pinch of kosher salt

### INGREDIENTS (FILLING)

4 packages (8 oz. each) full-fat cream cheese\*  
1 3/4 cup organic cane sugar  
5 large organic eggs\*  
1 tsp. real vanilla extract  
1/2 tsp. *Fiori di Sicilia* flavoring\* (or the zest of one lemon)  
1/4 tsp. kosher salt  
1/2 cup full-fat sour cream\*

### INGREDIENTS (TOPPING)

2 cups frozen dark sweet cherries  
1/4 cup real cherry juice (or water)  
1 cup fresh cranberries, rinsed and sorted  
1/4 cup organic cane sugar  
1 cinnamon stick, about 4" long

### \*NOTES

The most helpful thing I learned from the King Arthur experts is the importance of bringing *all* ingredients to room temperature before blending. This helps prevent clumping of the cream cheese and ensures the cheesecake mixture is the best temperature headed into the oven. Plan wisely, and take all the refrigerated ingredients—cream cheese, eggs and sour cream—out of the fridge at least an hour before you begin.

Fiori di Sicilia is a specialty ingredient I purchase from King Arthur Baking Company. You may not have heard of it, but you would find the citrus-vanilla flavor reminiscent of Italian panettone or a frozen creamsicle treat. The ingredient is not essential for this cheesecake, but I love the “special something” it brings to desserts. This was my substitute for lemon zest in the original King Arthur recipe.

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The recipe that inspired me did not require a water bath, but I found some helpful comments online that suggested using cake strips, which are soaked and wrapped around a cake pan to promote even baking. Find these online or at a gourmet kitchen store, or give the recipe a go without them.

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400° F.
2. Use your hands to break the graham crackers and ginger snaps into smaller pieces. Pulse into fine crumbs in a food processor or use a rolling pin to smash them into fine crumbs in a large zip-top bag. Pour melted butter into crumbs and stir to mix well.
3. Press crumbs into a 9" springform pan, evenly covering the bottom and about a half inch up the sides. I used a small glass bowl to compress the crumbs.
4. Bake at 400° for 10 minutes, then remove pan and allow crust to cool at room temperature.
5. In a stand mixer on the lowest speed, beat cream cheese and sugar until well blended. Use a spatula to scrape down the sides of the bowl and beat again briefly.
6. Beat in vanilla, Fiori di Sicilia and salt.
7. Add eggs, one at a time, beating until blended and scraping bowl after each egg.
8. Stir in sour cream and give the mixture another thorough scraping.
9. Carefully spoon in part of the filling mixture, taking care to not disturb the crumb crust. Gently pour in remaining filling and use rubber spatula to smooth the top of the cheesecake.
10. Reduce oven temperature to 325° F and slide the cheesecake into the oven on a center rack. Bake 50 minutes, or until filling is set around the edges and slightly jiggly in the center. Turn off oven and prop door open, allowing cheesecake to cool very slowly. This will help prevent the top of the cheesecake from cracking.
11. When cheesecake is completely cool, cover cheesecake with aluminum foil and refrigerate at least overnight.

### CINNAMON CRAN-CHERRY SAUCE

Combine frozen cherries, cranberries, sugar and cinnamon stick in a medium saucepan. Stir and cook over medium heat until mixture reaches a low boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer for 30 minutes. Berries and cherries should be softened and reduced. Transfer mixture to refrigerator overnight.

### TO SERVE

Run a clean knife carefully around the inside of the springform pan, then release to plate the cheesecake. Cut into wedges and top with cinnamon cran-cherry topping.

Store leftovers completely covered in the refrigerator for up to a week. We found that we liked the flavor and texture even better after a few days in the fridge. Enjoy!