

DEBI SHAWCROSS

LEMON BISCOTTI CHEESECAKE BARS

For crust:

2 ½ cups biscotti cookie crumbs (from about 18 medium cookies)

1 teaspoon grated lemon peel

½ cup unsalted butter, melted

1/8 cup sugar

For filling:

1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons cornstarch

½ cup cold water

2 large egg yolks

1 ¾ cups sugar

¼ cup lemon juice

1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest

1 ¼ pounds cream cheese, softened

2 tablespoons all purpose flour

3 large eggs, at room temperature

¼ cup sour cream

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Butter a 10-inch square pan. In the bowl of a food processor, add about 18 biscotti and process until crumbs are made. Remove crumbs and measure out 2 ½ cups. Return crumbs to the bowl of the food processor add all of the remaining crust ingredients and process until well combined. Press the crumb mixture evenly over the bottom and a scant ½ inch up the side of the pan. Bake crust for 8 minutes.

Meanwhile, make the filling: In a small bowl, dissolve the corn starch in the water. In a medium saucepan, whisk the egg yolks with ¾ cup of the sugar and the lemon juice. Whisk in the cornstarch mixture and cook over moderate heat, whisking gently, until the sugar is dissolved and the lemon mixture is hot, about 4 minutes. Boil over moderately high heat for 1 minute, whisking constantly, until the mixture is thick and glossy. Transfer the lemon mixture to a heatproof bowl. Stir in lemon zest and let cool.

In a large bowl, using an electric mixer beat the cream cheese with the remaining 1 cup of sugar until smooth. Beat in the flour until blended. Add the eggs one at a time, beating well between additions. Add the sour cream and the vanilla and beat until the batter is smooth. Pour the cream cheese batter over the crust and smooth the surface with a spatula. Dollop the lemon mixture on the cheesecake batter and carefully swirl into the batter using a sharp knife.

Bake the cheesecake for about 40 minutes, or until golden around the edges and just set. Run the tip of a knife around the edge to loosen the cheesecake from the side of the pan. Let cool on a wire rack 1 hour, then refrigerate the cheesecake at least 6 hours or overnight. (May be prepared and refrigerated up to 3 days before serving). Cut into 16 bars and serve.

Makes 16 bars

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