

# Who Cut The Cheese-Cake (?)

*There is nothing healthy about this recipe. It is however, lower in fat and almost no cholesterol compared to the real deal. Plus, to only eat it once in a while, it's freaking delicious! I recommend doubling the recipe to make a thicker, more 'authentic' looking cake. This needs to set for a while. Make 24 hours before serving.*

- 1 Box Graham Crackers
- 1/4 C Flax Meal (Golden or Regular. This just adds a nutrient boost and no taste difference)
- 1/4 C Pure Maple Syrup
- 2 Tbsp Vegan Butter, melted
  
- 1 12oz Block Firm Tofu
- 2 Tbsp non-GMO Cornstarch
- 1/2 C Soy, Almond or other Non-Dairy Milk (NOT Rice...too thin)
- 8oz (1 tub) Vegan Cream Cheese
- 1 Tbsp Lemon Juice
- 3/4 C Organic Powdered Sugar
- 1/4 C Organic Sugar
- 1 tsp Vanilla Extract
- 1 Vanilla Bean, Scraped\*

Grind up graham crackers into a meal and measure out 1 3/4 C. Save the rest for ice cream toppings or another use. Mix in bowl with flax, syrup and butter. Press into an 8" spring form pan. (If you don't have a spring form pan, you can use a pie plate but Don't Double the recipe unless you plan on making 2). Set aside.

Put the tofu in your food processor and process until smooth. In a separate bowl, mix non-dairy milk with cornstarch. Dump 'milk' mixture and remaining ingredients into food processor and process until JUST combined. Do not over-mix.

\*Vanilla Bean - This concept was new to me a few years ago. I purchased a ton of organic vanilla beans from amazon.com a while ago when I learned this technique. If you are unfamiliar with scraping the beans: Lay the vanilla bean on a flat surface. Using a small paring knife, cut lengthwise down the center of the bean. Carefully use your fingers to peel apart the bean and spread it open. Use the paring knife to literally scrape all of the tiny vanilla-ness out. You will only end up with a small amount, but it is a potent small amount.

Spread your cheesecake mix onto your crust and gently but firmly lift the pan and drop it on the counter from about an inch or 2 above the counter to even it all out and create a uniform shape. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes. Turn temp down to 325° and bake for an additional 15 minutes. Remove from oven

and allow to cool on counter for at least an hour. Then....move to fridge for at least 3 hours. Then, as hard as it might be, leave it in the pan and place in the fridge overnight or for at least 8-12 hours. The freezing and refrigeration are key to creating a firmer texture so you're not digging into tofu mush. This is your BASIC Vanilla Bean Cheesecake. From here, the possibilities are endless.

**Variation 1: (pictured)**

I doubled the recipe to create a thicker cake. I had on hand some frozen organic raspberries and blackberries and some organic blueberry preserves. I used my leftovers, roughly 1/2 C frozen and thawed berries and 1/4 C preserves and a couple Tbsp Agave Nectar. Pulsed in my food processor and spread on top. Refrigerated another hour or so to firm up the topping.

**Variation 2:**

Melt 1/2 C Vegan Chocolate Chips and swirl through cake prior to baking.

**Variation 3:**

Slightly melt organic peanut butter and swirl through cake prior to baking.

**Variation 4:**

Combine Variations 2 & 3!

I generally used the measurements listed in an 8" spring form pan. It is delicious and perfect if you want a thinner pie-size. However, if you want a thicker cheesecake DOUBLE the CAKE ingredients (NOT the Crust...leave that the same!) and bake for 45min at 350 and 15 at 325 degrees.

