



## JERNEJ KITCHEN

# VANILLA CHEESECAKE BARS WITH RHUBARB

*Cheesecake bars with vanilla and rhubarb are the perfect spring/summer dessert. Creamy, light and delicious. Easy recipe, perfect for celebrations.*

FOR	12	BARS
PREPARATION:	15	MINUTES
BAKE:	35	MINUTES
REST:	50	MINUTES
TOTAL TIME:	100	MINUTES

### COOKIE LAYER

200 g graham cracker crumbs (7 oz)  
2 tbsp brown sugar  
60 g butter (2.1 oz)

### RHUBARB

200 g fresh rhubarb (7 oz)  
100 ml water (1/2 cup)  
1 tea bag of hibiscus tea  
140 g sugar (5 oz)  
1 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice  
1/4 vanilla pod (seeds and empty vanilla pod)

### CHEESECAKE LAYER

550 g cream cheese (1.2 lb) (for example: Philadelphia)  
60 g sour cream (2.1 oz)  
1 tbsp lemon juice, freshly squeezed  
1 tsp lemon zest  
50 g sugar (1.8 oz)  
100 g powdered sugar (3.5 oz)  
2 eggs

### FIRST LAYER - COOKIES

In a large bowl stir to combine graham cracker crumbs, sugar, and melted butter. Line a baking pan (25 cm x 20 cm or 10-inch x 8-inch) with baking paper. Press the mixture into the bottom (and sides) of the prepared pan. Place in the fridge for 20 minutes.

### RHUBARB

First clean and prepare your rhubarb. Remove all the leaves because they are inedible. Roughly chop the rhubarb on 5 cm (2-inch) slices. Pour 100 ml (1/2 cup) boiling water into a small cup. Add the hibiscus tea and set aside for 1 - 2 minutes. Add sugar, lemon juice, vanilla seeds, empty vanilla pod and strained hibiscus tea to a saucepan. Place over high heat, bring to a boil, then add your sliced rhubarb. Cover with a lid and remove from the heat. Leave the mixture to cool to room temperature, then transfer to a fridge, until both the rhubarb and rhubarb syrup are completely cold. Preheat your oven to 160 °C / 320 °F.

### CREAM CHEESE

Add your cream cheese to a bowl of a stand mixer (fitted with the whisk attachment) or to a large bowl. Beat the cream cheese until completely smooth. Add the sour cream, lemon juice, lemon zest, sugar, powdered sugar, eggs, vanilla seeds and a pinch of salt to the cream cheese and beat to get a nice, creamy, smooth cheesecake mixture.

### BAKE AND COOL

Pour filling on top of the prepared crust, and spread evenly. Lightly tap on the countertop to release air bubbles. Place in

1/2 vanilla pod (or 1/2 tsp vanilla extract)

1 pinch of salt

#### TOOLS AND EQUIPEMENT

bowl

pan 25 cm x 20 cm or (10-inch x 8-inch)

baking paper

cutting board

kitchen knife

saucepan

electric mixer or stand mixer

the preheated oven and bake for 35 - 40 minutes at 160 °C / 320 °F or until the edges have set and the middle is still slightly jiggly. Don't worry, the cheesecake bars will firm up as they cool. Remove the cheesecake bars from the oven, and leave to cool to room temperature. Then refrigerate for at least 30 minutes (or overnight).

#### SERVE

Transfer the cheesecake to a cutting board and slice the slabs into squares. Serve with cold rhubarb slices and rhubarb syrup. Store in a fridge for up to three days.