

# Holiday Pumpkin Cheesecake with Pumpkin Seed Brittle

©2008, Scott Duncan

## *For pumpkin seed brittle:*

½ C sugar

½ C water

¾ C raw pumpkin seeds (pepitas)

## *For crust:*

1 ½ C chocolate wafer crumbs

½ C pulverized walnuts

½ t cinnamon

1 stick butter, melted

## *For filling:*

24 oz. (3- 8oz. pkgs.) cream cheese, room temperature

1 ½ C sugar

4 eggs

15 oz. canned pumpkin

½ C sour cream

½ t cinnamon

¼ t ground cloves

¼ t ground allspice

1 t vanilla

## *To make brittle:*

Grease a baking sheet and set aside. Combine sugar and water in saucepan and place over medium heat. Swirl gently until desired caramel color is achieved. Add pumpkin seeds and immediately remove from heat, stirring vigorously. Quickly pour onto greased baking sheet and spread out. Set aside to cool.

Preheat oven to 325°. Place spring form pan on a double layer of heavy duty aluminum foil and fold up the outsides to seal the base.

## *To make crust:*

Combine chocolate crumbs, walnuts, and cinnamon in mixing bowl. Add melted butter and stir to combine. Press crust evenly into a 9" spring form pan. Use a measuring cup to press into corner and up the sides (*I usually get about ½ way up the sides with the crust*). Place pan in refrigerator for 5-10 minutes to set crust.

## *To make filling:*

Place room temperature cream cheese in mixing bowl and beat on low speed until smooth (1-2 minutes). Add one egg at a time, fully incorporating before adding next egg. Add sugar and sour cream. Beat on medium speed for 2-3 minutes. Add pumpkin and stir mix well. Add cinnamon, ground cloves, ground allspice, and vanilla. Mix until incorporated.

Pour filling into crust and place spring form into a roasting pan. Fill roasting pan with hot water until half-way up the side of the cheesecake pan.

Bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes. The cheesecake should still be jiggly in the center. Remove the roasting pan from the oven and leave cheesecake in water bath for 30 minutes. (The carryover heat will help the cheesecake set without overcooking). Remove cheesecake pan from water bath and loosely cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate for a minimum of 4 hours.

To plate, remove plastic wrap and run a knife around the inside rim before releasing the spring. Transfer to serving platter. Break pumpkin seed brittle into shards. Take ¼ of the brittle and break into small pieces (2-4 seeds per piece) and sprinkle over the top of the cheesecake. Place remaining shards around the base of the cheesecake for presentation.

Serves 12.