

IRISH COFFEE CHEESECAKE

Irish whiskey and espresso flavor the delicious filling, encased in an oatmeal cookie crust.

10 servings

Oatmeal Crust.

- ½ 12½-ounce package crisp oatmeal cookies
- 1 tablespoon firmly packed dark brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- 3½ tablespoons well-chilled unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

Coffee Filling

- 24 ounces cream cheese, room temperature
- 1 cup plus 2½ tablespoons firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 4 eggs, room temperature
- 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons coffee liqueur
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- 5 teaspoons instant espresso powder
- 7 tablespoons Irish whiskey

Topping

- ¾ teaspoon instant espresso powder
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon whipping cream
- 1½ cups chilled whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons sugar

Chocolate coffee beans

For crust: Preheat oven to 325°F. Lightly butter 9-inch springform pan. Finely grind cookies, sugar and cinnamon in processor. Add butter and process until crumbs hold together. Press into prepared pan, covering bottom and extending 1½ inches up sides. Bake until crust darkens slightly, about 8 minutes. Cool completely.

For filling: Preheat oven to 325°F. Blend cream cheese and sugar in processor until smooth, stopping occasionally to scrape down sides of bowl. Mix in 1 egg, liqueur and vanilla. Dissolve instant espresso powder in whiskey in large bowl. Stir in cheese mixture. Whisk in remaining 3 eggs 1 at a time. Pour filling into cooled crust. Bake until outer 2 inches of cake, are firm and slightly puffed, about 45 minutes (center will appear moist and edges may crack slightly). Internal temperature should be about 150°F. Cool to room temperature on rack. Refrigerate until well chilled. Cover with plastic wrap and let mellow for 1 to 2 days.

For topping: Dissolve instant espresso powder and ½ teaspoon sugar in 1 tablespoon cream in small bowl. Beat 1½ cups cream and 2 tablespoons sugar in large bowl until peaks form. Fold in espresso mixture.

Serving: Remove plastic wrap and pan sides from cake. Spread top with whipped cream topping and garnish with coffee beans. Can be prepared 3 hours ahead and refrigerated. Let stand at room temperature 15 minutes before serving.