

ARIZONA REPUBLIC

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2015 R1

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Food & Dining

MICHELLE DUDASH DISH WITH DUDASH

A good cheesecake under 200 calories? Yes, it is possible



I love a good cheesecake, so I created a solution for the next time I'm craving a slice of heaven that still satisfies with a more responsible nutritional profile — fewer than 200 calories.

In vanilla cheesecake bars with orange, yogurt replaces half the cream cheese, which reduces the saturated fat and calorie content. I created this recipe for siggi's, an Icelandic style of yogurt known as skyr, which contains more protein than sugar. The brand's vanilla flavor has the perfect balance of sweetness, tartness and simple ingredients, such as real vanilla beans, and not a lot of sugar.

I'm able to use less sugar in this recipe by infusing it with fresh orange, which adds a bright, natural sweetness and a hit of acidity to this lightened-up dessert. This dessert is a real crowd-pleaser.

Dudash is a registered dietitian, chef and publisher of a healthy eating newsletter, michelledudash.com.

Vanilla Cheesecake Bars With Orange

Servings: 16.
Prep time: 25 minutes, plus cooling time.
Cook time: 30 minutes.

For the crust

7 sheets graham crackers made with whole grains (or 1½ cups fine crumbs)
½ teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons virgin coconut oil, plus extra for coating the pan (see notes)

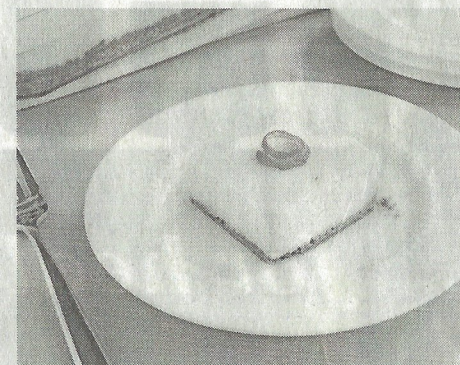
For the filling

1 (8-ounce) package light cream cheese, room temperature
2 (5.3-ounce) siggi's vanilla yogurt cups (or 1¼ cups)
½ cup granulated raw sugar (evaporated cane juice)
1 medium orange, zest finely grated and ¼ cup juice
3 large eggs
3 tablespoons unbleached all-purpose flour
Preheat oven to 350 degrees and rub a 9-inch-

by-9-inch pan with a thin coat of coconut oil. Place the pan on top of a sheet pan or jellyroll pan.

To make the crust: Whir the graham crackers and salt in a food processor until they reach the consistency of fine crumbs. With the motor running, drizzle in the oil and mix until blended completely. Spread crumbs evenly into the pan and ½ inch up the sides. Press crumbs firmly. Bake until fragrant and surface appears dry, about 11 minutes.

To make the filling: Beat the cream cheese with a mixer's paddle attachment on high speed or whisk until smooth. Add yogurt, sugar and orange zest and juice, and beat until smooth. On low speed, whisk in the eggs one at a time until incorporated completely, scraping the sides and bottom of bowl after adding each egg. Add flour and stir just until incorporated. Pour the filling into the slightly cooled or cooled crust and place the pans in the oven. Pour hot water into the sheet pan, making a water bath. Bake for 10 minutes, then reduce heat to 325 degrees and bake until only the center jiggles when shaken gently, about 20 more minutes. Cool completely. Chill for at least 4 hours. Cut into 16 bars.



MICHELLE DUDASH

Yogurt replaces half the cream cheese in this vanilla cheesecake bars with orange recipe.

Notes: If you don't have coconut oil, substituting with butter or trans-fat-free baking sticks will also produce good results.
Per serving: 180 calories, 8 g total, 4 g saturated fat, 49 mg cholesterol, 335 mg sodium, 21 g carbohydrates, 2 g fiber, 5 g protein.