

PUMPKIN PRALINE CHEESECAKE - Judy Spears

45 gingersnap cookies

1/4 cup softened margarine or butter

Four 8-ounce packages cream cheese, softened

1 cup packed light brown sugar

3 tablespoons flour

2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

1 1/2 teaspoons ground ginger

1 teaspoon ground allspice

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

3/4 teaspoon salt

4 large eggs

One 16-ounce can solid pack pumpkin (not pie mix) (2 cups)

1/3 cup sugar

One 3-ounce can pecans (1 cup), chopped

1 tablespoon light corn syrup

1. Place gingersnap cookies, in batches, in heavy-duty closed plastic bag and, with rolling pin, roll cookies into fine crumbs or use a food processor. You should have about 2 1/2 cups of crumbs.
2. In a 9-by-2-inch springform pan, with hand, mix cookie crumbs and margarine or butter and press mixture onto bottom of pan.
3. Preheat oven to 350. In large bowl, with mixer at medium speed, beat cream cheese just until smooth; slowly beat in brown sugar, scraping bowl often with rubber spatula. Add flour, cinnamon, ginger, allspice, vanilla extract, salt, eggs and pumpkin. Beat three minutes, occasionally scraping bowl.
4. Pour cream cheese mixture into crust. Bake cheesecake for 1 hour. Turn off oven; let cheesecake remain in oven 1 hour. Remove cheesecake from oven; cool completely in pan on wire rack. Cover and refrigerate at least six hours or until well chilled.
5. Meanwhile, make praline. In 1-quart saucepan over low heat, heat sugar and 3 Tablespoons water until sugar dissolves, stirring gently. Increase heat to medium and boil rapidly without stirring until syrup turns a light golden brown, about six minutes.

6. Working quickly, stir in chopped pecans and spread praline in a thin layer on cookie sheet.

7. Cool praline, then chop into small pieces.

8. Store praline in tightly covered container until ready to use.

9. When cheesecake is firm, with spatula loosen pan side from cheesecake and remove; loosen cake from pan bottom; slide onto plate. Gently spread corn syrup on top of cake and sprinkle with praline.