raspberry cheesecake COOKIES (crumbl copycat)

A plate of graham cracker cookies with cheesecake frosting and fresh raspberry jam and berries berries

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***Raspberry Cheesecake Cookies****are a fresh take on your favorite cheesecake! With a thick and chewy graham cracker base, layered with a cool and refreshing creamy cheesecake frosting, and topped with a decadent Fresh Raspberry Sauce, you won’t be able to stop yourself from enjoying these!  Inspired by Crumbl, these gourmet cookies are an indulgent treat that combines the classic flavors of cheesecake and raspberry in a deliciously unique way. These cookies are one of the most-requested by family and friends - soft and chewy, with just the right amount of fresh tart sweetness! So fast and easy to make, it’s easy to see why these are always a favorite for special occasions and everyday treats!*

**INGREDIENTS**:

**GRAHAM CRACKER COOKIE BASE**:

1 large egg (room temperature)

½ cup (1 sticks) unsalted butter (softened)

¾ cup (165g) light or dark brown sugar

¼ cup (50g) granulated sugar

1-1/3 cups (160g) all-purpose flour

1-1/4 cups (150g) graham cracker crumbs (plus an extra ½ cup (60g) for rolling dough)

1 Tablespoon cornstarch

1 Tablespoon milk powder

¾ teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon baking powder

½ teaspoon salt

1 Tablespoon light corn syrup

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

**CHEESECAKE FROSTING**:

8 ounces cream cheese (softened)

4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter (softened)

4 cups (480g) powdered sugar

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste

Pinch of salt

**FRESH RASPBERRY SAUCE**:

2 cups (12 ounces) fresh raspberries

½ cup granulated sugar

1/3 cup water

1 Tablespoon fresh lemon juice

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1 Tablespoon cornstarch

1 Tablespoon water

1 Tablespoon butter (salted or unsalted)

**HOW I MAKE THESE**:

1. Set egg and butter out to come to room temperature (this helps them incorporate into the cookie dough better).
2. **PREPARE GRAHAM CRACKER COOKIE BASE**: In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, graham cracker crumbs, cornstarch, milk powder, baking soda, baking powder and salt until well combined; set aside.
3. In a large bowl using a hand-held mixer or stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter and both sugars on medium speed until completely creamy and fluffy (about 3-4 minutes).
4. Scrape down the sides and add in the egg, beating well until fully mixed in.
5. Add corn syrup and vanilla extract; beat until well blended.
6. Scrape down the sides and add in the flour mixture, ½ at a time, mixing just until blended; add remaining flour mixture and again mix just until blended. This cookie dough will be soft and creamy!
7. Using a large cookie scoop (3 Tablespoon size), scoop out cookie dough and roll into a ball with your hands, roll each cookie dough ball in graham cracker crumbs and place on a baking sheet that has been lined with parchment paper. Repeat with remaining dough, cover and refrigerate for one hour.
8. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line baking sheets with parchment paper; set aside.
9. Place six cookie dough balls on each baking sheet, leaving room between each cookie as the cookies will spread slightly when they bake.
10. Flatten the cookie dough balls by pressing gently with your hand to about ¾-inch thickness.
11. Bake for 11-12 minutes or until the top and edges are just set and no longer glossy. Every oven is a little bit different, so watch your first batch when baking and time accordingly. **DO NOT OVERBAKE**, as these will lose their softness.
12. Remove from oven and allow cookies to cool on the baking sheets for 10 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.
13. **PREPARE CHEESECAKE FROSTING**: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, combine the softened butter and cream cheese, beating until light and fluffy.
14. Add powdered sugar and slowly mix until well blended. Add pure vanilla extract and a pinch of salt and beat on medium until light, fluffy and well combined, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary.
15. The Cheesecake Frosting should be the perfect consistency for spreading, but if needed, add half & half or heavy cream, 1 tablespoon at a time, until frosting is piping consistency. If your frosting is too thin, add a little bit of powdered sugar and beat until light and fluffy.
16. **PREPARE FRESH RASPBERRY SAUCE**: In a medium saucepan, add the fresh raspberries, sugar, water and lemon juice. Stir to combine and heat over medium-high heat until the mixture comes to a boil. Reduce heat to medium, and stir frequently until the raspberries have broken up. (I use a potato masher to smash the berries while cooking.)
17. Reduce heat to low and add the pure vanilla extract.
18. In a small bowl, stir the cornstarch and ½ tablespoon of water. Slowly pour the cornstarch mixture into the saucepan. Stir and boil over medium-low heat for 3-4 minutes or until the sauce starts to thicken.
19. Remove from heat, add the butter and stir until melted and well blended. Remove from heat and cool before using. NOTE: You can prepare the Fresh Raspberry Sauce ahead of time and refrigerate.
20. **ASSEMBLE COOKIES:** Spoon Cheesecake Frosting into a large piping bag fitted with a large round tip (or you can simply cut the end off the piping bag so that you have a 1/2-inch opening.
21. Once cookies have reached room temperature, pipe the frosting onto cookies, starting in the center of the cooking and piping in a circular motion until the cookie is covered evenly.
22. Top with a spoonful of Fresh Raspberry Sauce on the top of each cookie. Cover and chill in the fridge until ready to serve.
23. The Fresh Raspberry Sauce and Cream Cheese Frosting both need to be refrigerated. Assembled cookies should be covered and stored in the fridge until ready to serve.
24. These cookies are best served slightly chilled. Remove from the fridge 10-15 minutes before serving so that the Cheesecake Frosting has a few minutes to soften to the perfect texture. You can also serve these directly from the refrigerator if you prefer chilled cookies.
25. Store cookies in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3-4 days – if they last that long!

**YIELD**: Makes 15 (three-inch) cookies

**RECIPE NOTES**:

**WEIGH INGREDIENTS CAREFULLY FOR BEST RESULTS:** If I can only share one baking secret with you, always use a DIGITAL KITCHEN SCALE. You *can* use measuring cups and spoons for most recipes, but using a digital scale makes for the more consistent and efficient baking. Take this from someone that bakes A LOT!

**CAN I USE RASPBERRY JAM INSTEAD OF MAKING FRESH RASPBERRY SAUCE?** Yes - if you want something simple and are running short on time, you can definitely cut corners and use raspberry jam or preserves - **BUT** this homemade Fresh Raspberry Sauce only takes about 10 minutes to prepare, and really takes these cookies to the gourmet level!

**DON’T OVERBAKE**: For soft and chewy cookies, remove the cookies from the oven when the edges are set but the centers look *slightly*underdone. Don’t worry! They will continue to bake and set-up as they cool on the cookie sheets – giving you a perfectly soft and chewy texture!

**TO KEEP THESE COOKIES FRESH:** Frosted cookies will stay soft, chewy and fresh for up to 3 days in an air-tight container kept in the refrigerator. To prevent the Fresh Raspberry Sauce from “bleeding” on top of the Cream Cheese Frosting, top with Fresh Raspberry Sauce right before serving. Fully decorated cookies (with Cream Cheese Frosting and Fresh Raspberry Sauce) should be refrigerated until ready to serve.

**MAKE AHEAD TIP:**  You can bake these cookies and freeze UNFROSTED for up to 2 months – simply defrost and then top with Cheesecake Frosting and add Fresh Raspberry Sauce before you plan on serving. The Cheesecake Frosting and Fresh Raspberry Sauce can be made ahead of time and refrigerated in airtight containers for up to 5 days, or freezer for up to 1 month. Baked and frosted cookies freeze well in an airtight container for up to 1 month.

**BEFORE FREEZING:** With frosted cookies, it’s important to **freeze** the cookie prior to placing them into a container so that the frosting remains intact.Place all frosted cookies on a parchment paper lined baking sheet and pop it in the freezer. Once the icing is set and hard (usually an hour) or the cookies are frozen solid, the cookies can be frozen in containers with parchment paper between layers.

**HOW TO THAW FROSTED COOKIES:** For frosted cookies or “served chilled” cookies, thaw them in the fridge and **NOT** at room temp. For chilled cookies, you need to maintain refrigeration throughout the thawing process up until the time you eat the cookie for food safety. To keep your cookies from getting soggy and frosting from losing shape and texture, remove from the freezer and place the unopened container in the refrigerator overnight to thaw, and top with Fresh Raspberry Sauce right before serving.

**CAN I MAKE GLUTEN-FREE RASPBERRY CHEESECAKE COOKIES?** You can easily make this recipe gluten-free by substituting your favorite 1:1 gluten free flour for the all-purpose flour - I use and recommend *King Arthur, Measure for Measure Flour* and *Bob's Red Mill Gluten Free 1-to-1 Baking Flour*. You will also need to replace the graham crackers with gluten-free graham crackers (made with a gluten free flour blend).  Most graham crackers are made with graham flour, wheat flour, or whole wheat flour and are not gluten-free—but fortunately, there are many gluten-free graham crackers available. Note that not all gluten-free grahams are not created equal when it comes to taste and texture – so make sure to substitute one that you have tried and like!

**RECIPE VARIATIONS**:

**BLUEBERRY CHEESECAKE COOKIES:** Substitute Fresh Blueberry Sauce for the Fresh Raspberry Sauce and top with fresh blueberries; Blueberry Pie Filling works well too!

**STRAWBERRY CHEESECAKE COOKIES:** Substitute Fresh Strawberry Sauce for the Fresh Raspberry Sauce and top with a fresh strawberry; Strawberry Pie Filling works well too!

**LEMON CHEESECAKE COOKIES**: Substitute Lemon Curd for the Fresh Raspberry Sauce; Lemon Pie Filling works well too!

**KEY LIME CHEESECAKE COOKIES**: Substitute Key Lime Curd or Lime Curd for the Fresh Raspberry Sauce

**MARGARITA (STRAWBERRY LIME) CHEESECAKE COOKIES**: Substitute Fresh Strawberry Sauce and Lime Curd for the Fresh Raspberry Sauce

**BLACKBERRY CHEESECAKE COOKIES**: Substitute Fresh Blackberry Sauce for the Fresh Raspberry Sauce; Blackberry Pie Filling works well too!

**RHUBARB RASPBERRY CHEESECAKE COOKIES**: Substitute Fresh Rhubarb Raspberry Sauce for the Fresh Raspberry Sauce

**CHERRY CHEESECAKE COOKIES**: Substitute Fresh Cherry Sauce for the Fresh Raspberry Sauce; Cherry Pie Filling works well too!

**HAZELNUT CHOCOLATE CHEESECAKE COOKIES**: Replace the Fresh Raspberry Sauce with Nutella or Chocolate Hazelnut Spread – simply warm 1 cup in a microwave save bowl until warm and pourable

**APRICOT CHEESECAKE COOKIES**: Substitute Apricot Preserves or Jam for the Fresh Raspberry Sauce (warm and stir until easily spoonable)

**SALTED CARAMEL CHEESECAKE COOKIES**: Replace the Fresh Raspberry Sauce with Ghirardelli Salted Caramel; sprinkle with sea salt on top

**REESE’S PEANUT BUTTER CHEESECAKE COOKIES**: Add ½ cup creamy peanut butter to the Cream Cheese Frosting and increase powdered sugar by ½ cup; replace the Fresh Raspberry Sauce with chopped Reese’s Miniature Peanut Butter Cups

**DULCE DE LECHE CARAMEL CHEESECAKE COOKIES**: Replace the Fresh Raspberry Sauce with Dulce De Leche Caramel

**CARAMEL PECAN TURTLE CHEESECAKE COOKIES**: Add ½ cup Ghirardelli Caramel Sauce and add an additional 1 cup powdered sugar to the Cream Cheese Frosting; replace the Fresh Raspberry Sauce with Ghirardelli Caramel Sauce; sprinkle with chopped pecans or chopped Chocolate Caramel Pecan Turtle candies

**OREO CHEESECAKE COOKIES**: Replace the graham cracker crumbs with Oreo Cookie Crumbs; add 1 cup crushed Oreos to the Cream Cheese Frosting and top with chopped Oreo Cookies

*Original recipe created by Snowflakes & Coffeecakes; published July 2023.*

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