



CHERRY CHEESECAKE BARS

From the *Centennial Collection (1981)* — revived in my kitchen, where heirloom recipes find their forever home.



Source: *Philadelphia Brand Cream Cheese Centennial Cookbook (1981)*

Inspiration: *Philadelphia Classic Recipes, 2001*

Prep Time: 20 minutes + Refrigeration | Bake Time: 35 min

Yield: 18 Servings

Recipe Description

Originally featured in the *Philadelphia Brand Cream Cheese Centennial Cookbook (1981)*, this Cherry Cheesecake carries with it a century of celebration — rich, smooth, and sweetly timeless. First baked to honor Philadelphia's 100th year, its lemon-kissed crust and creamy filling embody the golden age of classic desserts. Revived here in my kitchen, it's a tribute to nostalgia — the kind that warms the heart as much as the oven.

Ingredients

Crust

- 2 cups graham cracker crumbs
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup ($\frac{1}{2}$ stick) butter or margarine, melted

Filling

- 3 packages (8 oz each) Philadelphia Cream Cheese, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 eggs

Topping

- 1 can (20 oz) cherry pie filling

✿ Inveniam viam aut faciam.

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Directions

1. Prepare the Crust

Mix crumbs, sugar, and butter until combined. Press firmly into a 13×9-inch baking pan.

Bake at **325°F (160°C)** for 10 minutes. Cool slightly.

2. Prepare the Filling

Beat cream cheese, sugar, and vanilla with an electric mixer until smooth.

Add eggs, one at a time, mixing just until blended.

Pour over the crust and spread evenly.

3. Bake

Bake at **325°F (160°C)** for 35 minutes, or until the center is almost set.

Cool completely at room temperature.

4. Chill & Top

Refrigerate for at least 3 hours (or overnight).

Spoon cherry pie filling evenly over the cheesecake.

Cut into squares before serving.



Notes

- Chill the cheesecake completely before slicing for clean edges and the perfect creamy texture.
- Garnish with toasted almonds or heart-shaped pastry cutouts for a charming nod to the 1981 Centennial style.
- Keeps beautifully — refrigerate up to 3 days or freeze (without topping) for up to a month.