

HOLIDAY BAKING

Peppermint in black and white

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Winter's most festive flavor pairs with its favorite partner—chocolate—for desserts that will disappear from your table in minutes.

White chocolate peppermint cheesecake

SERVES 18 TO 20 | 2½ HOURS, PLUS 4 HOURS TO COOL

This party-size, extravagantly dense and creamy cheesecake comes from chef Peter Birk at Boka restaurant in Seattle. He infuses cream with fresh mint; we used extract for simplicity.

2 cups graham cracker crumbs
½ cup butter, melted
2¼ cups sugar, divided
2 lbs. cream cheese, at room temperature
5 large eggs, at room temperature
⅔ cup heavy whipping cream
4 oz. white chocolate, finely chopped and melted
1 tsp. peppermint extract
¾ cup flour, sifted
Finely crushed peppermint candies

- 1. Preheat** oven to 300° with 2 racks set on lowest rungs. Combine crumbs, butter, and ½ cup sugar in a bowl. Press over bottom and up sides of a 10-in. springform pan; set aside.
- 2. Blend** cream cheese and remaining 1¾ cups sugar in the bowl of a stand mixer on low speed (do not whip or add air). Add eggs, 1 at a time, scraping bowl between additions. Pour in cream, chocolate, and extract and mix just to blend. Mix in flour. Pour into prepared pan.
- 3. Put** a rimmed baking sheet on bottom rack and fill halfway with water. Set cake on rack above it. Bake until top is set but center still jiggles slightly when shaken, 1¼ to 1½ hours. Let cool on a rack 1 hour. Chill 3 hours and up to 3 days before serving. To serve, sprinkle with candies and cut with a hot, wet knife.

PER SERVING 412 CAL., 59% (244 CAL.) FROM FAT; 5.9 G PROTEIN; 27 G FAT (15 G SAT.); 38 G CARBO (0.4 G FIBER); 255 MG SODIUM; 127 MG CHOL.

