INDIRECT · MEDIUM

Burnt Basque cheesecake on the kamado, creamy inside

La Viña on the kamado: a near-burnt mahogany top and a wobbly, creamy centre. Indirect at 210°C, the Basque cheesecake that beats the home-oven version.



PREP	COOK	SERVINGS	TEMPERATURE
20 min	50 min	10	210 °C

Ingredients

- **1 kg** full-fat cream cheese (Philadelphia-style), at room temperature
- **5 ud** large eggs, at room temperature
- **30 g** plain flour (a veil, sifted)
- **1 cda** orange-blossom honey (optional, to round out the bitterness)
- **1 pizca** fine salt (lifts the cheese and the caramel of the burn)
- **300 g** white sugar
- **400 ml** double cream (35% fat)
- **1 ud** orange (fine zest, no white pith)
- **1 cdita** vanilla extract

Method

1 BRING EVERYTHING TO ROOM TEMPERATURE

An hour ahead, take the cream cheese, eggs and cream out of the fridge. This is the invisible step that decides the texture: cold cheese will not integrate and leaves lumps no amount of beating clears, and a lumpy batter bakes unevenly. The cheese should be soft and pliable, almost a paste, before you start beating.

2 SET THE DEFLECTOR AND STABILISE 210°C

Light the kamado, set the deflector (plate-setter) and stabilise the chamber at 210°C indirect. It takes 20-25 minutes. Do not load the cake until the thermometer holds at 210°C for 10 minutes: this cake lives on the initial heat burst, and an oven still climbing will not burn the top properly.

3 LINE THE TIN WITH CRUMPLED PAPER

Use a tall 23 cm springform tin. Crumple two large sheets of baking paper, dampen them slightly and squeeze so they mould, and line the base and sides letting them stand 5-6 cm above the rim. Those creases score the crust and cradle the cake as it rises and puffs in the oven.

4 BEAT THE CHEESE, SUGAR AND EGGS

Beat the cream cheese with the sugar and salt on medium until smooth and lump-free, 2-3 minutes. Add the eggs one at a time, fully integrating each before the next. Mix in the orange zest, honey and vanilla. Do not over-beat: aerating the batter traps bubbles that puff and crack the cake.

5 ADD CREAM AND FLOUR

Pour in the cream in a stream, beating on low until combined. Sift the flour over the top and fold it in gently, just until it disappears: the flour is only a veil that stabilises the centre, it should not be noticeable. Pour the batter into the lined tin; it should be loose and glossy.

6 BAKE 45-55 MIN WITHOUT LIFTING THE LID

Place the tin on the grate over the deflector and close the kamado. Bake 45-55 minutes at 210°C without lifting the lid. It is ready when the top is dark mahogany, almost burnt, and the centre wobbles like a barely-set flan when you shake the tin. It looks raw and that is exactly the point: the centre sets as it cools.

7 COOL, THEN CHILL BEFORE SLICING

Pull the cake with gloves and let it cool in the tin at room temperature for 1 hour; it will sink a little and settle. Then refrigerate at least 3-4 hours, ideally overnight. Straight out it is too loose to slice and the flavour of the burn has not settled. Unmould using the paper itself and serve at a gentle room temperature.

Editor's tips

- An independent chamber probe (Inkbird) at grate height is more reliable than the dome gauge, which reads the air under the lid, not next to the tin. At 210°C, thirty degrees of drift is the difference between a mahogany burn and either a set centre or a pale top.
- The centre must wobble when you pull it, full stop. This is the mistake that ruins a Basque cake: you leave it until it sets for fear it is raw, and out comes a plain firm cheesecake. Pull it when the edges are firm and the middle jiggles; the custard sets itself as it chills.
- Smoke has no place here. The Basque cake is cheese, cream and the caramel of the burn: the kamado's clean charcoal already lends a subtle toasted backdrop. Do not add wood chunks; a cheese dessert with smoke tastes of forgotten barbecue, not complexity.

Gear for this recipe

Monolith Classic Pro 2.0

mikamado.es/en/kamados/monolith-classic-pro-2-cart

Kamado Joe Big Block XL lump charcoal 9.1 kg

Clean lump with no off-flavours to mask the cheese at 210 °C.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/kamado-joe-big-block-xl-lump

Inkbird IBT-4XS Bluetooth thermometer

Keep track of the steady 210 °C the creamy centre needs.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/inkbird-ibt-4xs

IBILI 650223 Stainless Steel Springform Cake Tin, 23 cm

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/ibili-650223-molde-desmontable-23

Full recipe at: mikamado.es/en/recetas/cheesecake-vasco-quemado-kamado

As an Amazon Associate, mikamado.es earns from qualifying purchases. At no extra cost to you.