



# *Mango Sticky Cheesecake*

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*Where creamy indulgence drifts into  
coconut-scented bliss.*

# *Vibes - Cheesecake Part 1*

## Where it came from

Cheesecake goes back farther than anyone expects—ancient Greece had early versions made with soft cheese, honey, and wheat. But the dessert we recognize today didn't crystallize until cream cheese arrived in the late 1800s in the United States. From New York delis to Midwest potlucks, cheesecake became a symbol of celebration: rich, smooth, a little tangy, and endlessly adaptable.

## Why it endures

Cheesecake is beloved because it rides the line between indulgent and comforting. It can be elegant or homey. It works with fruit, chocolate, spices, nuts, or global flavors—matcha, guava, ube, dulce de leche, miso caramel. Its genius is that it says “yes” to almost anything.



# *Cheesecake Part 2*

## Why It Matters

Cheesecake is a dessert that brings people together—birthday tables, holidays, late-night slices in a quiet kitchen. In your fusion, it becomes a creamy anchor: the familiar base that lets the mango and coconut shine without losing their roots.

## Modern Takes

Today's cheesecake world stretches from no-bake bars to brûléed tops, swirl cakes, vegan tofu versions, basque burnt cakes, and global mashups. Bringing Thai dessert logic into cheesecake? That's exactly the kind of joyful remix modern desserts are built for.

# Vibes – Mango Sticky Rice

## Where It Comes From

*Mango sticky rice—khao niao mamuang*—is a classic Thai dessert built on seasonal timing. When the sweetest yellow mangoes flood the markets during the hot season, families and street vendors pair them with sticky rice cooked in coconut milk. It's a dish rooted in harvest, climate, and everyday celebration.

## What Makes a Mole a Mole

It's the perfect balance Thai cuisine is famous for: the perfume of ripe mango, the creamy richness of coconut milk, the soft chew of sticky rice. It's refreshing, comforting, and deeply tied to warm-weather joy. Even people who've never heard of it taste it once and instantly get why it's a staple.

# *Mango Sticky Rice Part 2*

## Why It Matters

Mango sticky rice is hospitality in dessert form—simple ingredients elevated through care, timing, and balance. When its flavors drift into a cheesecake, they bring their warmth with them: coconut aroma, fruit brightness, and that gentle glow that defines Southeast Asian sweets.

## Modern Takes

From coconut-infused sticky rice bowls to ube-sticky rice, pandan sticky rice, fried sticky-rice bites, and deconstructed plated versions in fine dining, mango sticky rice has traveled far outside Thailand. Folding its flavors into cheesecake is a natural next step—familiar enough to feel cozy, different enough to feel exciting.

# Grandpa Bill's Lab Notes

Grandpa Bill didn't believe in recipes — he believed in ratios, rhythm, and sharing what works. This turkey & mole dish follows that same spirit. You're not chasing exactness; you're chasing balance: texture, heat, aroma, and what the moment calls for. The lab notes are here so you can riff, adjust, and pass it on your own way.

This turkey and mole are all about depth — slow smoke, warm spice, and that long-simmered flavor that unfolds in layers. The idea came from wanting the smoke of the turkey to meet the richness of a real mole, where the chiles, seeds, and cacao make the bird taste bigger than it looks. It's a pairing built on contrast and harmony at the same time.

Grandpa Bill would tell you to trust your senses more than your timer — when the kitchen smells right and the sound of the sizzle changes, you're close.

# Lab Notes

## On making cream cheese

There's something beautifully old-school about making your own cream cheese. You heat the dairy, add your acid, strain, and watch it turn from liquid to silk. It's simple kitchen alchemy. The only real trick is patience — give it time to split cleanly and drain long enough so the final filling holds its shape. Homemade cream cheese is naturally softer and tangier than store-bought, but that's part of its charm; you can taste the ingredients instead of preservatives. Note: I accidentally got heavy cream instead of milk for this and ended up with something more like marscapone. This is actually a totally valid choice, you'll just end up with a softer, more custardy consistency. Pro-tip is to use half cream cheese and half marscapone.

## On texture and balance

This dessert lives in the overlap between creamy, chewy, and bright. Sticky rice adds body, mango brings lightness, and the dairy holds everything together. If the batter feels too loose, let it chill; if the rice feels clumpy, warm it a little before folding it in. Everything needs just enough structure to slice clean but enough softness to feel lush on the spoon.

# Lab Notes

## On the crust

I tried a Rice Krispies crust first, and I'll be honest — it didn't hold. It tasted fun, but the moment the filling hit it, the crunch disappeared like a dream you forgot when you woke up. So I switched to a crust built from toasted rice flour, coconut, sesame seeds, brown sugar, and butter — something that actually belongs next to mango and sticky rice. Toasting everything makes the flavor deeper and the texture sturdier, and it keeps the crust crisp instead of turning soggy under the creamy filling. It's culturally closer, structurally better, and just tastes more intentional.

## On mangoes

Mango in November isn't peak season, so frozen or bagged fruit is often sweeter and more consistent than anything at the grocery store. Dice it small so it distributes evenly instead of sinking to the bottom, and don't be afraid to salt it lightly — salt wakes up tropical fruit the same way it wakes up tomatoes.



# Lab Notes

## *On the Bain-Marie*

A bain-marie sounds fancy, but it's really just you showing the cheesecake a little respect. Cheesecake hates aggressive heat; it likes a warm hug, not a blast furnace. The water bath keeps the temperature gentle and humid so the filling sets slowly and evenly instead of curdling at the edges and cracking down the middle like it's questioning its life choices. If you're using a springform pan, wrap it tight in foil so you don't end up steaming your crust by accident. The goal isn't to drown the cake — it's to protect it. Think of the bain-marie as training wheels for heat: it stops the oven from throwing surprises at you and helps the cheesecake finish silky instead of sad.

# Ingredients - Mole Sauce

- Homemade cream cheese/marscapone (from ½ gallon whole milk/heavy cream + lemon juice)
- 2–3 large eggs
- ½–1 cup sugar (adjust to taste — mango varies)
- 1 cup cooked sticky rice (warm or room temp so it folds in cleanly)
- 1–1½ cups diced mango (fresh or frozen, thawed and drained)
- ½ cup coconut milk or coconut cream
- Pinch of salt
- Splash of vanilla (optional)
- ¾ cup rice flour (toast lightly for best flavor)
- ½ cup shredded coconut (toasted or untoasted)
- 2–3 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds (black or white)
- 3–4 tablespoons brown sugar
- 6–8 tablespoons melted butter
- Pinch of salt
- Tiny splash (¼ teaspoon max) sesame oil (optional, for aroma)
- Large roasting pan
- Hot water
- Foil (if using a springform pan)

# Cooking Instructions

## *Make the crust*

Toast the rice flour, coconut, and sesame seeds lightly until they smell warm and nutty. Stir in brown sugar and melted butter until the mixture feels like damp sand and holds when pressed. Add the tiniest splash of sesame oil if you want the aroma to come forward. Press the crust firmly into the base of your pan — use a glass or measuring cup to really compact it — and bake it briefly so it sets and develops a little color. Let it cool completely before adding the filling.

## *Make the filling*

Blend your homemade mascarpone-style cheese with sugar, eggs, coconut milk, a pinch of salt, and a splash of vanilla if you're using it. Fold in the warm or room-temp sticky rice so it distributes instead of clumping, then gently stir in the diced mango. The filling should be smooth, glossy, and pourable but not thin. If it feels too loose, chill it briefly to let the fats tighten.

# Cooking Instructions

## *Make the cheese*

Warm your dairy gently until it's steaming — not boiling — then stir in lemon juice and a pinch of salt. If you're working with milk (or milk mixed with cream), the acid will pull it into clear curds and whey. If you're using heavy cream, it won't form big curds; it will thicken softly, like it's just beginning to separate. Strain both the same way and let it rest overnight. Either version works for this recipe as long as you drain it well; one gives you a firmer set, the other gives you a more luxurious, custardy texture.

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## *Assemble*

Pour the filling over the cooled crust and smooth the surface. Give the pan a few taps on the counter to knock out any trapped air bubbles so the cheesecake bakes evenly.

## *Prep the Bain-Marie*

Set your cheesecake pan inside a larger roasting pan. Fill the outer pan with hot water until it comes halfway up the sides of the cheesecake. Wrap your pan in foil first if it isn't watertight — the bain-marie should steam the cheesecake gently, not soak the crust.

# *Cooking Instructions*

## *Bake*

Bake until the outside edges look set and the center still has a soft wobble. Don't wait for a firm center; it will finish setting as it cools. Turn off the oven, crack the door, and let the cheesecake ease down in temperature gradually to keep the top smooth.

## *Chill*

Let the cheesecake come fully to room temp, then chill it in the fridge for several hours or overnight. This rest tightens the structure, marries the mango and coconut with the mascarpone base, and protects the crust from softening.

## *Finish*

Add diced mango, a drizzle of coconut cream, toasted sesame seeds, or nothing at all. Serve chilled enough to hold its shape but not so cold that the textures mute.