

# Savory smoked salmon cheesecakes offer a flavorful gluten-free bite

By Susie Iventosch



Smoked Salmon Cheesecakes

Photos Susie Iventosch

I wanted to come up with a savory salmon cheesecake recipe and this is so delicious and festive for the holidays. Most of the recipes for salmon cheesecake are not really a cheesecake at all, but rather a salmon cheese spread. This one is actually baked just like a regular cheesecake made with cream cheese, egg and plain yogurt. The aroma as these tarts bake in the oven is so alluring. Some of my very favorite flavors grace this dish, including smoked salmon, pecans, Gruyere and Boursin cheese, shallots and fresh dill. This list of ingredients might help explain why they taste so yummy!



Daughter Courtney fills tart pans.



The pecan crust pairs perfectly with the salmon and also helps keep this dish gluten-free. Besides, toasted pecan crust is fabulous. This recipe could also be good for anyone on a Keto diet, due to the egg, cheese, pecans, etc. ... all ingredients with high fat content. I used the nova smoked salmon for these cheesecakes, but we also plan to try it with some regular smoked flaky salmon to see if there is any difference in flavor. The way these turned out

is really tough to beat, though, so thinking we will like the nova salmon better.

I made these cheesecakes in 4-inch tart pans with the removable bottom, but if you plan to make them as appetizers to pass around for holiday parties, you could always use the mini muffin tins so they would truly be bite-sized. If you do that, be sure to adjust your baking time. Have fun with this recipe. It's so delicious!

## Smoked Salmon Cheesecakes

(Makes six 4-inch mini tarts)

### INGREDIENTS

#### Pecan Crust

1 cup pulverized toasted pecans

1 1/2 tbsp. melted butter

1/2 tsp. salt

#### Smoked Salmon Cheesecake Filling

4 oz. cream cheese, softened to room temperature

2 oz. Boursin Garlic & Fine Herbs cheese

1 large egg

1/3 cup plain Greek yogurt (I use nonfat)

1 tsp fresh dill, snipped

1 small shallot, finely chopped

3 oz. smoked Nova salmon, shredded into small pieces

1/4 cup Gruyere cheese, grated

1/8 tsp. white pepper

Garnishes: fresh dill sprigs and long, thin cucumber slices rolled into spirals.

### DIRECTIONS

#### Pecan Crust

Spray the bottoms and sides of the tart pans with cooking spray or rub all over with butter. Preheat oven to 350 F.

Toast pecans in 350 F oven for about 5-7 minutes, or just until very aromatic and beginning to brown. Set aside to cool. Place cooled pecans into the bowl of your food processor and pulse until very finely chopped but be careful not to turn them into a paste.

In a separate bowl, mix processed pecans, melted butter and salt.

Divide this mixture evenly among the 6 tart pans and press down with the back of a spoon to smooth out into an even layer at the bottom of each pan. Set aside while you make the filling.

#### Smoked Salmon Cream Cheese Filling

In a medium mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and Boursin cheese until smooth and fluffy. Add egg and continue to beat just until incorporated. You don't want to over beat, because that can cause cracks in the filling.

Stir in yogurt, fresh dill, shallots, smoked salmon, grated Gruyere, and white pepper. Evenly distribute the filling mixture among the 6 tart pans, and carefully spoon on top of the crust. Smooth out with a spatula.

Bake at 350° F for approximately 30-35 minutes, or until the center is barely jiggly and the edges look done. Remove from oven and cool for at least 15 minutes to allow to set up before serving. Serve warm, cold or at room temperature.

Garnish with thinly sliced cucumber rolls and a sprig of fresh dill.



Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). This recipe can be found on our website: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com) If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977. Or visit <https://treksandbites.com>

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## Sleep disorders & memory

By Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC

### A Typical 8 Hour Sleep Cycle

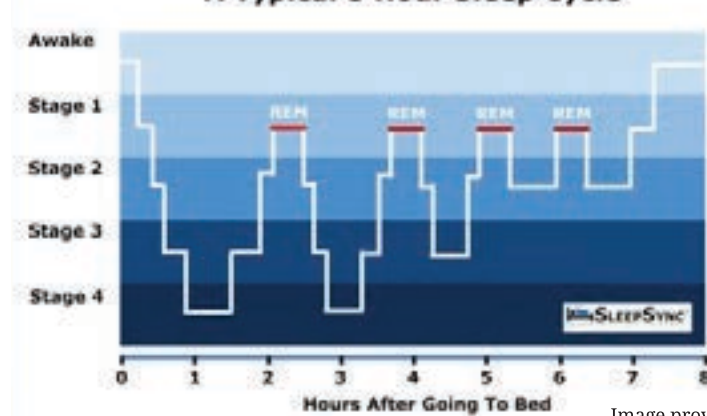


Image provided

Trouble sleeping? Discovering what is keeping you from getting 7-8 hours of sleep should be a priority. Long-term disturbances in sleep can lead to problems with age-related health decline. Bad sleep – linked to increased age-related discomfort and pain – also causes beta-amyloid to build up, which harms brain function and is associated with Alzheimer's disease. It can also hurt your immune system, increase your chance of illness, and prolong recovery time.

Memory and the importance of sleep might be the number one reason you want to work on getting a good night's sleep.

Remembering takes: Acquisition/Encoding – learning or experiencing something new (at this point memories are highly vulnerable to being forgotten); Consolidation (during sleep) – the memory becomes stable in the brain.

(New memories get integrated into already existing knowledge networks in the brain – so you can recall them later); and Recall/Retrieval – having the ability to access the memory in the future.

Both acquisition and recall are functions that take place when you are awake. However, researchers believe sleep is required for consolidation of a memory, no matter the memory type. Without adequate sleep, your brain has a harder time absorbing and recalling new information.

Sleep also helps remove toxic proteins, which if allowed to accumulate in the brain can clog and kill healthy neurons as well as the memories they store, according to research by NIH. These are the "amyloid" proteins that build up in the brains of those with Alzheimer's disease.

REM sleep is important in that it is critical to procedural

learning. And slow wave sleep is the period of deep sleep when the brain begins to sort through, recognize, and consolidate declarative or factual information that you acquired during the day. Before the memory is filed, it is evaluated for its relevance to what else you might know. If what you heard, read or experienced is not relevant to you now, you probably will not remember it.

Remember sleep aids and prescriptions sedate and truly do not lead to healthy sleep. There are some natural herbal supplements that can help and we will discuss those in a free Zoom class, "The Elusive Thing Called Sleep," at 11 a.m. Nov. 10 on how you can become a detective to your sleep issues and impart ideas for a good night's sleep. To receive a link to the recording of this workshop email me at [Lindafj620@outlook.com](mailto:Lindafj620@outlook.com).

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### Below are listed articles from respected sources and one sleep program promoted at Stanford.

- <https://medicine.yale.edu/news-article/sleeps-crucial-role-in-preserving-memory/>
- <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/want-to-improve-your-memory-get-a-good-nights-sleep-2021040222255>
- <https://www.webmd.com/sleep-disorders/sleep-deprivation-effects-on-memory>
- <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/how-sleep-works/memory-and-sleep>

## Take the pledge to reduce single-use plastics!

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Bring reusable shopping bags to the store

Take a reusable cup to the coffee shop

Shop at local refill stores to reduce plastic

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Sustainability in Action

Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority