

Food professional Sharon Tyler Herbst of Greenbrae won third prize in the 1986 Courvoisier Culinary Mini-Classic cooking competition for her Cream Cheesecake with Suzette Sauce.

Baked like a custard, this Cognac-flavored cheesecake is decadently rich and creamy, crowned with a delicious orange sauce.

COURVOISIER-CREAM CHEESECAKE WITH SUZETTE SAUCE

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 8-ounce packages cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- Finely-grated rind of $\frac{1}{2}$ small orange
- Pinch salt
- 4 eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Cognac
- $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups sour cream
- Suzette Sauce (recipe follows)

INSTRUCTIONS: Preheat the oven to 325°. Butter a 1½- to 2-quart souffle dish; set aside.

Beat cream cheese, sugar, orange rind and salt together in a large mixing bowl until perfectly smooth. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add Cognac and sour cream; beat to combine.

Turn into the prepared dish. Set dish in a large, shallow baking pan; place in preheated oven.

Pour hot water into pan so it reaches halfway up side of dish. Bake 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Turn oven off. Let cheesecake stay in oven with door closed for 30 minutes. Remove from oven and place on a rack to cool.

After 1 hour, run a thin kitchen knife between dish and cheesecake. Cool to room temperature. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

To serve, invert cheesecake onto a serving plate. Spoon $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Suzette Sauce over top, allowing excess to drizzle down sides and pool around base. Serve remaining sauce on the side. Serves 8.

SUZETTE SAUCE

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups sweet orange marmalade
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup orange-flavored liqueur
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Cognac
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cold butter

INSTRUCTIONS: Combine marmalade, liqueur and Cognac in a small saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until marmalade melts and mixture is blended.

Remove from heat; add butter and stir briskly until butter melts. Serve barely warm or at room temperature. Makes about $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups.