TORTE MONTEROSA (JOHANNISBEERTORTE / RED CURRANT CHEESECAKE)

INGREDIENTS for the base layer 1 1/2 cups lemon wafer cookie crumbs 1/4 cup sugar 1/3 cup butter, melted

for the lemon cream layer

1 cup plain yogurt

3/4 cup sugar

2 packages powdered gelatin

8 oz quark

8 oz cream cheese, room temperature

1/2 teaspoon lemon extract
juice of 1 lemon

1 cup heavy cream

1 tablespoon whipped cream stabilizer

for the currant cream layer

1 cup plain yogurt
3/4 cup sugar
2 packages powdered gelatin
8 oz quark
8 oz cream cheese, room temperature
1/2 cup red currants, pureed and seeds strained off
1 cup heavy cream
1 tablespoon whipped cream stabilizer

for the gelee layer and decoration
2 ounces water, boiling hot
1 1/2 teaspoons powdered unflavored gelatin
8 ounces currant juice (alternatively, use pomegranate juice)
2 teaspoon sugar
1 pint champagne or red currants (or mixed) to garnish

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 375F. Grease a 9 inch spring form pan with butter one third of the way up the sides.

Combine wafer crumbs, sugar and melted butter in a bowl and combine until it looks like course sand. Put into spring form pan and push firmly into the bottom only (it will only be a little bit up the side). Bake 12-15 minutes or until the top starts to brown a bit. Let cool completely.

To make the lemon layer: Soak gelatin in cold water. Heat the yogurt until not quite at a boil; mix in gelatin. Let cool to room temperature. Whip quark and cream cheese with sugar, lemon extract and lemon juice. Whip heavy cream with stabilizer until stiff peaks begin to form. Combine yogurt mixture with cheese mixture and finally, fold in (very carefully!) the whipped cream. Spread cream evenly and place in the fridge for about 2 hours.

After 2 hours, make the second cheesecake layer. Soak gelatin in cold water. Heat the yogurt until not quite at a boil; mix in gelatin. Let cool to room temperature. Whip quark and cream cheese with sugar and red currant puree. Whip heavy cream with stabilizer until stiff peaks begin to form. Combine yogurt mixture with cheese mixture and finally, fold in the whipped cream. Spread cream evenly over the lemon layer and place in the fridge for another 2 hours.

To make the gelee layer: Stir the gelatin and hot water together until the gelatin has dissolved. Pour the pomegranate juice and sugar into the mixture and stir. When the cheesecake has firmed up, pour the gelee over the top and let set another 30-45 minutes. Garnish liberally with currants.