Prep Time	25 minutes
Cook Time	0 minutes (no-bake)
Chill Time	4 hours minimum (overnight recommended)
Total Time	4 hours 25 minutes
Difficulty	Easy
Cuisine	American
Course	Dessert

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Why You’ll Love This Recipe

Cheesecake in a Jar takes everything wonderful about classic cheesecake — the buttery graham cracker crust, the tangy-sweet creamy filling — and packages it into individual jars. No water bath, no oven, no cracking worries. Each jar is a self-contained serving, making this ideal for picnics, potlucks, lunchboxes, and gifting. You can make them days ahead, and they travel beautifully.

Ingredients

For the Crust

- 1½ cups graham cracker crumbs (about 11–12 full sheets, crushed)
- 3 tablespoons granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon (optional)
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

For the Cheesecake Filling

- 16 oz (2 blocks) full-fat cream cheese, softened to room temperature
- ¾ cup granulated sugar

- ½ cup full-fat sour cream, room temperature
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- ⅛ teaspoon fine salt
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream, cold

Optional Toppings

- Fresh berries (strawberries, raspberries, blueberries)
- Fruit compote or jam
- Whipped cream
- Crushed graham crackers or cookie crumbs
- Chocolate shavings or caramel drizzle

Equipment

- 6 (8-oz) mason jars with lids
- Hand or stand mixer
- Medium mixing bowl
- Rubber spatula
- Piping bag or zip-top bag (optional, for neat layering)

Instructions

Step 1: Make the Crust (5 minutes)

In a medium bowl, stir together the graham cracker crumbs, sugar, and cinnamon if using. Pour in the melted butter and mix until the crumbs resemble wet sand and hold together when pressed.

Step 2: Press the Crust (5 minutes)

Divide the crumb mixture evenly among the 6 jars (about 3 tablespoons each). Using the back of a spoon or a small flat-bottomed glass, press the crumbs firmly into an even layer at the bottom. Set jars aside.

Step 3: Beat the Cream Cheese (3 minutes)

In a large bowl, beat the softened cream cheese and sugar with a mixer on medium speed until completely smooth and lump-free, about 2–3 minutes. Scrape down the bowl.

Step 4: Add the Flavorings (2 minutes)

Beat in the sour cream, vanilla, lemon juice, and salt on low speed until just combined. Do not overbeat.

Step 5: Whip the Cream (3 minutes)

In a separate chilled bowl, whip the cold heavy cream on medium-high speed until stiff peaks form, about 2–3 minutes. Watch closely — it goes from soft to over-whipped quickly.

Step 6: Fold Together (2 minutes)

Gently fold one-third of the whipped cream into the cream cheese mixture to lighten it, using a slow, folding motion with a spatula. Fold in the remaining whipped cream in two additions, just until no white streaks remain. Stop as soon as it’s combined to keep the filling fluffy.

Step 7: Fill the Jars (3 minutes)

Spoon or pipe the filling over the crust in each jar, dividing evenly and leaving about ½ inch of headspace. Smooth the tops with the back of a spoon.

Step 8: Chill (4 hours minimum)

Seal the jars and refrigerate for at least 4 hours, or overnight for the best texture. The filling needs this time to set firmly and for the flavors to meld.

Step 9: Finish and Serve (2 minutes)

Just before serving, top with berries, compote, whipped cream, or a sprinkle of crumbs. Serve chilled.

Recipe at a Glance: Time & Intensity

Step	Time	Intensity Level
Make crust	5 min	Low
Press crust	5 min	Low
Beat cream cheese	3 min	Medium
Add flavorings	2 min	Low
Whip cream	3 min	Medium-High (watch closely)
Fold together	2 min	Gentle / Low-Medium
Fill jars	3 min	Low
Chill	4+ hours	Hands-off
Finish & serve	2 min	Low

Total active time: ~25 minutes | Overall effort: Easy

Nutrition Information

Per serving (1 jar, without optional toppings):

- Calories: ~510 kcal

- Total Fat: 39 g
- Saturated Fat: 23 g
- Cholesterol: 115 mg
- Sodium: 300 mg
- Total Carbohydrates: 34 g
- Sugars: 25 g
- Protein: 6 g