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Let Them Eat Cheesecake!

Forget the stodgy old pudding; make this year's Christmas dessert memorable with the English Cheesecake Company

By Emily Hirschmann

For me, the traditional Christmas Pudding has always been an anomaly; it's nice enough on a cold winter's night, but after a full Christmas dinner where your greedy eyes have stretched the capacity of your belly to extremes? No. It's the last stodge that breaks the bariatric band. But to go without dessert at Christmas? Not to be borne! It's time to seek out a lighter, but equally extravagant alternative.

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The good people of the English Cheesecake Company have been producing delectable desserts for more than 15 years, so are, naturally, not unknown to us Culinary Guide gluttons. This year, however, they have added to their already scrumptious stable with the production of Cheesecake Minis and the Christmas collection is not to be sniffed at... drooling, licking and consuming would be a far more sensible course of action.

Gorgeously presented, the Minis come in an array of salivary-glad-seducing flavours, twisting time-honoured Christmas classics into something entirely, enticingly new. With Mince Pie, Brandy Snap and Gingerbread Man inspired cheesecakes sitting demurely besides the zingy Cranberry & Lime combo, the sultry After Dinner Mint and the child-attracting Snowball, there is likely to be more than one Mini to suit every family member. The Raspberry Pavlova is my personal favourite; beautifully balancing flavours and textures to create one perfect moment of pure indulgence. For the chocolate-lover however, the Star Gazer offers sheer melt-in-the-mouth goodness that is difficult to rival, meaning that sharing is not an option.

Available in a box of twelve, English Cheesecake Company Christmas Mini's will finish off any family meal with style, as well as making the perfect festive office treat. For me though, they are at their very best when hidden away at the back of the freezer for personal alone-time excess and secret consumption. Creamy and bursting with flavour, with a crumbly, biscuit crunch... Now I come to think of it, I'm not sure that the rest of the family would like them anyway!

The English Cheesecake Company Christmas Minis retail at a bargainous £36 for a box of twelve. For more information, or to order online, visit www.englishcheesecake.com

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