

Downchild's new LP nothing new

by Gary P. LeBlanc

The **Downchild Blues Band** is most enjoyed when taken in proper perspective. They are an over-hyped, over-rated, quite average blues band. Competent, mind you, but not made of the stuff of greatness. The main reason **Downchild** is so popular is that they are the only Canadian band to play blues exclusively with 'big money' behind them. The T.V. exposure received years ago didn't hurt either. Other bands just as deserving of attention are certainly **Success Without College**, **Cameo Blues Band**, and even the **Dutch Mason Blues Band**.

But I'm on the Guest List is Downchild's first live release and ninth album to date. This LP is respectfully dedicated to Jane Vasey, their pianist who died of leukemia last summer.

There is nothing here to disap-

point Downchild fans, the band providing such signature tracks as 'Caledonia', 'Flip, Flop and Fly', and their own 'I Got Everything I Need (Almost)'. For many bands, a live album is an obvious commercial move when a vinyl release is due and there's little or no new material available. Such is not entirely the case with Downchild. As the eight previous albums are studio recordings, a live one gives fans a testament of what Downchild does most - play live. In fact, they boast doing about 300 gigs a year, which by any standards is a formidable undertaking.

At any rate, 'But I'm on the Guest List' is an excellent live recording, done over three dates last August at Toronto's El Mocambo, most famous for hosting the **Rolling Stones** pub gig in 1976.

Though Downchild succeeds in winding up the audience through musical sensationalism, the album doesn't leap off the turntable in a fit of excitement. The band is tight and all the songs adequately executed. The lead breaks on guitar, harmonica and piano are merely OK, nothing awe inspiring.

Downchild appears to have reached their uppermost limits as a band. Only three original cuts made it onto this record, and Downchild offers nothing in the way of developing a musical style that essentially has not changed in at least 20 years. Their rehashing of old blues songs is not refreshing, let alone new. Our own local **Willy Hop** (mostly former **Water St.** members) seems to carry that much more vitally, making the blues a reminiscently nostalgic experience.



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Food 101: Easy-to-Make Desserts

CHEESECAKE ON REQUEST

This cheesecake is so easy you'll almost be embarrassed to give in to the many requests you'll get for this recipe.

Preparation time: 15 minutes
Cooking time: 20 to 30 minutes

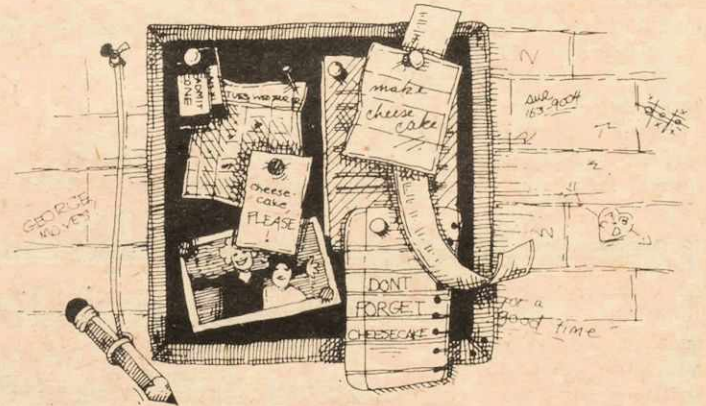
Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

Melt in a small pot over medium heat:
1/3 cup (80 mL) butter or margarine

Combine in a small bowl:
1 1/2 cups (375 mL) graham wafer crumbs
1/4 cup (60 mL) icing sugar
melted butter or margarine
Press mixture into bottom of a pie pan. Set aside.

Beat until fluffy in a large bowl:
1 lb. (0.5 kg) cream cheese, at room temperature
2 eggs
1 tsp. (5 mL) vanilla extract
Pour over crumb mixture.
Bake for 25 to 30 minutes.

Cool and serve.



Don't Start Without:

- large bowl
- pie pan
- small bowl
- small pot
- large spoon
- measuring cup
- measuring spoons

Helpful Hints:

- If the cheese is not at room temperature, leave it on the counter for a while. Hard cheese won't combine with other ingredients smoothly.
- Cake is done when center doesn't jiggle.

Serving Ideas:

- Can be served plain or garnished with fresh fruit (on top).
- Any beverage, hot or cold, will complement cheesecake.

Recipe extracted from **FOOD 101: A STUDENT GUIDE TO QUICK AND EASY COOKING** by Cathy Smith, available at your bookstore or from The Canadian Student Book Club, 46 Harbord St, Toronto Ontario M5S 1G2 for only \$7.95