

Incredibly Moist Carrot Cake Recipe

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 45 minutes

Total time: 1 hour 5 minutes

This cake is incredibly moist and light. It's up to you when it comes to the grated carrots. You can hand grate for the finest carrot pieces that sort of melt into the cake batter. A food processor makes quick work of grating carrots, but the pieces will be slightly larger. This is what we do and find it works really well in the cake. A third option is to use pre-grated carrots from the store. They work very well and help with prep time.

This cake recipe is very forgiving. You can make this with or without nuts and raisins. We like using both granulated and brown sugar in this -- you could just use granulated sugar, though.

Yield: 1 (9-inch) double layer cake (or, 24 cupcakes*see Notes section)

For the Carrot Cake:

- 2 cups (280 grams) all-purpose flour, we use Gold Medal
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1-1/4 cups (295 ml) canola or other vegetable oil
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 cup (200 grams) lightly packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 large eggs
- 3 cups (300 grams or 5 to 6 medium) grated peeled carrots
- 1 cup (100 grams) coarsely chopped pecans
- 1/2 cup (65 grams) raisins, optional



For the Cream Cheese Frosting:

- 16 tablespoons unsalted butter (2 sticks)
- 3 cups confectioners' sugar (12 ounces)
- 1/3 cup buttermilk powder
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 12 ounces cream cheese (1-1/2 packages)
- 2 cups pecans (8 ounces)

Directions

1. Heat the oven to 350° F. Grease two 9-inch by 2-inch cake pans and line the bottom with parchment paper then grease the top of the paper. Or, grease and flour the bottom and sides of both pans.
2. **Prepare Cake Batter:** In a medium bowl, whisk flour, baking soda, salt and the cinnamon until well blended. In a separate bowl, whisk the oil, sugars and vanilla. Whisk in eggs, one at a time.

3. Switch to a large rubber spatula. Scrape the sides and bottom of the bowl then add the dry ingredients in 3 parts, stirring gently until they disappear and the batter is smooth. Stir in the carrots, nuts and raisins, if using them.



4. **Bake Cake Layers:** Divide the batter between the prepared cake pans. Bake until the tops of the cake layers are springy when touched and when a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean; 35 to 45 minutes.
5. Cool cakes in pans for 15 minutes then turn out onto cooling racks, peel off parchment paper and cool completely.
6. **Make Cream Cheese Frosting:** While the cake is cooking, toast your pecans and chop them coarsely. Cut your cream cheese into 12 equal-size pieces, but keep it refrigerated until you are ready to use in step 3. Add the butter, sugar, buttermilk powder, vanilla extract and salt to the bowl of a standing mixer. Mix using the paddle attachment on low-speed for 2 minutes; scrape down the bowl as necessary. Increase mixer speed to medium-low, then add cream cheese one piece at a time. Mix for 2 minutes until the frosting is smooth.



7. **Frost Cake:** When the cake layers are completely cool, frost the top of one cake layer, place the other cake layer on top. Decoratively swirl the top of the cake with remaining frosting, leaving the sides unfrosted. Scatter nuts on top.

Notes and Tips

Preparing the Cake Pans: Even though it is a bit time consuming, don't skimp on prepping the pans. It's never fun to find your cake layer is stuck to the bottom of your pan. (If this does happen to you, leave the cake pan upside down and allow gravity to do its thing).

How to Make Carrot Cake Cupcakes: For cupcakes, we'd recommend baking for 14 to 18 minutes (or until a tester inserted into the center of one comes out clean). Then let them cool for a few minutes in the cupcake pan before transferring them to a cooling rack.

We use kosher salt. If you don't have it on hand, keep this in mind: 1 teaspoon fine sea or table salt = about 1 1/4 teaspoons kosher salt.

CARROT SALAD

Total Time: 13 min Prep: 5 min Cook: 8 min

Yield: :4 servings

6 large carrots, peeled
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon salt, plus more for water
1/4 cup olive oil
1/4 cup finely chopped flat-leaf parsley

Directions

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the whole carrots (cut them in half if they don't fit in the pot) and cook until just cooked through, about 8 to 10 minutes. Drain and cut carrots into 1/2-inch thick slices. Whisk together the lemon juice, garlic, cumin, cayenne, and salt in a large bowl. Slowly drizzle in the olive oil until emulsified and stir in the parsley. Add the cooked carrots and toss to combine. Serve cold or at room temperature.

Recipe courtesy of Bobby Flay



PEAS WITH LETTUCE & CARROTS

Makes: 8 servings

Prep: 10 mins

Cook: 10 mins

Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 3 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves
- Salt and pepper
- 2 10 ounce packages thawed frozen peas, drained
- 1/2 head iceberg lettuce, thinly sliced

Directions

1. In a large deep skillet, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the carrots, onion, garlic, bay leaf and 1 tbsp. thyme; season.
2. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the carrots and onions begin to soften, about 5 minutes.
3. Stir in the peas and lettuce.
4. Cook, stirring often, until the lettuce begins to wilt and the peas are heated through, about 4 minutes.
5. Discard the bay leaf. Sprinkle with the remaining 1 tbsp. thyme. Serve immediately.



ROASTED BRUSSELS SPROUTS

Prep: 15 m

Cook: 45 m

Ready In: 1 h



"This recipe is from my mother. It may sound strange, but these are really good and very easy to make. The Brussels sprouts should be brown with a bit of black on the outside when done. Any leftovers can be reheated or even just eaten cold from the fridge. I don't know how, but they taste sweet and salty at the same time!"

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 pounds Brussels sprouts, ends trimmed and yellow leaves removed
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F (205 degrees C).
2. Place trimmed Brussels sprouts, olive oil, kosher salt, and pepper in a large resealable plastic bag. Seal tightly, and shake to coat. Pour onto a baking sheet, and place on center oven rack.
3. Roast in the preheated oven for 30 to 45 minutes, shaking pan every 5 to 7 minutes for even browning. Reduce heat when necessary to prevent burning. Brussels sprouts should be darkest brown, almost black, when done. Adjust seasoning with kosher salt, if necessary. Serve immediately.

SHREDDED RAW BRUSSEL SPROUTS WITH PECORINO, LEMON AND OLIVE OIL

NOTES

This is a hearty raw salad, This works well as a packed lunch as well since the brussels sprouts won't wilt.

RECIPE DIFFICULTY Level: EASY SERVES: 2 PREP TIME: 5 MINS

SALAD

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 LB BRUSSELS SPROUTS, END TRIMMED
- 1 SMALL CLOVE GARLIC
- 1 SHALLOT
- 1 LEMON, JUICED
- 3 TBS OLIVE OIL
- 1/4 CUP PECORINO ROMANO
- 1/4 CUP TOASTED PINE NUTS

INSTRUCTIONS

Wash and dry brussels sprouts. Cut off the bottom of each one and discard. With a sharp knife, hold sprout with flat side down on cutting board and slice each sprout as thinly as possible. You can use a mandolin for this, but be careful!

Mince shallot and garlic clove, add to sprouts. Squeeze juice of one lemon over sprouts and drizzle with olive oil and stir until the greens are well-coated. Crack pepper and sea salt on top.

Using a micro-grater, grate cheese on top of salad, toss to combine. Add as much cheese as you fancy.

Optional: toast a few pine nuts and toss them on top.



ULTRA CREAMY MASHED POTATOES FROM SWANSON^(R)

Prep: 15 m

Cook: 20 m

Ready In: 35 m

"The secret to making these potatoes extra-flavorful is cooking them in chicken broth. They're mashed until perfectly smooth and creamy, with just the right amount of butter and cream to make a savory side everyone will enjoy."

Ingredients

- 2 cups Swanson^(R) Chicken Broth or Swanson^(R) Certified Organic Chicken Broth or Swanson^(R) Natural Goodness^(R) Chicken Broth
- 6 Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1/2 cup light cream
- 2 tablespoons butter

Directions

1. Heat the broth and potatoes in a 3-quart saucepan over medium-high heat to a boil.
2. Reduce the heat to medium. Cover and cook for 10 minutes or until the potatoes are tender. Drain the potatoes well in a colander, reserving the broth.
3. Mash the potatoes with the reserved broth, the cream and butter. Season to taste.



PARMESAN-ROASTED POTATOES

SERVINGS: 8

Cooking the potatoes on a wire rack lets hot air circulate around them, so they get extra crisp.

Ingredients:

- 3 pounds baby Yukon Gold potatoes, halved
- ½ cup olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4 oz. finely grated Parmesan
- ¾ cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

Recipe Preparation

- Place a rack in upper third of oven; preheat to 400°. Toss potatoes and oil in a large bowl; season with salt and pepper. Place potatoes, cut side up, on a wire rack set inside a rimmed baking sheet; reserve bowl. Roast until golden brown and cooked through, 30–35 minutes. Transfer to bowl; toss with Parmesan. Return potatoes to rack and roast until Parmesan is brown and crisp, 10–12 minutes.
- Toss potatoes in same bowl with parsley, lemon juice, and red pepper flakes. Top with lemon zest just before serving.



EASY POTATO SKINS RECIPE

Yield: 25 ROUNDS

Ingredients:

- 4 large baking potatoes (washed)
- 3 TB butter, melted
- 2 teaspoons of kosher salt
- 1 1/2- 2 cups of shredded cheddar cheese
- 7 slices bacon -cooked and crumbled (or 1/2 cup bacon bits)

Directions:

Pre-heat oven to 400°. Cover a baking sheet with foil and spray with non-stick cooking spray. Set aside. Wash potatoes and then cut the ends of the potatoes off and discard. Next cut the rest of the potatoes into approximately 1/2 inch slices.

Brush both sides and edges of the potatoes with butter and sprinkle with salt. Place on the foil covered pan and bake for 30 to 40 minutes, or until lightly browned. Turn potatoes onto the opposite side after about 15 minutes, to brown the other side.

When potatoes are done, top with cheese, bacon and green onions. Continue baking for 3-5 minutes, or until the cheese is nice and bubbly.

These also taste great topped with a little sour cream. Enjoy!



GRILLED SQUASH AND ZUCCHINI

"A refreshing summer vegetable medley."

Prep: 15 m

Cook: 30 m

Ready In: 45 m

Ingredients

- 1 yellow squash, sliced
- 1 zucchini, sliced
- 1 lemon, zested and juiced
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, cut into chunks
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon ground black pepper, or to taste
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper, or to taste

Directions

Preheat grill for medium heat and lightly oil the grate.

Place yellow squash and zucchini on a square of aluminum foil; sprinkle with lemon zest, lemon juice, and butter.

Season with salt, black pepper, and cayenne pepper. Wrap the aluminum foil over the vegetables.

Cook vegetables on the preheated grill until tender, about 30 minutes.



BAKED SPAGHETTI SQUASH WITH BEEF AND VEGGIES

"Baked spaghetti squash, peppers, and onions are mixed with beef and cheese in this delicious casserole."

Prep: 25 m

Cook: 1 h 25 m

Ready In: 1 h 50 m

Ingredients

- 1 spaghetti squash, halved and seeded
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1/2 cup diced green bell pepper
- 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1/4 cup diced red onion
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 1 (14.5 ounce) can Italian-style diced tomatoes, drained
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 1/4 cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese

Directions

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C).

Place squash on a baking sheet, and bake 40 minutes, or until tender. Remove from heat, cool, and shred pulp with a fork.

Reduce oven temperature to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Lightly grease a casserole dish.

In a skillet over medium heat, cook the ground beef until evenly brown. Drain, and mix in the green pepper, red pepper, red onion, and garlic. Continue to cook and stir until vegetables are tender.

Mix the shredded squash and tomatoes into the skillet, and season with oregano, basil, salt, and pepper. Cook and stir until heated through. Remove skillet from heat, and mix in 2 cups cheese until melted. Transfer to the prepared casserole dish.

Bake 25 minutes in the preheated oven. Sprinkle with remaining cheese, and continue baking 5 minutes, until cheese is melted.



GREENBEAN AND ARTICHOKE CASSEROLE

Or, as we used to call it as kids, "stringbean-artichoke thing" ...

Please make the effort to use fresh green beans if you can. Please do NOT use canned ones. This makes all the difference between a near-restaurant-quality dish and something you get at Aunt Matilda's house that's only okay. If you want to go to the effort of preparing fresh artichoke hearts, do go ahead but frozen ones work very well in this dish. The marinates ones in oil, not so much, but they'll do in a pinch.

Oh okay, and since I'm allowing frozen artichoke hearts, I suppose I will allow you to use frozen beans if you wish, while pointing out that fresh beans are always better. Don't try to get away with using canned. I'll know. (Canned vegetables, eww.)

- 2 lbs fresh green beans or French haricots verts; OR you can get away with frozen ones, but NOT canned.
- 1 9-oz. package frozen artichoke hearts. Do not use canned. I'll know.
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup Italian-seasoned bread crumbs
- 1 cup fresh grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 onion, finely diced
- 6 - 8 cloves garlic, minced
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

If you're using fresh green beans and you don't mind the extra labor, split them lengthwise (or use French-style if frozen). Cook the green beans in boiling salted water or steam until just tender. Medium-dice the artichoke hearts.

Saute the onions and garlic in the olive oil. In a large bowl, mix the beans, bread crumbs, cheese, hearts, and the oil with the onions and garlic. Season liberally with black pepper; salt to taste.

Put the mixture into a 9"x14" baking dish, and sprinkle the top with additional bread crumbs and cheese. Bake at 350 for 20 - 30 minutes.

