

Carrot Cake

(Gluten Free)

Serves 10-12

Hands-on Time 35 minutes (plus cooling)

Baking Time 1 hour 5 minutes (35 minutes for the cake)

Ingredients

- 200ml plus extra for greasing olive oil
- 2-3 medium-large carrots (at least 300g)
- 2 large oranges
- 150g pecan nuts
- 5 large eggs
- 230g plus ½ tbsp light brown sugar
- 250g ground almonds
- 30g cornflour
- 1/8 tsp fine salt
- 1 tsp ground cardamom (or mixed spice)
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 100g cream cheese
- 50g unsalted butter, softened
- 250g icing sugar

Equipment

- Scissors
- Baking parchment
- 2 x 20cm fixed or push-bottom cake tins
- Kitchen paper
- Baking sheet
- Vegetable peeler
- Knife
- Coarse grater
- Plate
- 2 mixing bowls
- Electric whisk
- Spatula
- Wire rack

Method

1. Prepare the Oven and Tins

- Preheat the oven to 170°C/150°C (fan)/325°F/Gas Mark 3.
- Cut two pieces of baking parchment into circles to line the bases of the cake tins.
- Grease the tins with olive oil and line with parchment.
- Line a baking sheet with parchment.

2. Prepare the Carrots, Oranges, and Pecans

- Peel and grate the carrots over a plate. Set aside 200g for the cake and place 50g on the lined baking sheet.
- Grate the zest of one orange over the carrots on the plate and the other over the carrots on the baking sheet.
- Roughly chop the pecans. Add 50g to the baking sheet mixture and 100g to the plate mixture.

3. Make the Cake Batter

- Separate the eggs into two mixing bowls.
- Add 200ml of olive oil and 130g of light brown sugar to the egg yolks. Beat with an electric whisk on high speed for at least 1 minute.
- Clean and dry the beaters. Whisk the egg whites until foamy, then gradually add 100g of light brown sugar until stiff peaks form.
- Add the ground almonds, cornflour, salt, cardamom, ginger, and 1½ teaspoons of cinnamon to the egg yolk mixture. Combine with a spatula.
- Add the 200g of grated carrot, orange zest, and pecans from the plate to the batter. Mix well.
- Fold in the egg whites in two batches until no streaks remain.

4. Bake the Cakes

- Divide the batter between the prepared tins and smooth the tops with a spatula. Tap the tins on the worktop to remove air bubbles.
- Bake on the middle shelf for 35 minutes. Let the cakes cool in the tins for 15 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

5. Prepare the Topping

- Reduce the oven to 100°C/80°C (fan)/210°F/Gas Mark ¼.
- Combine the 50g of grated carrot, orange zest, and pecans on the baking sheet with the remaining ½ teaspoon of cinnamon.
- Bake on the middle shelf for 40 minutes. Let cool, then mix in ½ tablespoon of light brown sugar.

6. Make the Cream Cheese Frosting

- In a clean mixing bowl, whisk the cream cheese and butter until thick and voluminous.
- Gradually add the icing sugar, whisking until smooth.

7. Assemble the Cake

- Place one cake layer on a serving plate. Spread half the frosting on top and sprinkle with half the baked topping.
- Add the second cake layer and gently press down.
- Spread the remaining frosting over the top and sprinkle with the rest of the baked topping.

Enjoy!