



## Carrot Cake

Carrot cakes are oil-based, and oil-based cakes are easy, which is why they became so popular. It's simply a matter of grating some carrots and measuring out the dry ingredients. There's no creaming of butter and sugar, no egg whites to whip, no sugar syrup for the frosting. It's a glorified quick bread. And it's healthy, right? Big wrong. Remember the oil? More often than not, carrot cakes are a greasy, dense cake laden with frosting and topped with garish exclamations of orange and misshapen squiggles of green. This cake rescues the carrot cake. It still contains oil, but as little as possible, and still stays moist.

Makes one 2-layer cake to serve 24

### INGREDIENTS

1 (8-ounce) can crushed pineapple in pineapple juice  
2¼ cups whole wheat pastry flour, plus more for dusting  
1¼ teaspoons baking powder  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 teaspoon fine sea salt  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
¼ teaspoon ground allspice  
¼ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg  
1 cup chopped pecans  
½ cup golden raisins  
1½ cups granulated sugar

3 large eggs  
½ cup canola oil  
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract  
3 cups grated carrots (4 to 6 medium)

### FROSTING

1 (8-ounce) package low-fat cream cheese, at room temperature  
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract  
Pinch of fine sea salt  
1 pound confectioners' sugar, sifted  
Pecan halves, for garnish

### METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray two 9-inch round cake pans with nonstick cooking spray. Line with parchment paper. Spray again, and dust with flour. Set aside.
2. Drain the pineapple in a sieve set over a bowl, pressing on the solids. Reserve the drained pineapple and pineapple juice.
3. In a large mixing bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, allspice, and nutmeg. Add pecans and raisins, tossing to combine and coat. (This will prevent the nuts and raisins from sinking to the bottom.) Set aside.
4. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine the sugar and eggs. Beat at low speed until well combined. Add the oil in a slow, steady stream, pausing as needed if the mixture starts looking too greasy and unincorporated until the mixture is smooth. Add the flour-nut mixture, vanilla, drained pineapple, and grated carrots. Mix on low speed until combined. Divide the batter evenly between the prepared pans.
5. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in the center of the layers comes out clean, and the sides start to pull away from the edges of pans, 35 to 40 minutes. Let layers cool in the pans for 10 minutes. Remove from the pans and place on wire racks, top-side down, to cool completely. Remove the parchment paper. Brush with reserved pineapple juice.
6. Meanwhile, to make the frosting, in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk or paddle attachment, combine the cream cheese, vanilla, and salt. With the mixer running on low speed, add the confectioners' sugar. Blend until smooth and consistent. Set the frosting aside, or refrigerate until ready to use.
7. Once the cake rounds have cooled completely, and when ready to frost, place the first layer on a cake stand or cardboard cake round, "top" side down. Using a small offset spatula, evenly cover the top of the first layer with about 1 cup of frosting. Spread the frosting so that it extends to the edge of the cake. Place the other cake layer, with the "top" side down, on top of the frosting; press to make it level. With the small offset spatula, spread the top of the cake with the remaining frosting. Garnish around the top with the pecan halves. Slice with a serrated knife and serve. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator up to 3 days.

*¡Buen Provecho!*