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Blissful buttermilk carrot cake bursts with flavor

By Susie Iventosch



Buttermilk Carrot Cake with Cream Cheese Frosting Photo Susie Iventosch

I just adore carrot cake. In fact, I've almost never met a carrot cake that I didn't love, but some are still better than others. It's really just a matter of degrees for me. But this one is my favorite and the best I've tasted yet! I found this one in my old recipe box and it came from my great aunt, who apparently brought it to many a family dinner. I can certainly see why. Made with buttermilk, it is both light and moist, and the fluffy cream cheese frosting is blissful!

When you make the cake batter, it will be very thick due to all of the goodies like raisins, nuts, pineapple, coconut and carrots in the batter. Don't worry it is a dense cake, bursting with flavor and crunchy bits in every bite.

This cake holds very well for a week or more in the refrigerator and makes a delightful snack for the mid-afternoon munchies. (I actually have a piece for breakfast now and then.) You can opt to make this cake as a 9x13 sheet cake or as a layer cake using either two 9-inch pans or three 8-inch pans. The only difference is that for a layer cake you might want to double the

frosting recipe, so you can plenty of the cream cheese frosting between the layers and over the entire cake. If layer cakes intimidate you, then just stick to the sheet cake and your guests will be just as happy!

INGREDIENTS

Buttermilk Carrot Cake

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 3/4 cup canola oil (or your favorite vegetable oil)
- 3/4 cup buttermilk (can be low-fat)
- 3 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups grated carrots (peel before grating)
- 1 flat can (8-oz.) crushed pineapple, drained
- 2/3 cup walnuts or pecans, quartered (not chopped)
- 6 ounces flaked coconut (optional)

Cream Cheese Frosting (double recipe for layer cakes)

- 1 8-ounce package cream cheese (full fat is better), softened to room temp
- 1 cube butter, at room temp (4 ounces)
- 4 cups powdered sugar, sifted
- 3 teaspoons vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS

Buttermilk Carrot Cake

Preheat oven to 350 F. Grease or spray a 9x13 inch baking pan. (You can also use three 8-inch or two 9-inch cakes pans. If you use round cake pans, dust with flour after spraying or grease the pans to help extract the cooked cakes from the pan.)

Sift flour, baking soda, salt and cinnamon together and set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, beat sugar with oil, buttermilk and vanilla. Beat in eggs, one at a time.

Add sifted dries and mix well. Then add the pineapple, carrots, coconut and nuts. Mix thoroughly with a wooden spoon. The batter will be very thick at this point.

Spoon batter into the prepared pans and bake for approximate 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Reduce baking time by about 10 minutes for round cake layer pans.

Cool completely before frosting. Meanwhile make frosting.

When ready to frost, simply spread the frosting over the top of the entire cake. If you're making layer cakes, then frost in between each layer and completely around the cake. If you aren't crazy about so much frosting on your layer cake, you can also make this as a naked cake, and just frost between the layers and on the top of the layer cake.

Cream Cheese Frosting

Place butter in the bowl of your mixer. Beat until creamy and fluffy, about 2-3 minutes. Add vanilla and sugar and beat until smooth. Now, add in the softened cream cheese. Adding the cream cheese last helps to keep the frosting from getting runny. If frosting is too thick, add a tiny bit of milk or cream, just a teaspoon at a time until it is a good spreading consistency. Conversely, if the frosting seems to soft to spread, add more powdered sugar, a tiny bit at a time.



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