



Carrot & Orange Cake

This carrot cake does not have any 'bits', which means there are no nuts or dry fruits. Let's be honest we all have friends and family who are not keen on the bits, especially the little ones.

The addition of the citrusy notes of orange makes it a perfect summer dessert. I revised my carrot cake recipe with walnuts and currants for one of my work colleagues' little birthday celebrations, and everyone has been enjoying this recipe ever since. It was such a hit that I am going to use this sponge in his wedding cake too.

Ingredients

For carrot and orange sponge

5 free range medium eggs
375g self-raising flour
1tsp baking powder
1.5tsp ground cinnamon
1tsp ground ginger
½ tsp ground nutmeg
275g caster sugar (or a mix of caster and brown, for more caramelly note)
Zest of 2-3 oranges
300g grated carrots
300g vegetable oil

Orange syrup

50g sugar
Juice of 2 oranges

For frosting

400g cream cheese
100g caster sugar
300g double cream
2tsp vanilla bean paste

To decorate

1-2 orange sliced

Method

Preheat the oven to 160°C (Fan). Grease and line two, 20cm cake tins.

Mix all the sponge ingredients in a large mixing bowl and mix well with a balloon whisk. Divide the batter equally into the prepared baking tins and bake in the preheated oven for about 50-60mins, or until a skewer inserted comes out clean.

Once the sponges are baked, let them cool in the tin for 10 mins. After that, remove them from the tins and place on a wire rack to cool completely.

Make a syrup by boiling 50g sugar and the juice of two oranges. Let the syrup come to room temperature, then drench the sponges in the syrup before sandwiching them with frosting.

To make the frosting, whisk all the ingredients together to create a spreadable mix. Use some more frosting along the side of the cake and smooth using a pallet knife. This cake has a semi naked look, so a thick coat of icing isn't necessary.

Decorate the cake with sliced oranges and some 'kisses' of piped frosting along the top of the cake.