

Autumn Carrot Cake



Ingredients for Cake

3 cups all-purpose flour

2-1/2 cups sugar

2 tsp. baking soda

1 tsp. salt

2 tsp. ground cinnamon

1/2 tsp. ground cloves

1/2 tsp. ground allspice

4 eggs

1-1/2 cups vegetable oil

2 tsp. orange extract

3 cups shredded carrots

1 cup unsweetened applesauce

3/4 cup chopped walnuts or pecans (optional)*

3/4 cup raisins (optional)*

Orange Cream Cheese Frosting

2 sticks butter, softened

16 oz. cream cheese, softened

4 cups powdered sugar

1 tsp. orange extract

Garnish

Fresh rosemary sprigs

Fresh figs

Fresh blackberries

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 F. Grease and lightly flour four 8-inch round cake pans; set aside. Combine flour, sugar, baking soda, salt, and spices in a large bowl; set aside. Crack eggs into a separate bowl and lightly beat. Pour in oil and orange extract; whisk well. Add carrots, applesauce, nuts, and raisins; stir to combine. Fold the wet mixture into the dry ingredients and stir just until the flour is no longer visible, being sure not to over-blend. Pour equal amounts of batter into the prepared cake pans.

Place cakes on two shelves in the oven and rotate halfway through the baking time. Bake for 18 to 20 minutes, or until a knife inserted into the center of each cake comes out clean. Leave cakes in pans for 10 minutes, then invert onto a wire rack and allow to cool completely.

Prepare the frosting by placing the butter and cream cheese into a medium mixing bowl and beating until well blended. Add sugar and orange extract; beat until the mixture has a creamy, smooth consistency. Cover and keep at room temperature until ready to frost.

Apply frosting to the top of each cooled cake and stack the layers together; cover the remaining cake with frosting. Refrigerate until ready to serve. If desired, garnish with fresh rosemary, figs, and berries.

* If nuts are omitted, reduce vegetable oil to 1-1/4 cups.

