

Carrot Cake with Fresh Orange Cream Cheese Frosting

For the Cake:

- 1 package (18.25 oz) plain yellow cake mix
- 1 package (3.4 oz) vanilla instant pudding
- 2/3 cup fresh orange juice
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 4 large eggs
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 3 cups grated carrots (5 medium carrots)
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts or pecans

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and grease and flour 1 13x9 inch pan, or two 9 inch round cake pans.

Place cake mix, pudding, orange juice, oil, eggs, and cinnamon in a large bowl and blend with an electric mixer on low for 1 minute to stir it all together. Increase the mixer speed to medium and beat for 2 minutes more. The batter should look thick and well blended. Fold in the carrots, raisins, and nuts with a rubber spatula and mix through. Place the batter in the prepared pans and bake - about 45-55 minutes for a 13x9 pan, and 30-35 minutes for 2 9 inch round pans. The cake will pull away from the sides of the pan and spring back in the middle when lightly touched. Cool them completely, then frost with Fresh Orange Cream Cheese Frosting.

Fresh Orange Cream Cheese Frosting

- 1 8oz package cream cheese, at room temperature
- 1 stick butter, at room temperature
- 3 cups confectioner's sugar
- 2 tbsp fresh orange juice
- 1 tbsp grated orange zest (from one medium orange)

Beat the cream cheese and butter together in a large mixing bowl on low speed until combined, about 30 seconds. Add the confectioners' sugar, a little at a time, until it's well combined (about 1 minute). Add the orange juice and zest, and increase the mixer speed to medium. Beat until the frosting lightens up and is fluffy, about 1 minute more.