

Incredible Carrot Cake

Use greased parchment paper to line cake pans if desired.

Cake:

1 cup coarsely chopped walnuts or hazelnuts
4 eggs
1 cup granulated sugar
1 cup dark brown sugar
1½ cups vegetable oil
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 tsp baking powder
1½ tsp baking soda
2 tbsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp salt
2½ cups grated carrots (about 5 medium carrots)
1 cup unsweetened crushed canned pineapple, undrained
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 cup dark raisins

Cream Cheese Icing:

1 lb/500g cream cheese, at room temperature
½ cup butter, at room temperature
Grated rind of 1 lemon
2 tbsp fresh lemon juice
2 cups icing sugar, sifted

Preheat oven to 350F.

Butter and lightly dust with flour three 9-inch/1.5 L cake pans.

Add walnuts to dry skillet over low heat. Cook, shaking at intervals, about 5 min. or until aromatic.

Using electric mixer, in large bowl, beat eggs until combined. Add sugars and oil. Beat until light and creamy.

Into separate bowl, sift flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon and salt. Stir into egg mixture until blended. Stir in carrots, pineapple, toasted nuts, vanilla and raisins.

Divide batter evenly among prepared pans. Bake 30 to 40 min. or until toothpick inserted in centre comes out clean. Cool 5 min. in pan. Invert onto wire racks. Cool completely.

Cream Cheese Icing:

Using electric mixer, beat cream cheese in large bowl until light and fluffy. Add butter, lemon rind and juice; beat until blended. Add icing sugar; beat until smooth.

Spread thin layer of icing over two cake layers. Place on top of each other; place third layer on top. Spread remaining icing over top and sides of cake.

Makes 12 to 16 servings.