

Carrot Cake

Turns out Mother loved cake. I don't know if she got a taste for it as she got older or if she had always loved cake but didn't allow herself to indulge too often. Possibly she decided that having Parkinsons was so rubbish, that she might as well eat cake whenever she liked. And good on her for that. I have to say I was delighted to eat cake with her. On my last visit before she passed away, I remember suggesting that maybe we should share a piece, which was frankly rejected as a ridiculous idea. So, we had a piece each.

I think Mother got the recipe for Carrot Cake when we lived in The States, when people in Britain hadn't quite grasped the fact that you could put vegetables in baking. Now, of course, it's common place. But still, fairly recently, I had a friend who told me how delicious my chocolate and zucchini cake was, until he found out that zucchini was courgette and then he wouldn't eat another bite. Nutter! (joj
o)

It's cake sized, so it serves 8, or 10, but maybe 6.

Ingredients and Method

Preheat oven to 180°C

2 cups of wholemeal flour (I use gluten free white flour and it works really well)

2 tsp baking powder

1.5 tsp baking soda

1 tsp salt

2 tsp cinnamon (personally I like my carrot cake with lots of spice so I add more and I also throw some mace or mixed spice in)

- Sift the above ingredients together into a large bowl.

2 cups brown sugar

1.5 cups peanut oil

4 eggs

- Beat together well, the above 3 ingredients in a separate bowl.
- Mix the 2 bowls together. Then stir in

2 cups grated carrot

227g can pineapple pieces (or crushed pineapple is fine too)

2 cups walnut pieces.

- The original recipe says to pour the mixture into 2 greased and lined cake pans and bake for 35 to 45 mins. (or longer if using gluten free flour). However, mother, and I, and no doubt Becca and Olly too, just use one large tin and then only put the icing on the top of the cake and not in the middle. Less faffing about, and just as delicious.

Cream Cheese Icing

This is a bit controversial. Becksy is probs going to tell me off, but I really don't think you need as much butter or icing sugar as this recipe suggests. I like the sharpness of the cream cheese and I think too much butter and sugar hides it. So, here's the recipe and you can decide how much butter and sugar to add. (jojo)

Top Tip – the butter must be lovely and soft. If it is not, you will get lumps of it in your icing that will be very difficult to get out.

Ingredients

455g icing sugar (sifted, definitely sifted, don't try and get out of it, sift it!)

115g butter (room temperature – this is summer time room temperature or winter time with a lovely roaring fire or delightful central heating. But this is definitely not, oh no I forgot to get it out of the fridge so I'll just stick it in the microwave room temperature – that is not room temperature, that is a puddle.)

227g cream cheese (I would recommend you go for Philadelphia; it has a certain freedom to it)

1 tsp vanilla essence

Zest of 1 Orange. (This is not in the original recipe; however, we live and learn and I think you'll find it's worth adding).

Method

Cream the SOFT butter with the cream cheese and vanilla (and orange zest if using). Slowly add the SIFTED icing sugar spoonful by spoonful. Spread over the cold cake, and decorate however you fancy. Bloody lovely!

