

Salted Caramel Carrot Cake: A Rich, Moist Dessert with the Perfect Sweet-Salty Finish

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OVEN
350°F

TIME
30 to 36 min

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INGREDIENTS

For the cake:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 3 cups finely grated carrots
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans or walnuts, optional

For the frosting:

- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 3 to 4 cups powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Pinch of salt

For the salted caramel finish:

- 1/2 cup caramel sauce
- 1/2 to 1 teaspoon flaky sea salt, to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Prep the pans: Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease and line two 8-inch round cake pans with parchment paper.
2. Mix the dry ingredients: In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, and nutmeg.
3. Mix the wet ingredients: In a large bowl, whisk together the oil, granulated sugar, brown sugar, eggs, and vanilla until smooth and well combined.
4. Finish the batter: Stir the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients just until combined. Fold in the grated carrots and nuts, if using.
5. Bake: Divide the batter evenly between the cake pans. Bake for 30 to 36 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let the cakes cool in the pans for about 10 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
6. Make the frosting: Beat the cream cheese and butter together until smooth. Add the powdered sugar gradually, then mix in the vanilla and a pinch of salt until fluffy.
7. Assemble the cake: Place one cake layer on a serving plate. Spread frosting over the top, add the second layer, then frost the top and sides.
8. Add the caramel finish: Drizzle caramel sauce over the top of the cake and let it gently run down the sides. Sprinkle with flaky sea salt just before serving.

SWAPS & NOTES

Finely grated carrots work best here because they melt more smoothly into the batter and keep the cake moist without creating stringy bites.

Chopped pecans or walnuts are optional, but they add a nice crunch that plays well with the silky frosting and caramel.

If you like a slightly richer flavor, you can swap part of the oil for unsweetened applesauce or sour cream.

For the caramel, a thick store-bought sauce works perfectly, though homemade caramel sauce gives the cake an even more bakery-style feel.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Do not overmix the batter once the flour goes in.

That is one of the easiest ways to end up with a denser cake.

Stir just until everything comes together, then stop.

Make sure the cake layers are fully cool before frosting.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

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