Carrot Cake

By

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The recipe for this lusciously moist carrot cake originally came from Judy Shilts, a longtime cook at Kegel's Inn. In 2005, a well-meaning customer furtively entered a cake based on the recipe in a Wisconsin State Fair dessert contest. It won a blue ribbon—but never got credited to Kegel's.





FOR THE CAKE:

Nonstick cooking spray
2 cups sugar
1 1⁄2 cups canola oil
3 eggs
2 cups flour
2 tsp. ground cinnamon
2 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. fine salt
1 8-oz. can crushed pineapple, undrained
1 7-oz. bag shredded sweetened coconut
1 cup finely chopped walnuts
2 tsp. vanilla extract
2 cups finely shredded carrots



FOR THE ICING:
2 1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
1 lb. cream cheese, softened
8 tbsp. unsalted butter, softened
1⁄2 tsp. vanilla extract

1. For the cake: Preheat oven to 350°. Spray a 9" × 13" pan with nonstick spray; set aside. Put sugar, oil, and eggs into a large bowl and whisk until well combined. Add flour, cinnamon, baking soda, and salt and stir with a wooden spoon until just mixed together into a batter. Add pineapple with juice, coconut, walnuts, vanilla, and carrots and gently fold together until combined. Transfer batter to prepared pan, smooth top with a rubber spatula, and bake until deep golden brown and a toothpick inserted in the middle of the cake comes out clean, 50–55 minutes. Set cake aside to let cool completely.

2. For the icing: Put sugar, cream cheese, butter, and vanilla into a large bowl and beat with an electric mixer until fluffy, 4–5 minutes.

3. To assemble: Spread the icing over the cooled cake to cover, creating swirls and whorls, if you wish. Refrigerate the cake until completely chilled, about 3 hours. Cut into 12 squares and serve chilled.