



## A rather pleasing carrot cake with lime mascarpone icing

This carrot cake is an exceedingly good cake made all the more pleasing by the twist of lime mascarpone icing. It's delicious, it works and it's better than any other carrot cake I've tried. I would normally bake this in a square or round cake pan, but for the picture I used a lovely old loaf pan and it came out looking gorgeous.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease and line a 9 inch square cake pan or a round equivalent with wax paper. Beat the butter and sugar together by hand or in a food processor until pale and fluffy. Beat in the egg yolks one by one, and add the orange zest and juice. Stir in the sifted flour and baking powder, and add the ground almonds, walnuts, spices and grated carrot and mix together well.

In a separate bowl, whisk the egg whites with a pinch of salt until stiff, then gently fold them into the cake mix. Scoop the batter into the prepared cake and cook in the preheated oven for about 50 minutes until golden and risen. You can check to see if the cake is cooked by poking a toothpick into it. Remove it after 5 seconds and if it comes out clean the cake is cooked; if slightly sticky it needs a bit longer, so put it back in the oven. Leave the cake to cool in the pan for 10 minutes, then turn it out on to a rack and leave for at least an hour.

Mix all the icing ingredients together and spread generously over the top of the cake. Finish off with a sprinkling of chopped walnuts.

serves 8–10

1¼ cups unsalted butter, softened  
2 cups light brown soft sugar  
5 large free-range or organic egg  
separated  
zest and juice of 1 orange  
1½ cups self-rising flour, sifted  
1 slightly heaped teaspoon baking  
powder  
1 cup ground almonds  
4oz shelled walnuts, chopped, plus  
a handful for serving  
1 heaped teaspoon ground  
cinnamon  
a pinch of ground cloves  
a pinch of ground nutmeg  
½ teaspoon ground ginger  
10oz carrots, peeled and coarsely  
grated  
sea salt

*for the lime mascarpone icing*  
4oz mascarpone cheese  
8oz full-fat cream cheese  
1 scant cup powdered sugar, sifted  
zest and juice of 2 limes