

Spiced Carrot, Cardamom & Pistachio Cake with Orange Icing



Cake Ingredients

- 2 cups spelt flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 2 teaspoons cardamom (see tip below)
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup of coconut sugar
- ¾ cups regular sugar
- 1 1/4 cup neutral oil (rice bran, light olive, or avocado oil)
- Zest of 1 medium orange
- 4 free-range eggs, room temperature
- 3 cups finely grated carrot
- 1 cup pistachios, roughly chopped (plus extra for garnish)
- 1 cup sultanas (or chopped apricots)

Icing Ingredients

- 250 g soy cream cheese (dairy-free), softened
- 1½ cups icing sugar, sifted
- 2–3 Tbsp fresh orange juice (to taste)
- Zest of ½ an orange

Method

1. Preheat oven to 160°C. Lightly grease and line two 20 cm (8-inch) round cake tins with baking paper.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the spelt flour, baking soda, cardamom, cinnamon, ginger, and salt until well combined.
3. In another bowl, whisk the sugar, oil, and orange zest until smooth. Beat in the eggs one at a time until the mixture is thick and glossy.
4. Gently fold the dry ingredients into the wet until just combined. Avoid over-mixing, as spelt flour can become dense if overworked.
5. Fold through the grated carrot, pistachios, and sultanas (or apricots) until evenly distributed.
6. Divide the batter evenly between the prepared tins. Bake for 45–50 minutes, or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the cakes comes out clean.
7. Allow cakes to cool in their tins for 15 minutes before turning out onto a wire rack to cool completely.
8. To make the icing: beat the soy cream cheese until smooth. Gradually add the icing sugar, orange juice, and zest, and beat until light and spreadable. Adjust the texture with more juice (to loosen) or more icing sugar (to thicken).
9. To assemble: place one cake layer on a serving plate and spread with half of the icing. Top with the second cake and cover with the remaining icing. Garnish with extra pistachios and a little extra orange zest or dried orange slices, if desired.

Tip: For the best flavour, crack open green cardamom pods and remove the tiny black seeds inside. Grind the seeds in a mortar and pestle just before using. The aroma is far more boldly flavoured than pre-ground cardamom.

