

CARROTS!!

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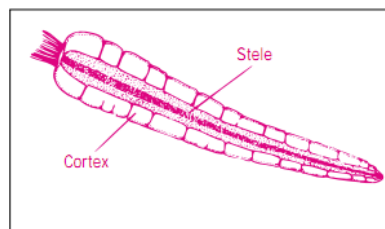
Origins and History:

Before the introduction of domesticated carrots, wild carrots were grown in gardens as medicinal plants.

However, it is a myth that domestic carrot was developed from wild carrot. Botanists have failed to develop an edible vegetable from the wild root and when cultivation of garden carrots lapses a few generations, it reverts to another ancestral type, a species that is quite distinct.

Carrots originated in present day Afghanistan about 5000 years ago, probably as a purple or yellow small, tough, bitter and spindly root. Purple carrots were then taken westwards where it is thought that yellow mutants and wild forms crossed to produce orange. Motivated Dutch growers are responsible for developing the sweeter, fleshy, unbranched, and more edible root we know now.

Longitudinal Section of Carrot



Plant Parts:

When eating a carrot, you're actually eating the roots of the carrot plant! The carrot is a biennial, and the carrot is where nutrients are stored over the winter to be utilized the next year. If a carrot completes its growth cycle, the "carrot" is nothing more than a withered shell of roots, but we harvest carrots in the middle of their growth cycle when they are full of nutrients that would otherwise be utilized by the plant.

Nutrition Information:

Carrots are an extremely healthy root vegetable. In a serving of carrots (around 128 grams), there are high levels of Vitamin K (21% daily value), Vitamin A (technically beta-carotene, 428% daily value, and Vitamin C (13% daily value). Carrots also have 3.6g dietary fiber in each serving.

Who first thought of "carrot cake"?

According to food historians, our modern carrot cake most likely descended from medieval carrot puddings enjoyed by people in Europe. In the Middle Ages, when sweeteners were scarce and expensive, carrots were used in sweet cakes and desserts. In the 20th century carrot cake was

re-introduced as a “healthy alternative” to traditional desserts, because it uses brown sugar, whole-meal flour and nuts (this is only slightly compromised by the cream cheese and sugar icing).

According to legend, George Washington was served a carrot teacake at Fraunces Tavern in lower Manhattan on November 25, 1783, to celebrate the occasion: British Evacuation Day.

Carrot Cake Recipe:

4 eggs
1 1/4 cups vegetable oil
2 cups white sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking soda
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
3 cups grated carrots

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease and flour a 9x13 inch pan.

In a large bowl, beat together eggs, oil, white sugar and 2 teaspoons vanilla. Mix in flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt and cinnamon. Stir in carrots.

Bake in the preheated oven for 40 to 50 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack and cool completely.

Maple Carrots Recipe:

1 1/2 lb of carrots, peeled and cut into half-inch thick rounds.
1/2 cup of water.
3 tablespoons of butter.
2 tablespoons of maple syrup.
1 tablespoon of brown sugar.
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste.

In a large skillet, bring all ingredients to boil.

Reduce heat to medium, then cover and simmer for 8 minutes.

Uncover and cook until the juices are reduced to glaze (4-5 minutes).

Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper.