

Carrot Cake Cookies recipe

If you love the flavor of carrot cake but want something easier to share, this carrot cake cookies recipe is exactly what you need.

These cookies deliver chewy centers, crisp edges, and rich cream cheese frosting on top. Whether you're prepping dessert for a gathering or craving comfort in cookie form, this spiced bake hits every note.

Carrot cake cookies recipe on a rustic plate

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Why This Carrot Cake Cookies Recipe Feels Personal

From Bronx Birthday Cake to Brooklyn Cookie Sheets

I didn't grow up eating carrot cake. In my abuela's Bronx kitchen, dessert often meant arroz con leche, creamy flan, or her chewy molasses cookies. But I remember being ten, at a classmate's birthday party, when I had my first slice of carrot cake. I didn't know what it was at the time—I just knew it was sweet, spiced, and topped with the best frosting I'd ever tasted. That bite stuck with me. It was a flavor I didn't forget.

Years later, when I started hosting dinners and baking out of my Brooklyn kitchen, I wanted to revisit that memory. But instead of making a full cake, I thought, why not cookies? I wanted something easier to serve, easier to grab, and still packed with all that carrot cake energy. That's how this carrot cake cookies recipe came to life. It turned into a blend of nostalgia and practicality, combining tradition with a modern twist.

A Cookie Made for Sharing and Remembering

What makes these cookies special is how they take the soul of carrot cake and rework it into something cozy, hand-held, and unexpectedly chewy. Brown sugar and cinnamon give depth. Ginger and nutmeg offer warmth. The grated carrot melts into the dough, making every bite tender. Rolled oats and chopped pecans round it out with texture and balance.

These have become one of my most requested recipes at pop-ups and during virtual classes. They remind people of something familiar but surprise them with how bold and balanced the flavors are. If you enjoy baked goods with a story, try my pistachio lemon bars or [almond croissant cookie bars](#) for more nostalgic bakes with a twist.

Carrot cake cookies recipe on a rustic plate

Carrot Cake Cookies Recipe – Soft, Spiced, and Frosted | 5-Star Bake

No reviews

- Author: [Aaron recipes](#)
- Total Time: [27 minutes](#)
- Yield: [24 cookies 1x](#)
- Diet: [Vegetarian](#)

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Description

This soft, chewy carrot cake cookies recipe combines fresh grated carrots, oats, and warm spices topped with a rich cream cheese frosting. Perfect for spring gatherings or any time you crave carrot cake in cookie form.

Ingredients

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Scale

For the Cookies:

- ☐ 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ☐ 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ☐ ¾ teaspoon kosher salt
- ☐ 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ☐ ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ☐ ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ☐ 1 cup unsalted butter, softened
- ☐ 1 cup light brown sugar, packed
- ☐ ½ cup granulated sugar
- ☐ 1 large egg, room temperature
- ☐ 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- ☐ 1 cup grated carrot (about 2 medium carrots)
- ☐ 1 cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- ☐ ½ cup finely chopped pecans (optional)

For the Cream Cheese Frosting:

- ☐ 8 ounces cream cheese, room temperature
 - ☐ ½ cup unsalted butter, softened
 - ☐ 2 cups powdered sugar
 - ☐ 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - ☐ Cook Mode Prevent your screen from going dark
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Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In a bowl, whisk flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, ginger, and nutmeg.

3. In another bowl, beat butter and sugars until fluffy.
4. Add egg and vanilla. Mix until smooth.
5. Gradually add dry ingredients to wet mixture.
6. Fold in grated carrots, oats, and pecans.
7. Scoop dough into 1½ tablespoon portions. Place on baking sheets.
8. Bake for 12 minutes or until edges are golden.
9. Cool on pan briefly, then transfer to wire rack.
10. For the frosting, beat cream cheese and butter until smooth.
11. Add powdered sugar slowly, then mix in vanilla.
12. Frost cooled cookies and serve.

Notes

Use freshly grated carrots for best texture.

If dough is sticky, chill for 15 minutes before scooping.

Unfrosted cookies freeze well for up to 2 months.

- Prep Time: 15 minutes
- Cook Time: 12 minutes
- Category: Dessert
- Method: Baking
- Cuisine: American

Nutrition

- **Serving Size:** 1 cookie
 - **Calories:** 210
 - **Sugar:** 18g
 - **Sodium:** 95mg
 - **Fat:** 11g
 - **Saturated Fat:** 6g
 - **Unsaturated Fat:** 4g
 - **Trans Fat:** 0g
 - **Carbohydrates:** 25g
 - **Fiber:** 1g
 - **Protein:** 2g
 - **Cholesterol:** 25mg
-

Did you make this recipe?

Share a photo and tag us—we can't wait to see what you've made!

Key Ingredients and What Makes These Cookies Work

Ingredients for carrot cake cookies recipe

The Power of Spice, Carrots, and Brown Sugar

What makes this carrot cake cookies recipe stand out is the careful layering of flavor. Cinnamon, ginger, and nutmeg give the cookies that unmistakable carrot cake warmth. They're earthy, sweet, and comforting without being overwhelming. Brown sugar adds depth and moisture, helping the centers stay soft. Granulated sugar brings the crisp edge every good cookie needs.

Grated carrots are essential. You want them fresh and finely shredded. They melt into the dough as the cookies bake, infusing them with natural sweetness and a little moisture. The carrots also balance the spices, making sure the cookies taste like more than just sugar and cinnamon.

Using room-temperature ingredients matters here. When the butter and egg are softened, they cream more evenly with the sugars and help build the right texture in the dough. If you're looking for a cozy recipe with a sweet finish, try my pistachio lemon bars. They have the same balance of brightness and richness.

Oats and Pecans for Texture, Balance, and Bite

Oats give this carrot cake cookies recipe structure. Use old-fashioned rolled oats, not quick-cooking ones. The rolled oats hold up better, providing just the right amount of chew while keeping the cookies from turning cakey. They also help absorb some moisture from the carrots, giving each bite a satisfying texture.

If you're into nuts, chopped pecans are an excellent add-in. They toast slightly while baking and add that subtle crunch that complements the chewy dough. This isn't just a cookie—it's a layered experience. A great recipe for carrot cake cookies should always feel balanced, from the first bite to the last crumb.

Want another dessert that balances softness and crunch? The almond croissant cookie bars are rich, flaky, and deliver bite after bite of buttery texture.

Step-by-Step Baking Instructions for Perfect Cookies

Mixing the Dough for a Chewy, Spiced Finish

This carrot cake cookies recipe begins with building the right foundation. Preheat your oven to 350°F and line two large baking sheets with parchment paper. This helps the cookies bake evenly and release easily. In a medium bowl, combine the flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, ginger, and nutmeg, whisking until evenly mixed. These dry ingredients set the tone for the warm, spiced flavor you want in every bite.

In a separate bowl, cream the softened butter, brown sugar, and granulated sugar using a hand or stand mixer.

Beat on medium speed for about three minutes, until the mixture becomes light and fluffy. Add the egg and vanilla extract, then continue mixing until fully incorporated.

This step builds the soft, tender structure that makes these carrot cake cookies so memorable.

Next, add your dry ingredients to the wet. Mix on low until almost combined. Fold in the grated carrots, rolled oats, and chopped pecans if you like a little crunch. The dough will be thick, sticky, and fragrant. This step is where the magic happens, and every ingredient in this carrot cake cookies recipe comes together to create that signature chew and warmth.

Scoop, Bake, Cool, and Frost Like a Pro

Scoop out the dough using a cookie scoop or spoon, about one and a half tablespoons per ball. Space each scoop two inches apart to allow room for spreading. Bake for 12 minutes, until the edges are golden and the centers appear just set. You want the centers to stay soft while the outside bakes to a light crisp.

Let the cookies cool on the baking sheet for a few minutes. Then move them to a wire rack to cool completely before adding frosting. This carrot cake cookies recipe holds its shape well and delivers that perfect cookie-to-frosting ratio.

If you're into creative bakes that deliver on both taste and texture, the almond croissant cookie bars are a great next bake. They're flaky, buttery, and just as unforgettable.

Carrot cake cookies dough in mixing bowl

Cream Cheese Frosting and How to Serve It Best

Making the Perfect Cream Cheese Frosting

The beauty of this carrot cake cookies recipe lies in the contrast between the warm, spiced cookie and the cool, tangy frosting. Start with room-temperature cream cheese and butter. Beat them together until smooth. It should take about one minute. Then slowly add the powdered sugar and continue mixing. Finish with a splash of vanilla extract to round out the flavor.

This frosting comes together quickly and spreads like a dream. If you prefer a thicker consistency, chill it for 10 to 15 minutes before using. For cookies that stack neatly or travel well, keep the frosting layer thin and even. But if you're serving them at home and want that bakery-style swirl, use a piping bag and go bold.

The tang of the cream cheese perfectly balances the sweetness of the cookie. That's what makes this carrot cake cookies recipe so satisfying. It's not just another spiced treat, it's a dessert with real personality and perfect texture in every bite.

How to Serve and Store for Maximum Flavor

Once the cookies are frosted, you can serve them right away or chill them slightly for a firmer bite. They're perfect at room temperature, but if you're prepping ahead for a party or event, store them in a single layer in an airtight container. Layering with parchment paper keeps the frosting intact.

These cookies stay soft for days, making them a great make-ahead option. And yes, they freeze well too. Just freeze them without frosting, then thaw and frost fresh when you're ready to serve. This level of flexibility is why so many home bakers love this carrot cake cookies recipe.

If you're ever short on time, check out my **3 ingredient carrot cake cookies** version. It's a shortcut recipe that still delivers flavor, especially when topped with the same frosting. For more easy treats with maximum payoff, try the strawberry shortcake dump cake. It's another crowd-pleaser that's simple to serve.

Storage Tips and Make-Ahead Tricks That Work

How to Store the Carrot Cake Cookies Recipe for Best Results

Once you've baked and frosted this carrot cake cookies recipe, the next step is proper storage. These cookies are soft, so you'll want to keep them fresh without losing their texture. Place them in a single layer inside an airtight container to keep them fresh and maintain their texture. If you need to stack them, use parchment paper between layers to keep the frosting smooth and clean.

This carrot cake cookies recipe stays fresh for up to five days at room temperature, especially if your kitchen stays cool. For longer freshness, store them in the refrigerator. The cream cheese frosting holds up better when chilled. Let the cookies sit at room temperature for about 10 minutes before serving so they can soften slightly.

You can also freeze these cookies. The ideal approach is to freeze the cookies before adding any frosting. Lay them flat on a tray, freeze until firm, then transfer to a freezer-safe bag or container. When you're ready to enjoy them, thaw at room temperature and add fresh cream cheese frosting before serving.

Making It Ahead Without Sacrificing Flavor

The beauty of this carrot cake cookies recipe is that you can prepare parts in advance. The dough can be made, scooped, and chilled for up to 48 hours before baking. In fact, chilling deepens the flavor and improves texture.

The cream cheese frosting also stores well in the fridge for up to three days. Just re-whip it briefly before using. This flexibility makes the carrot cake cookies recipe perfect for events, meal prep, or last-minute gatherings.

If you're exploring other bakes that handle storage well, my banana pudding cheesecake salad is another great option. Like these cookies, it can be made ahead without losing flavor or texture.

Flavor Variations and Customization Ideas

Simple Ways to Customize Your Carrot Cake Cookies Recipe

Once you've nailed the base, this carrot cake cookies recipe is a perfect canvas for creativity. You can make small tweaks that completely change the experience without losing the core flavor. Want a bolder spice profile? Add a pinch of cloves or extra cinnamon. Like citrus? Mix in a bit of orange zest for brightness. These cookies can go in many directions without losing their chewy, comforting texture.

Another twist that works beautifully is swapping the pecans for walnuts or even shredded coconut. This adds subtle crunch and a bit of sweetness that pairs perfectly with the cream cheese frosting. Raisins or chopped dates can also be folded in for a touch of chew and natural sugar. These are all ways to evolve the carrot cake cookies recipe into something unique to your taste.

If you're looking for another cozy bake with layered flavors, try the pistachio lemon bars. They combine tangy citrus with a nutty crunch, much like how these cookies mix spice and sweetness.

Trying Cake Mix or Mini Versions for Fun Options

Looking for an ultra-quick take on this carrot cake cookies recipe? Try the shortcut version that uses cake mix. This **carrot cake cookies with cake mix** variation cuts down on prep time and delivers a soft, consistent result with very little effort. Just mix a boxed carrot cake mix with eggs and oil, then gently fold in grated carrots before baking. It's a reliable go-to when time is short.

You can also shape these into smaller cookies for bite-size party treats. Use a teaspoon of dough per cookie and adjust the baking time to 8–9 minutes. They still pack the same flavor in a single bite, and they're great for sharing. This carrot cake cookies recipe is flexible, whether you're baking for a crowd or just indulging in a few warm cookies with tea.

Need more easy bakes with major payoff? Don't miss the almond croissant cookie bars for another take on familiar flavors with a twist.

Frosted carrot cake cookies recipe on platter

Common Mistakes and Expert Tips for Better Cookies

Avoid These Missteps in Your Carrot Cake Cookies Recipe

When working through a carrot cake cookies recipe, a few small mistakes can change the outcome. One common issue is grating carrots too thick or too wet. After grating, lightly pat the carrots with a paper towel to remove excess moisture. That little step prevents soggy dough and keeps your cookies from falling flat.

Another misstep is skipping the cooling time after baking. These cookies finish setting as they rest on the pan, so don't rush that step. Removing them too soon can cause them to fall apart. This carrot cake cookies recipe depends on timing, so trust the process and let the heat finish the job before transferring them to a wire rack.

Overbaking is also something to watch. If the edges are golden but the centers still look soft, that's your cue to pull them out. They'll continue to cook as they cool. That soft middle is part of what makes the carrot cake cookies recipe so satisfying.

Smart Fixes and Techniques for Consistent Results

To get bakery-style cookies, use a cookie scoop for uniform size. Consistent sizing means even baking. If your dough feels too sticky to handle, chill it for 10–15 minutes. Chilling the dough helps the cookies maintain their shape during baking.

Use parchment paper or silicone mats for easy release and a more even bottom. And when it comes time to frost, spread a thin layer for a soft bite or pipe it on thick for a dramatic finish. Either way, the cream cheese frosting is key to what makes this carrot cake cookies recipe unforgettable.

If you're trying other reliable bakes, my pistachio lemon bars are another hit. They offer a bright, nutty contrast to these soft spiced cookies, and both recipes are great choices for sharing or gifting.

Conclusion

There's something special about transforming a traditional dessert into something portable, cozy, and easy to share. This carrot cake cookies recipe captures everything we love about the original cake. The warm spice, soft texture, and creamy frosting come together in a form that's fun to bake and even more fun to eat.

With the right ingredients, a few simple techniques, and room for your own twist, these cookies can become a go-to treat in your kitchen. They're perfect for birthdays, brunches, bake sales, or those moments when you want a sweet bite of comfort. This carrot cake cookies recipe offers all the flavor of the classic dessert in a smaller, hand-held package.

If you're craving more nostalgic desserts with a fresh spin, my strawberry shortcake dump cake and banana pudding cheesecake salad are great follow-ups. Each one brings a new kind of sweetness to your table.

From one home baker to another, I hope this recipe becomes a favorite. Let it bring comfort, spark conversation, and remind you that great food often starts with simple ingredients and a little memory. If you're inspired to save or share this carrot cake cookies recipe for later, you can pin it over on [Pinterest](#) where I post all my newest bakes and kitchen-tested favorites.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the secret ingredient in carrot cake?

While carrot cake has many bold flavors, the secret ingredient is often the grated carrots themselves. They add natural sweetness and moisture. In this carrot cake cookies recipe, the carrots not only provide flavor but also help keep the cookies soft and chewy.

What are carrot cookies?

Carrot cookies are soft-baked treats made with grated carrots, warm spices like cinnamon and nutmeg, and often oats or nuts. This carrot cake cookies recipe takes inspiration from traditional carrot cake but reimagines it in cookie form for easier sharing and serving.

Why is it called divorce carrot cake?

"Divorce carrot cake" is a playful nickname for an ultra-delicious carrot cake that's so good, people joke it could start or end relationships. While that name doesn't apply to every recipe, this carrot cake cookies recipe might just earn similar reactions—because it's hard to stop at one bite.

Can I use cake mix for cookies?

Yes, cake mix can be a convenient shortcut. In fact, there's a simple version of this carrot cake cookies recipe that starts with boxed carrot cake mix. You just add eggs, oil, and some fresh grated carrots for a quick but flavorful bake.

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