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Carrot Cake Scones

By Susie Iventosch



Photo Susie Iventosch

These carrot cake scones really do taste like carrot cake, and especially when you add the cream cheese icing on top! Full of goodies like finely grated carrots, raisins, and toasted pecans, spiced with cinnamon and cardamom, they are a hearty and delicious breakfast snack. I love them with icing on top, but if you prefer a slightly healthier version, then just omit the icing!

Whenever I make scones or cookies with raisins, I first like to soak the raisins in boiling water for about 15 minutes, so they won't dry out too much in the baking process. They stay plump and juicy this way. You just need to be sure to squeeze out any excess liquid before adding them to the dough. I use finely grated carrots for these scones because I don't want huge pieces of carrot in my scone, but rather a finer, more subtle bit of carrot in each bite.

Because of these moist ingredients, you may find that you need to add a bit more flour once you have all

the ingredients mixed. If you do, then just add a little bit of flour at a time, one or two tablespoons, until you have a dough that holds together.

I haven't tried this yet, but since pineapple is a key ingredient in our carrot cake recipe, I think I'll try adding some canned pineapple to my next batch of carrot cake scones. This, too, will make the batter moist, so if you try this, be sure to have a little extra flour handy!

INGREDIENTS

Scones

2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

4 tbsp. light brown sugar

1 tsp. baking soda

2 tsp. cream of tartar

1/2 tsp. salt

1 tsp. cinnamon

1/2 tsp. cardamom

1/4 tsp. all-spice (*optional)

4 oz. butter, chilled and cut into small 1/2-inch pieces (= 8 tbsp. or 1 stick, or 1/2 cup)

1 cup raisins (rehydrated - see directions below)

1 cup toasted pecans (coarsely chopped)

1 cup finely grated carrots

3/4 cup milk or half and half - your choice

1 tsp. vanilla extract

1/2 cup toasted pecans pieces (for garnish on top of the icing)

Cream Cheese & Vanilla Icing

2 oz. cream cheese (softened to room temp)

1 cup sifted powdered sugar

2 tbsp. milk

1/2 tsp. vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 425F. Prepare a baking sheet with cooking spray or parchment paper.

To rehydrate the raisins, place them in a small bowl. Pour about 1 cup of boiling water over them and allow this to sit for about 15-20 minutes. Strain or squeeze excess water out of the raisins before adding them to the dough. You can use a strainer for this or cheese cloth.

Sift flour, salt, baking soda, cinnamon, cardamom, (allspice if using), and cream of tartar into a bowl. Stir in brown sugar. Using a pastry cutter or cold fingertips, cut the butter pieces into the dries until the pieces of butter are like small peas. Stir in the raisins, carrots, and pecans. Mix well. Add milk and vanilla all at once and mix just until integrated.

Turn dough onto floured cloth or board and gather into a ball. You may need to absorb a little of the extra flour for this step but be careful to not over handle your dough. Use a light touch. Remember, as our British au pair once told me, "The keys to good scones are cold hands and a warm heart!"

Roll or flatten the dough ball out to about 1 1/4 inch in thickness. Cut dough into 8 triangles for large scones, or 12 triangles for smaller scones. Or you can also use a biscuit cutter dipped in flour if you prefer round scones. Place scones on prepared baking sheet and refrigerate for 10-15 minutes, or longer. Remove from the refrigerator and bake for 12-14 minutes, or until the tops begin to turn golden-brown. Remove from oven and cool completely before icing.

Make the Icing

While the scones are baking, it's time to make the icing. Simply blend the sifted powdered sugar with the softened cream cheese. Whisk in the vanilla and enough milk to get to a thick icing consistency. If you

accidentally add too much milk, just add a little more sugar, and if it's too thick, then add more milk, a tiny bit at a time!

□ Spread the icing over the cooled scones with a spoon or offset spatula and then top with extra toasted pecan pieces while the icing is still moist. If you want to serve the scones warm, store them without the icing, and once reheated, spread the icing over them just before serving.

□ These scones store very well in the refrigerator even once iced, but if you want to freeze them, we suggest icing them when you're ready to serve them.



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