

'Carrot Cake' Latkes + Whipped Cream Cheese Frosting



Here's something I forgot to prep for: My Jewish kid wondering who that rather large man in the red suit is. Now that the kiddo is old enough to be aware of her surroundings, I'm struggling with how to make sure she has a place in this Christmas-dominant world. I gotta say, this is one area where the kid's obsession with Frozen is coming in handy because I basically tell her that every single house/building that is covered in twinkling Christmas lights is, in fact, Arendelle.

I'd like to take a moment now to personally thank the city of Beverly Hills for going WAY overboard with their Christmas lights. It makes the kid feel like she is literally walking in Arendelle every. Single. Night.



Nothing is wrong with Christmas. In fact, I kinda like it. I like the twinkling lights and the holiday cheer and the food is phenomenal. And I certainly don't want to pretend that Hanukkah is anything like Christmas. I'm kinda frustrated that someone has gone ahead and taken the whole "Elf on the Shelf" thing and tried to Hanukkah-ize it with Mensch on a Bench. I feel very strong in the fact that making Hanukkah more 'like' Christmas isn't going to make Jewish kids feel less alienated during the Christmas season. I feel, more than anything, that what's going to help Jewish kids feel less alienated or less 'left out' is to work on creating a strong sense of ownership at home over Hanukkah and your family's traditions. I think it's OK to feel 'left out'. Feeling 'left out' is what creates resiliency and confidence over one's choices and values. I used to sit in church and watch my dad sing in the choir on Christmas Eve but I could do that because my mom provided us an extremely prevalent and tangible Jewish home life.



OK, enough of my soap box and let's talk about these here latkes. These latkes can be eaten without the whipped cream cheese frosting. I mean, one could choose to eat them without

the frosting but why would one do that? I originally conceived of this dish as a latke and dip but the fact of the matter is that I like my latkes SUPER crispy and if you do decide to dip these in the frosting, they might fall off. Therefore, in my expert opinion, I think you should just go ahead and smear that frosting right on top of the latke. Heck, you can sandwich it between two latkes and make it a 'carrot cake' latke sandwich! Either way, I hope you enjoy and Happy Chanukkah!



However you take them, just TAKE THEM. They're so good.

"Carrot Cake" Latkes with Whipped Cream Cheese Frosting

Ingredients for Latkes:
(Makes 8 – 10 latkes)

3 medium sweet potatoes
1 cup baby carrot sticks OR 5 – 6 large/fat carrots
6 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/2 tbsp coconut or light brown sugar
1/2 tbsp cardamom

1/2 tbsp cinnamon
1 teaspoon baking powder
2 large eggs
Sunflower oil

Ingredients for Whipped Cream Cheese Frosting:

8 oz Cream cheese at room temperature
1 tsp vanilla
3/4 cup powdered sugar
1/2 cup heavy cream OR half & half

How to Make Latkes:

First, set up a large bowl of ice water in the sink. You will pour the shredded sweet potatoes and carrots in the ice bath immediately after shredding.

Peel sweet potatoes. Using the large holes of a box grater or in a food processor, shred the sweet potatoes and carrots (they can be done in the same bowl). Transfer to the ice bath so as to prevent browning. Let soak for a few minutes while you clean out your food processor. Next, transfer to a clean dishtowel or cheesecloth sling and wring out as much juice as you can.

Transfer grated sweet potato and carrot mixture to a medium bowl. In a small dish, whisk flour, cardamom, cinnamon and baking powder and toss with the sweet potatoes and carrots, coating them evenly. Whisk eggs in this small dish until lightly beaten and stir into mixture.

Add sunflower oil to a large frying pan that reaches a depth of 1/8 inch. Heat slowly over medium to about 365 degrees F. Scoop mixture out with large kitchen spoon (usually I lose the spoon after a while and just get in there with my hands). Squeeze the mixture firmly in your palm over an empty dish to remove any excess liquid. (If you squeezed the potatoes out thoroughly in the cloth, you may not have much

excess liquid to squeeze out). Shape the mixture into a tight ball.

Carefully test the heat of your oil by dropping a few droplets of water into the oil. If it sizzles immediately, it's ready.

Next, place the ball carefully into the hot oil. After a couple seconds, using a spatula, press down into the ball. If you can get them into the hot oil in one piece, chances are they will stick together – frying them is like the “glue” that holds them together. It takes a gentle touch, and it may take you some practice to get the “feel” for it.

The oil should sizzle, but not pop when the latke hits it; if the oil jumps wildly or smokes, it is too hot. If it only bubbles weakly, the oil is not hot enough. Use the first latke to test the oil temperature, and don't fry a whole batch until the temperature is right.

Continue shaping the latkes in this way, using 2 tablespoons of mixture for each latke. Fry in batches of 4-5 latkes at a time (no more than that – don't crowd the pan) for 2-3 minutes per side until brown and crispy. Remove the latkes from the frying pan and let oil soak on paper towel.

How to Make Whipped Cream Cheese Frosting:

Beat the cheese, sugar and vanilla until smooth and fluffy. In a separate bowl, beat the heavy cream to nearly stiff peaks, then add the whipped cream into the cheese mixture and quickly and briefly beat to combine.