

and grated carrots in a non-stick pot over medium-high heat. Let the carrots steam in their own water for about 10 minutes, stirring every minute or so. You should be able to smell their mingled perfume after a while.

Using 1/4 cup at a time, scatter the powdered milk over the carrots, stirring continually until you have gradually stirred it all in. The milk should form tiny granules among the softened carrots. You'll notice droplets of moisture on the pot sides at first, but keep stirring for about 20 minutes or so until those dry up. You want the mixture to be almost crumbly.

When no droplets of moisture can be seen on the pan, crack one egg at a time over the carrots, stirring quickly so that it forms granules of its own in the mixture. Stir for another 5 minutes.

Now put in the slivered almonds, pistachios and raisins. Stir for 5 minutes.

The sugar doesn't go in until almost the end, otherwise it would change the dessert's texture. If you prefer semi-sweet desserts,

start with 1/2 cup of sugar. My family, who like their desserts very sweet, would normally put in 3/4 cup. Stir continuously for a few more minutes. Pound the saffron strands in a saucer, and scatter them over the mixture.

Take the pot off the heat. Sprinkle the rosewater over the carrots, stir once quickly, and cover the pan immediately. Keep it covered for 5 minutes for the halwa to better absorb the rosewater scent. This recipe serves 10.

Serve the gajar ka halwa garnished with more slivered almonds or pistachios. In Pakistan, sometimes we garnish it with bits of edible silver foil.

If you like what you taste, consider substituting cardamom and pistachios for cinnamon and walnuts next time you make carrot cake. You can find a great carrot cake recipe with Asian spices in Madhur Jaffrey's *World of the East Vegetarian Cooking*. As I'm starting to learn, sometimes combining two worlds yields the best cooking of all. **EW**

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