

Authentic Gajar ka Halwa: A Royal Indian Carrot Dessert

Learn to make authentic Gajar ka Halwa, India's beloved carrot dessert. Rich, creamy, and perfectly spiced - this traditional recipe serves 4 in 65 minutes.

20 min

PREP

45 min

COOK

1h 5min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Easy

DIFFICULTY

Ingredients

- 1 kg carrot
- 5 cup milk
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup ghee
- 1 tsp cardamom powder
- 1 tsp saffron

Instructions

1 Prepare the carrots

Wash, peel, and grate 1 kg carrots using a coarse grater to create thin, uniform strands.

2 Cook the carrots

Heat a heavy-bottomed pan or kadhai over medium heat (160°C/320°F). Add the grated carrots and cook for 8-10 minutes, stirring frequently, until they soften and release their natural moisture.

3 Pour in 5 cups milk and bring to a rolling boil over medium-high heat, stirring to prevent sticking.

4 Reduce the milk

Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 25-30 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes, until the milk reduces by three-quarters and the mixture becomes thick and creamy.

5 Add 1 cup sugar and stir well. Continue cooking for 10-12 minutes, stirring constantly, until the sugar dissolves completely and the mixture pulls away slightly from the sides of the pan.

6 **Finish the halwa**

Stir in 1 tsp cardamom powder and cook for 2-3 minutes more until the mixture is thick enough to coat a spoon heavily.

7 Remove from heat and stir in 1 tsp ghee for extra richness and shine.

8 Serve warm in individual bowls, garnished with chopped nuts if desired.

Tips

Choose the Right Carrots: Red or Delhi carrots are ideal for authentic flavor and color. If unavailable, use the sweetest orange carrots you can find.

Grate Consistency: Use a medium grater for the carrots - too fine and they'll become mushy, too coarse and they won't cook evenly.

Milk Quality Matters: Always use full-fat milk for the richest, creamiest texture. Low-fat milk won't give the same luxurious mouthfeel.

Patience with Cooking: Don't rush the milk reduction process. Slow cooking on medium-low heat develops the best flavor and prevents burning.

Ghee Temperature: Add ghee when the mixture is slightly cooled to prevent it from separating and to achieve the perfect glossy finish.

Fresh Cardamom: Grind cardamom pods fresh for the most aromatic flavor. Pre-ground cardamom loses potency quickly.

Nut Preparation: Lightly roast the nuts in ghee before adding to enhance their flavor and ensure they stay crunchy.

Consistency Check: The halwa should coat a spoon when done but not be completely dry - it will thicken further as it cools.