



Orange Blossom Carrots

BRIGHT 🍊 | FLORAL 🌻 | COOL ❄️ | GLOWING ✨

Like carrots went to Morocco for a spa weekend

Vibes

Where it comes from

Sweet carrots paired with yogurt, citrus, and warm spices show up across a huge range of Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, and North African cooking traditions. Orange blossom water especially has a long history in desserts, drinks, and savory dishes where floral aromatics are used to brighten richness and bring a soft citrusy lift to a dish.

What it explores

This version explores temperature, texture, and floral contrast through warm seasoned carrots paired with cool orange blossom yogurt. The result feels bright and refreshing while still carrying enough richness and spice to feel satisfying.

Vibes

Why it works

Carrots naturally carry sweetness, earthiness, and enough structure to hold up against acid, yogurt, and floral aromatics without disappearing. The cool yogurt softens the citrus while the orange blossom quietly lingers in the background, making the whole dish feel light, balanced, and surprisingly refreshing.

Ways to play

Try swapping the yogurt for labneh, whipped feta, or even coconut yogurt if you want a dairy-free version. This also works beautifully with pistachios, mint, dill, cumin, chili crisp, roasted chickpeas, or different citrus depending on the direction you want to take it.

Grandpa Bill's Lab Notes

Grandpa Bill didn't cook by recipes — he cooked by paying attention. He watched how food reacted to heat, salt, and time, and he trusted his senses more than instructions. These notes exist to capture that way of cooking: not as rules to follow, but as observations worth remembering.

Orange blossom water is one of those ingredients where a tiny amount changes the entire personality of a dish. You can always add more orange blossom water, but you absolutely cannot add less once things start tasting like a fancy candle aisle.

The Lab Notes that follow aren't meant to be exhaustive or prescriptive. They're here to highlight the moments that matter — the parts of the process where slowing down a little, or doing less on purpose, leads to better food and a calmer cook.

Grandpa Bill's Lab Notes

On cooking carrots

Steaming keeps the carrots bright, tender, and clean-tasting in a way that really supports the citrus and yogurt. You're looking for tender with a little resistance left in the center, not full baby-food surrender.

On carrot seasoning

For the event I used Grandpa Bill's Sweet & Spicy blend because the turmeric, cumin, coriander, and paprika naturally fit the Mediterranean and North African flavor direction of the dish.

On bias cutting

Cutting carrots on a bias just means slicing them at an angle instead of straight across. It gives you more surface area for seasoning, helps the carrots cook more evenly, and honestly just makes the final dish look a little more elegant with almost no extra effort

Grandpa Bill's Lab Notes

On orange blossom water

Start smaller than your instincts tell you to. Floral waters continue opening up as they sit, especially once mixed into yogurt, so a little usually goes much further than expected.

On yogurt

Full-fat yogurt gives the best texture and helps carry the citrus and floral notes more smoothly. Taste the yogurt drizzle as you go and adjust gradually until it feels lightly floral and balanced instead of loud.

On citrus

Orange keeps the dish soft and rounded while lemon pushes it brighter and sharper. Using both together usually creates the most balanced result.

On temperature

This dish works because of contrast. Warm carrots and cool yogurt create just enough tension to keep everything feeling fresh and lively.

Ingredients

Serves 6–8 as a side

Produce

- 2 lbs carrots
- 1 orange
- 1 lemon
- fresh herbs (mint or dill work especially well)

Dairy

- 1 cup Greek yogurt

Pantry

- orange blossom water
- olive oil
- salt
- black pepper
- Grandpa Bill's Sweet & Spicy seasoning

Cooking Instructions

Total Time ~ 30 min

Prep ~ 10 min

Peel and slice the carrots on a bias into evenly sized pieces so they cook at roughly the same speed. Mix the yogurt with a very small amount of orange blossom water plus a little citrus juice, tasting as you go until it feels smooth, bright, and lightly floral.

Build ~ 15 min

Steam the carrots until tender but still holding a little bite. Toss them while warm with olive oil, Grandpa Bill's Sweet & Spicy seasoning, salt, pepper, and citrus juice so they absorb the seasoning while still hot.

Finish ~ 5 min

Spread the yogurt onto a platter or bowl, then pile the warm carrots over the top. Finish with herbs, citrus zest, olive oil, flaky salt, pistachios, chili crisp, or whatever balance of freshness, crunch, and brightness feels right to you.