NAME OF THE RECIPE:
Pecan carrot cake with cream cheese frosting

PARTICIPANT'S NAME:
Katie Purves

CATEGORY:
Young Chefs (17 years old and under)

PROVINCE:
Ontario

STORY:

Cakes have always brought my family together to celebrate occasions like birthdays, anniversaries, and Canada Day. But of all the cakes we've baked over the years, from ice cream to meringue, whether big or small, one has stood out: carrot cake. It's my favourite and my family's favourite, too.

The cakes in the collage are some of the ones that my family has made to celebrate special occasions. The largest pictures show two carrot cakes that I baked.

INGREDIENTS:

Cake

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp baking soda
- 1 ½ tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 ¾ cups granulated sugar
- 1 ½ cups oil
- 4 eggs
- 2 cups grated carrots
- 1 ¼ cups crushed pineapple
- 1 cup chopped pecans

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat the oven to 350 °F (176 °C).
- Sift the first 5 ingredients together into a large bowl. Mix well.
- Next, add the sugar, oil and eggs. Mix until well blended, then add the remaining ingredients.
- Grease 2 round 9-inch cake pans or line them with parchment paper.
- Divide the cake batter equally between the two pans.
- Bake for 35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the cake comes out clean.
- Meanwhile, prepare the frosting. Beat the butter and cream cheese until smooth. Mix well to ensure that there are no lumps in the frosting.
- Next, add the vanilla extract and icing sugar gradually while mixing. Add a bit of cream if the frosting seems too thick.

INGREDIENTS:

Frosting

- 1 cup cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup butter, softened
- 3 tsp vanilla extract
- 3 ½ cups icing sugar (or more for a thicker icing)
- 1 to 2 tsp cream (if necessary)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Once the cakes have cooled to room temperature (this is important because you don't want the frosting to melt), place one of the cakes on a platter. Spread about one third of the frosting evenly on top of the cake.
- Stack the second cake on top of the first, making sure that it's even on all sides. Add half of the remaining frosting and spread it in a thin layer over the entire cake.
- Put the cake in the refrigerator or the garage for 15–20 minutes. **This step is not essential, but it will help "trap the crumbs" on the sides or the top of the cake before the final layer of frosting.**
- If necessary, remove the cake from the refrigerator. Then, spread the remaining frosting all over the cake.
- If desired, decorate the cake with chopped pecans, or enjoy it without them.

Bon appétit!