

Carrot Halva

CARROT HALVA WITH RICE FLOUR

2 pounds carrots
2 cups sugar or grape molasses
1 cup canola oil or unsalted butter
2 cups sifted rice flour
½ teaspoon ground saffron dissolved in
½ cup rose water
1 tablespoon ground cardamom

GARNISH

2 tablespoons ground pistachios
2 tablespoons ground walnuts
2 tablespoons dried rose petals, crushed
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

VARIATION WITHOUT RICE FLOUR

2 pounds carrots, peeled and grated
6 cups whole milk
1½ cups sugar
1 tablespoon cardamom powder
½ teaspoon ground saffron dissolved in
2 tablespoons rose water
½ cup canola oil, butter, ghee*

Makes 12 servings
Preparation time: 15 minutes
Cooking time: 40 minutes

حلوة هبوج

Halva-ye havij

NOTE

You may use a food processor on pulse to grate the carrots (do not purée)

Photo shows the halva made with rice flour.

This sweet, nutritional, and comforting dish is associated with the Winter Festival, Shab-e Yalda.

1. Wash, peel, and grate the carrots. Place in a saucepan and add 2 cups water and the sugar. Bring to a boil stirring constantly until the sugar completely dissolves. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for 30 minutes.
2. In a large Dutch oven, heat the oil over high heat and gradually add the rice flour while stirring constantly. Cook for 5 to 8 minutes or until the mixture turns lightly golden.
3. Reduce heat to low. Wear oven mitts and carefully add the cooked carrot to the hot rice flour (step back to avoid getting splashed). Add saffron-rose water and cardamom, and cook over low heat for another 15 to 20 minutes, stirring quickly and constantly with a wooden spoon to make a thick, smooth halva.
4. Place a ring on a flat serving platter and spoon the halva into it; pack firmly with a spoon. Garnish with ground pistachios, walnuts, rose petals and cinnamon. Allow to cool, lift up the ring, then cover and chill in the refrigerator. Serve either as a main dish with *lavash* bread or alone as a dessert. *Nush-e Jan!*

VARIATION

Carrot Halva without Rice Flour—In a medium saucepan, combine the carrots and milk and cook over medium heat for 55 minutes, stirring occasionally until the carrots have absorbed all the milk. Add the sugar, cardamom, saffron-rose water, and butter, stirring frequently for 20 to 25 minutes until you have a pudding. Remove from heat, transfer to a dish, and garnish. Allow to cool and chill in the refrigerator.

