

# Roasted Carrots and Shallots

The keys to great cooked carrots are high heat and lots of flavorful browning.

by **Alli Berkey**

BOILED OR STEAMED carrots, tossed with a good bit of butter and maybe a little brown sugar, maple syrup, or some herbs, are a solid, dependable side dish. But are they ever great? Here in the test kitchen, experience has taught us that the best way to coax unexpected greatness out of grocery-store carrots is to roast them. Roasting drives off excess moisture and unlocks and concentrates carrots' sweet, earthy flavor.

But not all roasted carrots hit the mark; the twin goals are good browning and tender interiors, but too often the carrots turn out either underbrowned and bland or dry and leathery. I wanted to fix these problems.

Success here depended on the size of the cut carrots and the oven temperature. After trying every shape of cut carrot in the book, I settled on medium carrots halved lengthwise and roasted on a rimmed baking sheet in a 450-degree oven; this ensured that the carrots cooked through to tenderness in the time they took to brown significantly. Tossing the carrots with a little melted butter and cooking them on the bottom rack of the oven further contributed to nice, flavorful browning.

These caramelized, tender carrots wowed my tasters, but we all felt that they were missing something. And that something was halved shallots, which roasted to softness in the same time frame as the carrots and lent a sweet background flavor that highlighted that same quality in the carrots. A sprinkling of fresh thyme before serving added another layer of flavor to this side dish, which is elegant enough to serve at the holidays but also simple enough for any weeknight.



Shallots add sweet, mild flavor.

## ROASTED CARROTS AND SHALLOTS

Serves 4

Choose carrots that are between 1 and 1¼ inches in diameter. If your carrots are smaller, leave them whole; if they're larger, extend the roasting time slightly.

- 1½ pounds carrots, peeled and halved lengthwise**
- 4 large shallots, peeled and halved through root end**
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- ¼ teaspoon pepper**
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme**

1. Adjust oven rack to lowest position and heat oven to 450 degrees. Toss carrots, shallots, melted butter, salt, and pepper together in bowl.
2. Spread carrot-shallot mixture in even layer on rimmed baking sheet, cut sides down. Roast until tender and cut sides are well browned, about 25 minutes.
3. Sprinkle with thyme. Using spatula, transfer to platter. Serve.

## SPICE-ROASTED CARROTS AND SHALLOTS WITH PUMPKIN SEEDS AND YOGURT

Add ½ teaspoon ground cumin, ½ teaspoon ground coriander, and ⅓ teaspoon cayenne pepper to carrot-shallot mixture in step 1. Substitute cilantro for thyme. Whisk ¼ cup plain whole-milk yogurt, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, ¼ teaspoon salt, and ⅓ teaspoon pepper together in bowl; drizzle yogurt sauce over vegetables on platter. Sprinkle with 2 tablespoons toasted pumpkin seeds.



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