

K's Kitchen: Super moist carrot cake

By Kathryn Reed

Anything with the word carrot in it must be healthy, right? Not exactly.

Even withholding the frosting from carrot cake is not going to make it a health food. But it's cake, so go for it. Cake was never meant to be healthy.

I'm often one who says hold the cake, just give me the frosting. With this recipe, I want both. The cake is so incredibly moist. It was still tasty after spending a week in the refrigerator.

This is a recipe I have been making for years after my sister, Pam, shared it with me. For those who think cakes only come out of boxes, this will have you rethinking that philosophy.

In the past I had left the pecans out because I'm not a big fan of nuts in desserts. But I happen to have pecans on hand so I used them. And they were a nice addition.



Pamala's Carrot Cake

Cake

2 C sugar

4 eggs

1½ C canola oil

2 C flour

2 tsp soda

1 tsp salt

2 tsp cinnamon

3 C carrots, finely grated

¾ C pecans, chopped (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Beat the sugar and eggs until blended. Add oil, beat some more. Add dry ingredients. Beat until mixed. Add carrots and then nuts.

Pour mixture into greased and floured 9 x 13 pan. Bake for 55 minutes.

Frosting

4 oz. cream cheese

½ stick soft butter

½ box powder sugar

½ tsp vanilla (or more) B

blend all of the ingredients together. Frost cake when it is cool.

Graffiti artists marring national parks

By Louis Sahagun, Los Angeles Times

Andre Saraiva is an internationally known graffiti artist. He owns nightclubs in Paris and New York, works as a top editor of the men's fashion magazine *L'Officiel Hommes* and has appeared in countless glossy magazines as a tastemaker and bon vivant.

Two months ago he showed up on the decidedly un-fashionista website Modern Hiker, along with a photo of a boulder he tagged in Joshua Tree National Park. Since then, Saraiva, who lives in France and is known by his fans as Mr. Andre and Mr. A., has been scorned by American nature lovers and thrust into a highly charged debate.

Saraiva is of a new generation of graffiti artists who regard nature – not just the built environment – as their canvas. They tag national parks, then post photos of their work on the Internet.

Those acts infuriate outdoor enthusiasts, many of whom are otherwise fans of graffiti art.

Read the whole story

Dogs off-limits from South

Tahoe marsh

The annual seasonal dog closure at the Upper Truckee Marsh begins May 1.

The purpose of the three-month closure is to keep dogs out of critical breeding habitat for special, threatened and endangered species such as yellow headed blackbirds.

El Dorado County sheriff's deputies enforce the seasonal dog prohibition and California Tahoe Conservancy staff also monitor for compliance of the South Lake Tahoe property.

Beginning Aug. 1, dogs will again be permitted access to the Upper Truckee Marsh, provided they are on leash. The Conservancy-owned Cove East property, west of the river, remains open for year-round, leashed dog access.

California Naturalist Program on North Shore

University of California Cooperative Extension is developing a committed corps of volunteer naturalists and citizen scientists trained and ready to take an active role in natural resource conservation, education, and restoration.

Aspiring naturalists may enroll in a 40-hour course that combines classroom and field experience in science, problem-solving, communication training and community service. Classes will be at the Sagehen Creek Field Station in Tahoe City

Classes are:

June 5 – July 18 (6-week adult course)

July 18- 24 (1-week youth immersion course)

July 6 – 12 (1-week adult immersion course)

For more information, contact Leslie Smith at sagehen-calnat@berkeley.edu.

AAUW to host open house in South Tahoe

AAUW-South Lake Tahoe will host a meet and greet open house on May 7 from 3-5 pm at the Creekside Room at Lake Tahoe Community College.

At this informal drop-in event, guests will have the opportunity to learn about the organization's programs, interest groups, and sponsorship of various educational opportunities for local students.

"We moved here from Southern California knowing no one. I was invited to an AAUW meeting and was overwhelmed by their welcoming spirit and the diverse activities they offered. In addition to the informative monthly meetings, I attended a meeting of the Talking on Paper: Women Writing interest group. The TOP gals have grown into a warm fellowship of friends. Their enthusiasm and hospitality ranks high on my top Tahoe treasures list. There is something for every woman in AAUW," Denise Haerr, a member since 2013, said in a statement.

For more information, contact Kay Henderson at kmhende@charter.net or 530.544.5150.

Road beat: Mazda 6 tops the mid-size market



The Mazda 6 is setting the standard for what a mid-size car should be. Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

Mazda isn't the biggest car company in the world, now selling about 30,000 units a month in the U.S., up about 25 percent from the same period last year and for good reason. They design and build some of the best cars in the world. A recent Road Beat test of the Mazda 3 hatchback ranked it as the best compact car currently on the market, a position they could hold solely on its looks, closely based on its recent Takeri

show car. But its top of class handling, ride, fuel economy and performance only sealed the deal.

Mazda 6 is an obvious Mazda 3 sibling. Looks wise it's hard to tell them apart giving the Mazda 6 the title of the best looking mid-size car on the market. Its long, flat, yet shapely hood and aggressive front end sets the tone that this car means business. Even better is its profile, slick, lean and muscular with a window line that accentuates its length and sleekness. Its coefficient of drag is a remarkably low 0.26 which pays big dividends as you will see later. If there were a perfect design, this is it.



Specifications

Price \$21,985 to about \$33,000

Engine

DOHC, 16 valve inline 2.5L
four 184 hp @ 5,700 rpm
185 ft-lb of torque at 3,250 rpm

Transmission

Six Speed torque converter automatic, with paddle shifters

Configuration

Transverse mounted front engine/front wheel drive

Dimensions

Wheelbase 111.4 inches
Length 191.5 inches
Width 72.4 inches
Height 57.1 inches
Track (f/r) 62.8/62.4 inches
Ground clearance 6.7 inches
Weight 3,232 pounds
Weight distribution (f/r)
58/42%
Fuel capacity 16.4 gallons
Cargo capacity 16.4 cubic
feet
Steering lock to lock 2.81
turns
Turning circle (curb to
curb) 36.7 feet
Wheels 19X7.5 inch alloys
Tires 225/45X19 all season
radials
Co-efficient of drag 0.26

Performance

0-60 mph 7.32 seconds
50-70 mph 3.92 seconds
50-70 mph uphill 5.81
seconds
Top speed 140 mph
electronically limited
Fuel economy 28/40/32 mpg
city/highway/combined.
Expect 31-32 mpg in rural
country driving and over 40
mpg on a level highway at
legal speeds.

Mazda 6 looks longer, lower and wider than it actually is, although its wheelbase, length and width reveal it is a couple of inches bigger than other mid-size vehicles with a wheelbase

of 111.4 inches, a length of 191.5 inches and a width of 72.4 inches. While it stands 57 inches tall, which is about average for this class, it looks much lower because of its design.

Under the hood is a choice of one engine, a 2.5L super trick, SKYACTIV, 16 valve, inline DOHC four that produces a peak of 184 hp at 5,700 rpm and peak torque of 185 pounds at an exceedingly low 3,250 rpm. This engine also sports an astronomically high compression ratio of 13:1. One of the technologies of SKYACTIV is direct injection which allows such power producing compression while still running fine on 87 octane regular gas.

With peak power and torque being made at such low rpm, it means the Mazda 6 makes more power at the rpms you actually use in your driving, 2,000-4,000 rpm. Consequently, the Mazda performs far beyond its numbers would indicate with 0-60 mph arriving in just 7.32 seconds. Simulated passing tests also show off its muscle with 50-70 mph on level ground stopping the clocks in 3.92 seconds and the same test up a 6 percent grade only slowing that time to 5.91 seconds. Those numbers certainly put the new Mazda 6 at or near the top of the class for four cylinder mid-size sedans and are almost identical to the numbers produced by the Mazda 3 Road Beat test which uses the exact same powertrain but weighed in at about 230 pounds less. Only the 0-60 mph time was different by about a quarter second.

The six speed auto cog-swapper is a willing participant in achieving the 6's outstanding responsiveness as the paddle shifters really do act like an automated manual with quick, smooth shifts, up or down. Nice, or you can leave it in drive and forget about it. This is a high performance automobile that doesn't stop with just straight-line performance.

High performance also extends to fuel economy which the EPA rates at 28/40/32 mpg city/highway combined. Overall I averaged 31-32 mpg in very aggressive driving (hey, this ride

begs to be driven as you will see why). If I slowed it down a bit, that number would go up by a couple of mpg. When you cruise down a level highway at 70 mph you can expect 42-43 mpg. No, that is not a misprint, 40 plus mpg on the highway is a no brainer and with its 16.4-gallon fuel tank, the Mazda 6's tank will definitely out last yours. The Mazda 6 test vehicle did have the Mazda i-Eloop electric regen system which takes some alternator load off the engine thereby marginally improving fuel economy. The EPA numbers with i-Eloop are two mpg better across the board over the non i-Eloop model. Engine performance is otherwise identical.

More high performance is apparent when you change directions. Suspenders consist of the usual state of the art MacPherson struts up front and a multilink system in the rear with coils and twin tube shocks in all four corners and stabilizer bars at both ends. And does it ever work. Adding to this marvelous equation is a speed sensitive electric power rack that is only 2.8 turns lock to lock. My tester also had the optional gorgeous 19 x 7.5 inch alloys shod with wide 225/45 rubber (standard rubber is no slouch either at 225/55x17). Additionally, Mazda sports a wide 63-inch track front and rear. It changes direction better than water in a hose. It doesn't matter what you do as it goes where you point it with a natural aplomb while maintaining an incredibly flat attitude. Turning circle is almost 37 feet. It is the best handling mid-size car I have ever driven and that is among some pretty good competition.

Ride quality is firmer/supple; perfectly smooth on the highway and super quiet as the engine spins a slow 1,950 rpm at 70 mph. Is there a negative? Yes, on coarse roads you get more road and tire noise. It handles both small and large road imperfections well and there is absolutely no float or jiggle. I appreciate this quality ride, but we are not done yet.

Braking, of course, is by front ventilated four-wheel discs with ABS and all the other braking acronyms. Performance is

right at the benchmark stopping in 40 feet from 40 mph. The pedal is strong, firm and linear. The rest of the safety not left up to the all important driver consists of stability control, traction control, hill launch assist, a plethora of airbags, Mazda's SKYACTIV body ring structure and even a rear cross traffic alert. Also deserving special mention are the fabulous Bi-xenon headlights with standard AFS.



Plenty of room in the back for tall friends.

Inside is a fabulous interior that puts this Mazda Grand Touring into the near luxury class. Seating is perfect for my shape, some of the best I ever sat in. And their tasteful design only adds to the leather luxury. Of course in this full boat ride, they are heated, full power with lumbar and have a two position memory. Rear seating is voluminous with comfort and enough leg room for the front line of the Sacramento Kings.

Instrumentation is sporty with a tach and center speedo plus a digital trip meter/info gauge flanking right. Center stack and controls couldn't be better thought out and the materials on the instrument panel, door panels, center console and steering wheel is near luxury car quality or better. The trunk is large at almost 15 cubic feet.

Pricing starts at \$21,190 plus \$795 for the boat from Hofu, Japan. And that is a six-speed manual. The auto adds about

\$1,050. I would enjoy driving the manual which is also available in the touring sedan at \$23,845. My fully loaded ride stickered for \$29,895 and that included NAV and Bi-xenon adaptive headlights. The only option was the \$2,080 Tech Package which added i-e-loop, high beam control and radar cruise. I would take a pass. It is the best mid-size car I have ever driven.

Larry Weitzman has been into cars since he was 5 years old. At 8 he could recite from memory the hp of every car made in the U.S. He has put in thousands of laps on racetracks all over the Western United States.

Farmers' markets about to open in Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

It's time to abandon the produce section of the grocery store. Farmers' market season in Lake Tahoe starts a week from today.

Lake Tahoe Markets, which runs three markets in the basin, is returning to Kahle Community Park on Wednesdays from 4-7pm. Last year this market moved across the highway to accommodate construction on Kingsbury Grade. Incline Village's market at Tunnel Creek continues on Thursdays from 4-7pm and in Crystal Bay at the Tahoe Biltmore the market is Fridays from 10am-2pm. All open next week.



Produce from Steve Rozier's farm will be featured at his Tahoe markets.
Photo/Provided

Steve Rozier, who runs Lake Tahoe Markets, expects a ton of strawberries, some stone fruit and residual winter citrus to dominate the early markets.

"I believe consumers like to come out and touch the produce," Rozier said.

Each of his markets is a little different. There is some overlap in vendors as well as site-specific purveyors of produce and other goods. Most of the farmers are from Nevada.

"All of the markets have their own personalities," Rozier told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Rozier, for the first time, will also be bringing his own produce from the Carson Valley. Dani Bug Organics, at 2½ acres, is considered boutique farm.

Through the winter he has been delivering produce boxes to consumers. That ends when the markets open.



The Ski Run market has
produce and entertainment.
Photo/Provided

The two South Lake Tahoe markets kick off their seasons the first week of June. The El Dorado County Certified Farmers Market begins June 2 and will go through mid-October. It returns to the American Legion parking lot from 8am-1pm on Tuesdays. The Ski Run market in front of Blue Angel Café begins June 5. It is Fridays from 3-8pm.

“Some of the vegetables will be quite a bit earlier,” Jim Coalwell, who runs the Tuesday market, told *Lake Tahoe News*. This is because of the drought.

The pear crop in El Dorado County has been hit hard by fire blight.

“There’s been quite a bit of damage to pears and apples. Fire blight attacks and kills the blossoms,” Coalwell said.

He also runs the Placerville market, which starts this weekend.

Coalwell said the local farmers are doing OK with their water supply, and therefore what they can grow. The same is not true for the Fresno and Watsonville farmers who attend the South Tahoe market. For some of those farmers their water supply has been drastically reduced. Like last year, some fields will be fallow.

With most of the goods coming from small markets, Coalwell does not anticipate the supply of produce to be less than years past.

Some of the bigger changes Coalwell is contending with are rules coming out of Sacramento.

“The state used to take a 60-cent assessment per stall, now they want \$2,” Coalwell said. “Theoretically it is used for inspectors to keep the markets honest.”

Processed food is being more tightly regulated by the state, as are some of the rules for farmers. These are all things Coalwell is still getting a handle on.

This marks the fifth year of the Friends of Ski Run market, which is run by a nonprofit. More than 20 vendors will be offering organic farm fresh produce, honey, locally raised meats, hot food for dinner, handmade ice cream, handmade chocolates and other treats.

There is also a bounce house and face painting for kids, live art performances-demos and local live music.

“We strive to support local entrepreneurs with more than 85 percent of our vendors being South Lake locals. With drought conditions and new regulations for farms, it is a crucial time to help support our local farmers and food supply,” Michaela Dickson, one of the organizers, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Opinion: USFS still in search of a mission

By Jim Furnish, High Country News

Perhaps Ken Burns had the right idea when he named his public-television series “The National Parks: America’s Best Idea”. Even though I worked for the Forest Service for 34 years, I’m inclined to agree with him about the importance of our nation’s parks. But the national forests are surely our second-best idea, a priceless asset despite the call from some Westerners to sell off our forests and privatize them.

It is sad to admit that the battles over logging, grazing, mining and recreation fees have never stopped. Forests go up in smoke or fall prey to insect epidemics while critics complain about how ineffective and wayward the Forest Service has become. In some ways, it is the agency’s own fault.

The Forest Service enjoyed broad support as a “can do” agency in the post-WWII logging era, but its glacial response to the environmental movement dried up a reservoir of legitimacy and trust and created huge problems, perhaps best exemplified by the spotted owl crisis in the Pacific Northwest. I recall vividly when a federal judge determined that agency officials had willfully broken endangered species laws in their determination to protect logging interests. As Orville Daniels, the former supervisor of the Lola National Forest, put it, the Forest Service had gone over to the “dark side.”

The agency has found it difficult to right itself since then, and it still struggles to create a clear purpose and mission for the 21st century – one that resonates with the public it serves.

Read the whole story

S. Lake Tahoe trying to connect with residents

South Lake Tahoe is launching SpeakUp SLT, an online community engagement platform that allows citizens to provide feedback and help to prioritize community issues that are most important to them.

SpeakUp SLT will combine the power of social innovation and crowdsourcing with an online forum to prioritize projects and make the best decisions for our community. Citizens can vote on, comment on, and share other citizens' ideas, as well as their own.

In addition to posting and liking ideas, there are discussion and forum sections on the website where topics and ideas can be posted for community feedback.

Hwy. 50 on West Slope to be closed May 3

Both directions of Highway 50 between El Dorado Hills Boulevard and Bass Lake Road, as well as closures of the Latrobe Road on-ramp to eastbound Highway 50, the Bass Lake Road on-ramp to westbound Highway 50, and White Rock Road between Valley View Parkway and Entrada Circle will be closed May 3.

These closures are necessary to facilitate blasting operations on the north side of Highway 50 for El Dorado County's Silva Valley interchange project.

Traffic will be detoured around the closures via El Dorado Hills Boulevard, Serrano Parkway and Bass Lake Road. Motorists are encouraged to take other alternate routes around the area that also bypass the closures. Portable changeable message signs will be placed around the work zone to keep motorists updated on any changes to the timing of the closures.

Eastbound lanes from Latrobe Road to Bass Lake Road will be closed from 6-8am; eastbound on-ramp at El Dorado Hills Boulevard-Latrobe Road will be closed from 4:30-8am; westbound lanes from Bass Lake Road to El Dorado Hills Boulevard-Latrobe Road will be closed from 6-8am; and westbound on-ramp at Bass Lake Road will be closed from 4:30-am.