



ANSON MILLS

Roasted Carrots with Butter-Toasted Benne

Yield

8 side dish portions

Time

About 1¼ hours, start to finish

Cooking Remarks

Slow-roasted whole carrots have gained currency over the past few years, but that technique really works only on large, mature “vintage” carrots. We took the peel and slice path. Try to select carrots that are similarly sized and display no dramatic disparity between top and tip diameter, and are not too slender—the slices lose quite a bit of volume in the oven. Also, select firm and snappy carrots—if you can get your mouth on one, taste it, note its sweetness, and reject carrots with any trace of bitterness. A deep carrot-y flavor? Score! If this sounds crazy, it is nothing of the sort! Many old-fashioned heirloom carrots offer extraordinary flavor dimension. Look for them at farmers’ markets or farm stands.

While you’re at the farmers’ market shopping for carrots, check for hardneck garlic. Hardneck garlic can be identified by its hard, woody center stalk around which the cloves grow, and features fewer cloves per head, making peeling and appropriation easier. Plus, it isn’t grown in China and should be younger and sprightlier. Look for tight skin and firm, solid cloves. When the center sprout of a halved clove is green, cut it away—it is sure to be bitter.

Now, about honey. Real raw honey comes straight from the hive in its natural state and has not been heated or processed. It is a live ingredient and possesses natural enzymes and many purported health benefits. We like it particularly for this recipe because true raw honey is typically thicker than regular honey and glazes the carrots beautifully.

Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe, you will need a large bowl, a small roasting pan, and a small skillet.

Ingredients

3 pounds crisp, sweet carrots, about 1 inch in diameter at their fat end, trimmed and peeled
0.5 ounce (1 tablespoon) extra-virgin olive oil
¾ teaspoon fine sea salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1.5 ounces (3 tablespoons) unsalted European-style butter
6 large garlic cloves, preferably from a head of hardneck garlic (see Cooking Remarks),
peeled and halved
1 ounce (3 generous tablespoons) Anson Mills Sea Island Benne Seeds

1 ounce (1 generous tablespoon) raw honey (see Cooking Remarks)
2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme or rosemary
2 teaspoons minced fresh flat-leaf parsley

Directions

1. Adjust an oven rack to the upper middle position and heat the oven to 450 degrees. Cut the carrots on the diagonal into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch slices. Toss them into a small roasting pan, drizzle with the olive oil, and toss well with your hands to until the slices are evenly coated. Slide the pan into the oven and roast for 30 minutes, tossing the carrots every 10 minutes or so. Sprinkle the carrots with $\frac{5}{8}$ teaspoon salt and the pepper and toss to combine. Continue to roast until the carrots have released their moisture, are browned here and there in spots and are tender, 15 to 30 minutes longer.

2. While the carrots roast, in a small skillet, melt the butter over low heat. Add the garlic and stew the cloves very gently, spooning the butter over them, until they're fragrant, fork-tender, and translucent, about 5 minutes. Transfer the garlic to a small dish and set it aside. Add the benne seeds to the skillet and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until the seeds are lightly toasted but not darkened, 2 to 3 minutes. The butter may color slightly—and that is a good thing—but the seeds should remain relatively light. (Unhulled seeds such as ours will not produce color change until they are burned, so taste a few to gather an impression—but watch out! They're hot!). Remove from the heat, add the honey, the remaining $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt, and the reserved garlic and stir to combine.

3. When the carrots have only about 10 more minutes to roast, pour the butter mixture over them, scraping the skillet to get every drop. Toss the carrots until evenly coated and continue to roast. Toss in the herbs and serve without delay.