

Seasonal Eating
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Carrots Make an Easy Easter Side
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Easter always brings the promise of spring with new growth in the yards, beautiful colors, baby animals and a renewed enthusiasm. I have been getting ready for a program on Easter decorating and have looked at a lot of table settings online. I love the pastel colors and the flowers but I have also been intrigued this year with the bunny and carrot settings. Bright orange carrots (and carrot crafts) have been showing up in flower arrangements (Southern Living this month had a beautiful round fishbowl arrangement with carrots hanging down in the center – wow!), napkin rings, centerpieces and door decorations. The brilliant, fresh color just makes tables pop and makes for a happy atmosphere.

So as I started thinking about food dishes for Easter this year, carrots hit the top of the list. I love their sweet flavor. I always have a bag of baby carrots in the fridge for snacks but I also like them cooked. Carrots are a perfect accompaniment for ham with the sweet flavor against the saltiness of the ham, so they make a good side dish for Easter.

Carrots are an excellent source of vitamin A. They are second only to beets in their natural sugar content so children often will eat carrots more readily than other vegetables. A lot of the nutrients are found just under the skin, so if they aren't too tough or dirty, just scrub whole carrots really well and leave the peel on. If you can find true baby carrots at the farm markets or grocery store, try those. They are super tender although not quite as sweet as the more mature carrots.

For an easy side dish, glazed carrots are hard to beat. Whisk together a glaze, coat and either sauté in a pan on the stovetop or bake in the oven. The recipe below uses honey, ginger and vanilla for flavor and bakes in the oven while your ham rests. You can use whole carrots cut into diagonal 1" pieces or you can just use the baby carrots from the bag.

If you need more ideas for your Easter side dishes, check out the seasonal eating page at the Bedford County Extension website (bedford.tennessee.edu).

Honey Ginger Glazed Carrots

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon cider vinegar
- Pinch kosher salt
- Pinch black pepper
- 1 pound carrots, cut into 1" diagonal slices (or baby carrots)



In a large bowl, whisk together olive oil, butter, honey, ginger, vanilla, vinegar, salt and pepper. Add the carrots and toss to coat well. Place in a square baking dish and cover with foil. Bake at 400 degrees for 20-25 minutes or until carrots are just tender. Uncover and bake another 15-20 minutes until the liquid thickens slightly and the carrots become very tender.