

# Best of New York: Carrot Top Pastries in upper Manhattan is tops for carrot cake

Let's Bakery in Jackson Heights and Lloyd's Carrot Cake in Riverdale also make a magical cake

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**Mother and daughter Renee and Nikki Mancino of Carrot Top Pastries in Washington Heights, with a cream cheese-covered carrot cake.**

## **CARROT TOP PASTRIES**

**3931 Broadway, at W. 165th St. , Washington Heights; (212) 927-4800,  
CarrotTopPastries.com**

New York is full of characters, but none quite like Renee Mancino. The fast-talking matriarch of Carrot Top Pastries since 1979, Mancino is to carrot cake what DJ Kool Herc is to hip hop. She basically created the genre. Her carrot cakes (\$3.25-\$4.25 for a slice) are a perfect combination of sweet frosting and moist, fluffy bread. While eschewing raisins, Mancino insists on using walnuts, soy oil and whole carrots from California in her cakes, which have been specially ordered by the likes of Roberta Flack and Morgan Freeman. Her cream cheese frosting is a delicate work of art. "It takes ingenuity to turn a vegetable into a dessert," says Mancino, who is often referred to as "The Queen of Carrot Cake." The recipe hasn't changed since Mancino's original store in Washington Heights opened over three decades ago (there's also a store at 5025 Broadway in Inwood), but now her daughter Nikki works for her, ensuring that New York's best carrot cake will live on long into the future.