

Spring Carrots with Sorghum Agrodolce

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When I think about fresh Spring vegetables, there's one that always jumps out at me: the lowly carrot. This underappreciated root comes into its own during the post-Winter season, gently bursting with color and sweetness, reminding us that they aren't just rabbit food or something we have to mask with ranch dressing to tolerate. Indeed, their bright hue and subtle flavor are most enjoyed when handled with simplicity. (It also doesn't hurt if they are local or cooked soon after being plucked from the ground to maximize their freshness.)

In this recipe, carrots are glazed with an agrodolce, or reduction of sugar and vinegar, to brighten them up and add a little complexity without overpowering their naturally appealing flavor. For something a little different, this agrodolce combines the deep, almost caramel-like, earthiness of sorghum syrup*, a traditional Southern topping similar to molasses, with the tanginess of white balsamic vinegar for a sweet and sour combination that will delight even the pickiest veggie eaters.

1 pound carrots, cleaned and cut into manageable slices
¼ cup sorghum syrup
¼ cup white balsamic vinegar
salt to taste

Steam carrots until just tender but not soft. Remove from heat. Meanwhile, as carrots cook, stir in equal parts sorghum syrup and white balsamic vinegar into small saucepan and heat on medium until it begins to foam. Reduce heat to low and simmer until sauce develops into a thick consistency, gently stirring often. Remove from heat and using a kitchen sauce brush, glaze carrots tenderly with agrodolce. Add salt to taste. Serve warm.

* Sorghum syrup can be ordered at <http://muddypondsorghum.com/>.