

## CARROT FENNEL SOUP

SERVES 6

ACTIVE TIME: 20 MIN START TO FINISH: 50 MIN

What a soup. Carrots and fennel caramelize when roasted at high heat, then release their sweet essence when blended. A drizzle of fennel-seed oil echoes and intensifies the fennel flavor.

2 medium fennel bulbs with fronds  
1 lb carrots, quartered lengthwise  
1 medium onion, quartered  
1 garlic clove  
5 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, divided  
1/2 tsp sugar  
2 1/2 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth  
2 1/2 cups water  
1 tsp fennel seeds

**EQUIPMENT:** an electric coffee/spice grinder

- ▶ Preheat oven to 450°F with rack in lowest position.
- ▶ Chop enough fennel fronds to measure 1 Tbsp and reserve. Discard stalks and remaining fronds. Slice bulbs  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch thick and toss with carrots, onion, garlic, 3 Tbsp oil, sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp pepper. Spread in a 4-sided sheet pan and roast, stirring occasionally, until browned and tender, 25 to 30 minutes.
- ▶ Blend half of vegetables in a blender with broth until very smooth. Transfer to a medium saucepan. Repeat with remaining vegetables and water. Thin to desired consistency with extra water and simmer 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.
- ▶ Meanwhile, finely grind fennel seeds in grinder and stir into remaining 2 Tbsp oil. ▶ Serve soup drizzled with fennel oil and sprinkled with reserved fronds.

**COOKS' NOTES:** Soup can be made 1 day ahead and chilled.

- Fennel oil can be made 2 days ahead and kept at room temperature.