

Chilled Carrot Soup with Frizzled Ginger

6 to 8 servings

Raquel Mota presides over an ever-changing menu at the Museum of Modern Art's staff cafeteria, which serves both museum employees and restaurant staffers who get hungry between family meals. The menu ranges from her own Dominican favorites to an assortment of soups: seasonal specialties, meals-in-a-bowl, steaming-hot comfort soups, and chilled ones for warmer days. This quick and easy carrot soup is spiked with ginger, both in the broth itself and as crunchy little threads floated on top, and it is good hot as well as cold.

4 tablespoons ($\frac{1}{2}$ stick) unsalted butter
1 small yellow onion, coarsely chopped
2 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds carrots, peeled and coarsely chopped
2 tablespoons finely chopped peeled fresh ginger, plus one 2-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled, for garnish
3 quarts Vegetable Stock (below)
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 cup vegetable oil

In a large heavy saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the onion and cook, stirring, until slightly tender but not browned, about 5 minutes. Add the carrots, chopped ginger, and stock, bring to a simmer, and cook, uncovered, until the carrots are very soft, 30 to 40 minutes. Remove from the heat.

Puree the soup in batches in a blender until very smooth. Add salt and pepper to taste. Refrigerate if you want to serve the soup cold, 3 to 4 hours. (The soup can be made up to 2 days ahead, covered and refrigerated.)

When you're ready to serve the soup, slice the remaining piece of ginger into thin strips, then slice lengthwise into strands as thin as possible.

In a small skillet, heat the oil to 350 degrees over medium heat. To test it, add a strand of ginger—if the oil is the right temperature, the ginger will fry to a golden brown in about 30 seconds; if the oil is too hot, the ginger will burn almost immediately. Adjust the heat if necessary, add the remaining ginger, and fry until golden; drain on paper towels. Reheat the soup if you're serving it hot. Ladle into bowls and garnish each bowl with a few strands of the frizzled ginger.

Vegetable Stock

3 quarts

1 tablespoon olive oil
3 cups sliced carrots (about 1 pound)
3 cups sliced onions (about 12 ounces)
2 cups coarsely chopped Savoy cabbage (about 6 ounces)
2 cups well-washed sliced leeks, white and light green parts only (about 5 ounces)
1½ cups sliced celery (about 6 ounces)
1 medium head Bibb lettuce, cored and coarsely chopped
1 cup sliced peeled parsnips
3 garlic cloves, sliced
½ cup coarsely chopped fresh Italian parsley
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh basil
2 fresh thyme sprigs
1 bay leaf
2 tablespoons kosher salt
1 tablespoon whole black peppercorns
1 russet potato, scrubbed and sliced
2 tomatoes, cored and coarsely chopped

Heat the oil in a large saucepan over high heat. Add all the ingredients except the potato and tomatoes and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables soften, about 7 minutes.

Add the potato, tomatoes, and 3 quarts water and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer, covered, for 40 minutes.

Strain the stock through a fine-mesh strainer into a bowl or other container, pressing on the vegetables to extract the maximum amount of stock. (*The stock can be refrigerated, tightly covered, for up to 1 week or frozen for up to 3 months.*)