

SEASONED

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to our new *Seasoned* newsletter. Right now, due to COVID-19, we are all in our own homes, either alone or with our immediate family. That means there is more need than ever to cook for ourselves. It's also important that we cook healthy meals to help us stay fit and well. Since it's safer to avoid shopping at this time, the trick will be using what you're already got at home. We have ideas about how to do that. We've also got kitchen tricks to make cooking easier, exercises to keep us well balanced, and even a game to play.

Let's get started!



Carrot Soup

You'll be surprised what a rich, complex flavor you get from just a handful of ingredients. Since the soup is blended after it's cooked, you don't need to worry about carefully chopping the onion, carrots, and apple—rough and chunky is fine. The apple makes the carrots and onion taste even sweeter, but if you don't have one on hand, you can just leave it out.

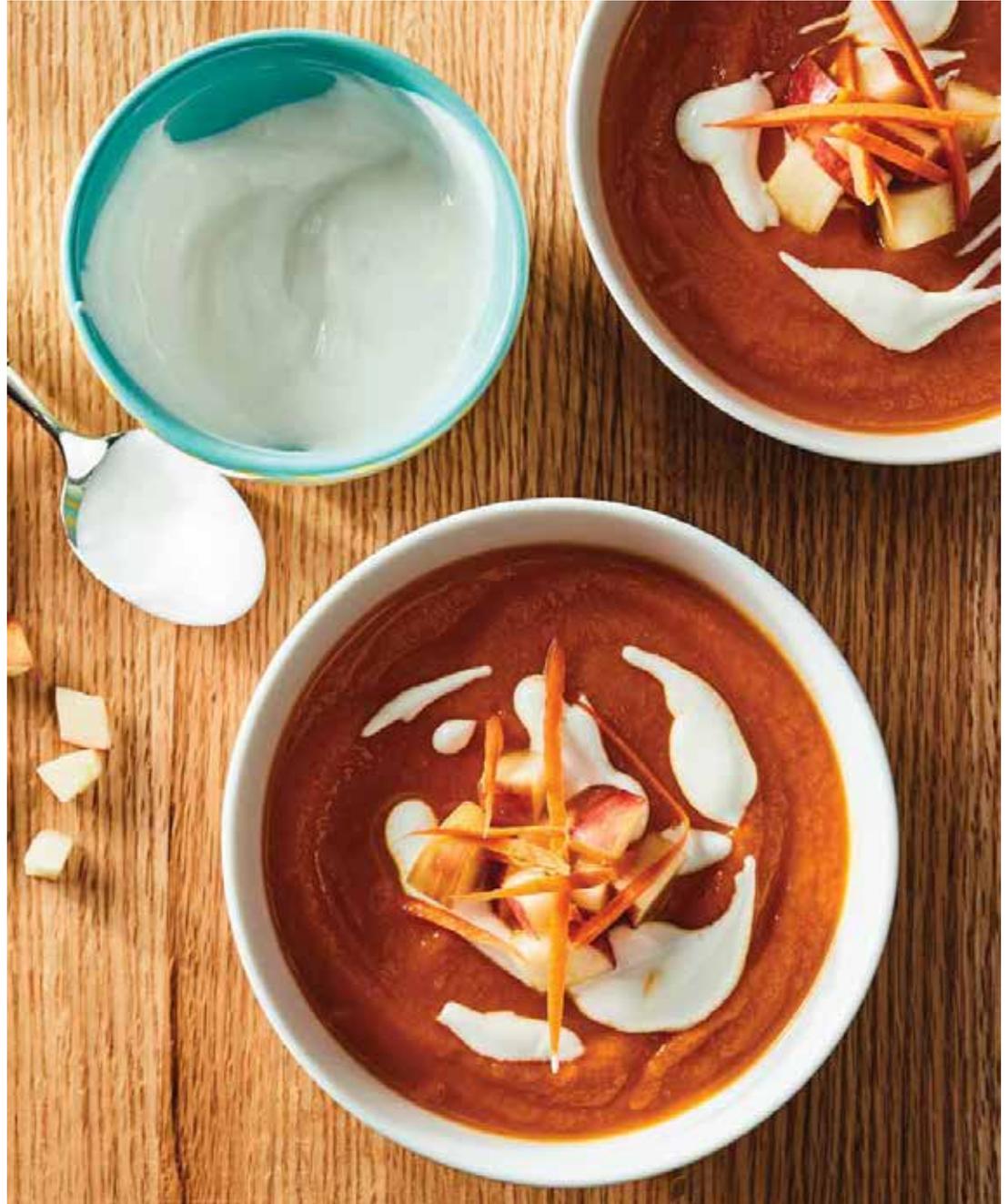
HANDS-ON TIME: 35 MINUTES TOTAL TIME: 2 HOURS MAKES: 3-4 SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive or vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 pound carrots, scrubbed and chopped
- 1 small apple, peeled (if you like), cored, and chopped
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- ¼ cup plain regular or Greek-style yogurt (if you like it creamy)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put a large lidded soup pot on the stove, turn the heat to medium, and add the oil.
2. When the oil is hot, add the onion, carrots, and apple, cover, and cook until the vegetables are beginning to soften, about 15 minutes. Use a wooden spoon to stir them occasionally while they cook.
3. Turn the heat to high, add the broth, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and cook until the carrots are tender, about 20 minutes. Set aside to cool for 20 minutes.
4. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the solids to a blender or food processor (don't throw out the liquid in the pot). Process until smooth. Add 2 cups of the cooking liquid and the yogurt, if using, and process again, then stir this mixture back into the pot.
5. You can serve this soup right away, but it's even better if covered and refrigerated up to 3 days, then reheated.



Or You Could

- Add a couple of garlic cloves, peeled and roughly chopped, to the onion, carrot, and apple mixture during the last 2 minutes of cooking.
- Stir 1 tablespoon chopped fresh ginger into the onion, carrot, and apple mixture during the last 5 minutes of cooking.
- Mix in 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro leaves after blending the soup.

Have More Carrots? Try This Simple Carrot Salad

This easy salad is similar to a slaw. It makes a nice, quick snack or side dish, but it's also great in a sandwich or taco or on a burger. Since you probably don't have fresh mint on hand, if you want mint flavor, open up a mint tea bag and put half in the salad.

HANDS-ON TIME: 15 MINUTES TOTAL TIME: 15 MINUTES MAKES: 4 SERVINGS



INGREDIENTS

- 3 large carrots, scrubbed or peeled
- 1 lime, halved
- 1 teaspoon honey
- ½ cup chopped fresh mint leaves
- ⅓ cup roasted peanuts, chopped (optional)
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Grate the carrots on the large holes of a box grater. Put them in a medium-sized bowl.
2. Grate the zest from one lime half into the bowl, then juice both halves into the bowl.
3. Stir in the honey, mint, peanuts, if using, and salt. Taste the salad. Do you think it needs more lime? Mint? Honey? Salt? If so, add it, and taste again.
4. Serve right away, or cover and refrigerate up to 3 days.

Or You Could

- Use lemon zest and juice instead of lime, or use vinegar.
- Use parsley or cilantro instead of mint, or use the fragrant leaves inside a bunch of celery.

Kitchen Tips and Tricks

Sometimes it's not the big techniques, but the little tricks that count most in the kitchen. Here are a few we like that we learned either from experience or from other cooks.



Just a Little Juice

Sometimes you need just one teaspoon or two of lemon juice, but to get it you have to cut open a whole lemon, which then often goes bad before you need more juice from it. The solution? Roll the lemon firmly on the countertop for 30 seconds, then use a skewer or toothpick to poke a hole directly in the bottom. You can now squeeze out the juice you need. Then cover the little hole you made with tape or plastic wrap; this will keep oxygen out so the lemon does not go bad nearly as quickly.



Before you begin cooking, get all the ingredients ready.

Wash, peel, and chop the vegetables; measure out the spices, oils, and seasonings into small bowls; open cans and packages. That way, once you start cooking you can follow along in the recipe without having to stop and prepare something.

Read every recipe all the way through before you start cooking.

It's no fun when you are planning to eat in 30 minutes and halfway through the recipe you find an instruction to "set aside for at least 1 hour."



Banana Saver

Wrapping the stems of your bananas in plastic wrap will make them last up to five days longer. The plastic helps trap the ethylene gas that bananas naturally produce as they ripen. This "fools" the bananas into ripening more slowly.

Exercises to Improve Balance



“Tightrope” Walking

1. Stand up as straight as possible, then begin to walk forward, placing one foot directly in front of the other as if you're on a tightrope.
2. Once you are very comfortable with the basic movement, try going backward. You can also try turning your head from side to side with each step, or walking with your eyes closed.



Stretch: Single Limb Stand

1. Stand with your feet together and your right arm relaxed at your side (or hold onto a chair with your right hand for support if needed).
2. Raise your left arm overhead and raise your left leg forward.
3. Hold for 10 seconds, then repeat on other side.

How to Play Mancala

If you have an egg carton and dried beans, you can make your own game. The word *mancala* comes from the Arabic word *naqala*, which means “to move.” Mancala is played around the world, especially in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. This is a great game to play at any time, but it is well suited for playing with any youngsters in the household.



WHAT YOU NEED

- 1 empty cardboard egg carton
- Scissors
- Tape or stapler
- 36 dried beans (or marbles or paper clips)

MAKE THE GAME

1. Open up the egg carton. Cut off any flaps that are used for closing the carton. Cut off the top of the carton and cut it in half across its middle.
2. Slide one half of the top underneath each end of the bottom, extending beyond the bottom by a couple of inches to make a well at each end. Use tape or staples to attach them.
3. Put three beans in each of the egg cups, and leave the wells on each end empty. You're ready to play!



PLAY THE GAME

The object of the game is to capture as many beans as you can. The player with the most beans at the end of the game wins. Sit across from your opponent. The six holes nearest to you are yours, while the six holes on the opposite side belong to your opponent. The large well on each player's right side is their mancala.

1. The starting player takes the beans out of one of their holes and puts one bean in each cup, moving around the board counterclockwise. Keep going around the board, putting one bean in each cup, until you run out of beans. You should place a bean in your own mancala along the way, but not in your opponent's mancala (if the beans get that far).
2. If your last bean lands in your mancala, you get another turn. Otherwise it is your opponent's turn. But if your last bean lands in one of your holes that is empty, and the hole opposite contains beans, you steal your opponent's beans from that hole and place them and your last bean in your mancala, and it is then your opponent's turn.
3. The game is over when one player is out of beans, or when a player's mancala holds more than half the beans in the game.