

FENNEL SOUP WITH ALMONDS AND MINT

(slightly modified from Oui, Chef)

1 Tbsp olive oil
3 cups sliced fennel bulb (I used two large bulbs)
1 shallot, chopped
1 garlic clove, minced
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, divided
2 1/2 cups water
1/2 teaspoon white vinegar (I added 1 tsp)
1 (15 ounce) can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
1/2 cup sliced almonds, toasted
3 tablespoons small fresh mint leaves
1 teaspoon lemon zest
1 ounce grated Parmigiano cheese

Heat a Dutch oven over medium heat. Add 1 tablespoon oil; swirl to coat. Add fennel, onion, garlic, and 1/4 teaspoon salt; cook 1 minute. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover and cook 6 minutes or until crisp-tender (do not brown), stirring occasionally.

Add remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt, 2 1/2 cups water, vinegar, and beans. Bring to a boil; cover, reduce heat, and simmer 10 minutes. Place half of mixture in a blender. remove center piece of blender lid (to allow steam to escape); secure blender lid on blender. Place a clean towel over opening in the lid. Blend until smooth. Pour into a large bowl. Repeat procedure with the balance of the mixture.

Combine almonds, mint, zest and cheese. Divide soup among 4 bowls; top with almond mixture and if desired drizzle a little olive oil before serving.