

RAW and ROASTED CARROTS and FENNEL with FETA and PISTACHIOS

Serves 4

This salad is a good exercise in the magic that can occur when you treat one ingredient very differently, in this case, as raw and roasted. It's doing a lot with a little; caramelized, tender bits of carrots and fennel mingle with slices of their raw, crunchy former selves, and, well, there's really nothing better. This salad is also terrific at room temperature, a trait I think is very sexy.

1 large fennel bulb, halved lengthwise 1 bunch smallish carrots (preferably with their tops)

1 bunch scallions, halved crosswise

5 tablespoons olive oil

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, plus more as needed

1 cup cilantro, tender stems and leaves

3 ounces feta cheese, sliced into 1/8-inch-thick slabs (if it crumbles a bit, that's fine)

1/4 cup pistachios, toasted and chopped

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F.
2. Slice half the fennel into 1/2-inch-thick wedges and place them on a rimmed baking sheet.
3. If your carrots have tops, remove and set them aside. Scrub the carrots (no need to peel) and place half of them on the baking sheet with the fennel. Add half the scallions and toss with 3 tablespoons of the olive oil. Season with salt and pepper, and roast, tossing occasionally, until the carrots and fennel are browned and the scallions begin to char, 20 to 25 minutes. Remove them from the oven and let cool to room temperature.
4. Meanwhile, thinly slice the remaining carrots and fennel lengthwise and place them in a large bowl. Thinly slice the remaining scallions on a strong bias and add to the bowl with the vegetables.
5. Once the roasted vegetables have cooled, add them to the bowl of raw vegetables. Toss with the lemon juice, cilantro, and some chopped carrot tops, if you've got 'em (if not, use more cilantro, parsley, dill, or mint—whatever you have). Season with salt, pepper, and more lemon juice, if you like.
6. Drizzle with the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil and top with the feta and pistachios.

DO AHEAD

This dish, sans feta and pistachios, can be made 5 hours ahead, no need to reheat. Add the feta and pistachios when ready to serve.

NOTE

If you're not familiar with carrot tops, they taste like a more assertive parsley. Next time you see carrot tops, save them and use like you would in pesto, salsa verde, or just general herbage—like in this salad.

