
Beets 101

Bold. Beautiful. Bliss.



3 KINDS OF BEETS



Golden Beets

Yellow and orange color.
Sweet flavor.



Chioggia Beets

Bulls-eye interior that fades
when cooked.



Detroit Red Beets

Classic dark red interior.
Sweetest flavor.

Buying:

When it comes to beets, size doesn't matter. Large ones are just as tasty as the smaller ones. But it helps for cooking time if they're the same size. Beets should be nearly rock hard. Avoid soft ones.

How to Store:

Roots: If your beets still have greens attached, cut them off, leaving an inch of stem. Keep the greens unwashed and refrigerated in a closed plastic bag. Store the beet roots, with the rootlets (or "tails") attached, unwashed, in a plastic bag in the crisper bin of your refrigerator. They will keep for several weeks, but their sweetness diminishes with time. So try to use them within a week. The yellow beets are especially sweet.

Beet greens: Cut beet greens from their roots. Keep dry, unwashed greens in a sealed plastic "Green" bag in the refrigerator up to 1 week.

Substitutes

Beet roots: Parsnips, rutabagas, turnips, or carrots.

Beet greens: Swiss chard, spinach.

How to Prep:

Roots: Just before cooking, scrub beets well and remove any scraggly leaves and rootlets. If your recipe calls for raw beets, peel them with a knife or a veggie peeler, then grate or cut them according to the recipe. To remove the skins, you can roast them in foil or boil them, and the peels will slip right off.



Beet greens: Wash leaves in basin of lukewarm water to remove grit. Remove the thicker stems. Cut into appropriately sized pieces, depending on use.

Pairs well with:

Allspice, apples, bacon, brown sugar, feta, gorgonzola, blue or goat cheese, chocolate, cinnamon, citrus, cloves, cream, cucumber, curry, dill, eggs, fennel, honey, horseradish, lamb, lemon, mustard, onions, oranges, parsley, pork, potatoes, quinoa, smoked fish, sour cream, tarragon, vinaigrette, balsamic vinegar.

Best Uses:

Raw in veggie trays

Grated raw in salad

Roasted

Braised or Steamed

Grilled

Baked goods

Roasted and added to salads

Juiced

Borscht (Beet Soup)

Spiralized

Beet Chips

Hummus

Pesto

Smoothie

Pickled

Salads (beet tops)

Stir fry (beet tops)

Veggie stock (beet tops)

How to Roast Beets



1. Preheat the oven to 400 F. Slice off the beet leaves close to the tip of the beet. Scrub the beets thoroughly, then wrap them loosely in foil.



2. Transfer the wrapped beets to a baking sheet. Roast for 50-60 minutes. Beets are done when a fork or skewer slides easily to the middle of the beet.



3. Cool beets. Then peel by holding one of the beets in a paper towel and using the edges of the paper to rub the skin away. The skin should peel away easily.



4. Store the Beets: Beets can be stored whole or sliced for up to a week in the refrigerator.



To Freeze:

Beet Roots: Boil or bake beets until done. Cool them in ice water or let them come to room temperature. Remove peels. Trim the beets into 1/4 inch slices or keep them whole (if they are small). Place in Ziplock freezer bag and remove as much air as possible. Seal and freeze.

Beet greens: Blanch washed beet greens for 2-3 minutes in hot boiling water. Immediately dunk in cold ice water to stop the cooking process. Then drain and pack into airtight containers. I like to freeze them in “balls” on a cookie sheet; then pop them into a Ziplock for the perfect portion.

Don't Toss Those Beet Greens!

Beet greens are highly edible! Here are some simple ways to use those beet greens.

1. Use them for making vegetable stock.
2. Toss them into a salad — especially the smaller leaves.
3. Braised with a little olive oil, garlic, and pepper flakes.
4. Throw ‘em in a smoothie!
5. Add them to your morning omelette, frittata, or quiche.
6. Stir them into a pasta sauce in the final stages.
7. Add to a soup, like you would kale or spinach.
8. Turn them into a pesto!

Beet Stains on Your Hands?

Take a half lemon and squeeze the juice on your hands. Rub with some elbow grease until the stain is gone!

Suggested Recipes:

Farro Salad with Beets, Beet Greens, and Feta

Adapted from The New York Times

Ingredients:

2 medium or 3 small beets (any color) with greens, the beets roasted, the greens stemmed and washed

1 cup farro, soaked for one hour in water and drained (or use rice or couscous)

Salt, preferably kosher salt, to taste

2 tablespoons sherry vinegar

1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar

1 small garlic clove, minced or pureed

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

1/2 cup chopped walnut pieces

2 ounces feta or goat cheese, crumbled (more if desired for garnish)

1/4 cup chopped fresh herbs, such as parsley, tarragon, marjoram, chives, mint

Preparation:

Bring 2 quarts water to a boil in a medium saucepan. Fill a bowl with ice water. When the water comes to a boil, add salt to taste and the greens. Blanch for two minutes, and transfer to the ice water. Allow to cool for a few minutes, then drain and squeeze out excess water. Chop coarsely and set aside.

Bring the water back to a boil, and add the farro. Reduce the heat, cover and simmer 45 minutes, stirring from time to time, or until the farro is tender. Remove from the heat and allow the grains to swell in the cooking water for 10 minutes, then drain.

While the farro is cooking, make the vinaigrette. Whisk together the vinegars, salt, garlic and mustard. Whisk in the oil(s). Add to the farro. Peel and dice the beets and add, along with the beet greens, feta or goat cheese, herbs and walnuts. Toss together, and serve warm or room temperature with a little more cheese sprinkled over the top if you wish.

Roasted Beet and Carrot Salad with Watercress

Serves 5

This salad is a show-stopper. I've never combined it with the watercress (as suggested) since I could never find any. But it's great without it. The vinaigrette is what makes this dish outstanding!

Ingredients:

1 lb. beets, peeled and cut into 1/2 inch thick wedges

1 lb. carrots, peeled and cut on bias into 1/4 inch thick slices

3 T. extra virgin olive oil

Table salt and ground pepper

1/4 t. sugar

2 T. white wine vinegar

1 t. honey

1 medium shallot, minced

6 oz. watercress, washed and trimmed (4 cups)

Directions:

Adjust oven rack to lowest position, place large rimmed baking sheet on rack, and heat oven to 500 degrees. Toss beets and carrots with 2 T. oil, 1/2 t. salt, 1/4 t. pepper, and sugar in large bowl. Remove baking sheet from oven and working quickly, carefully transfer beets and carrots to sheet and spread in even layer. (Do not wash bowl). Roast until veggies are tender and well-browned on one side, 20-25 minutes. Do not stir during roasting.

Meanwhile, whisk remaining T. oil, vinegar, honey, shallots, 1/4 salt, and 1/8 t. pepper in now-empty bowl.

Toss hot veggies with vinaigrette and cool to room temperature, about 30 minutes. Stir in watercress if desired, transfer to serving platter and serve.

Beet Green Pesto

Recipe adapted from nutmegnanny.com

You can mix the pesto with cooked pasta or use it as a condiment on grilled meat, or even as a sandwich spread. Makes about 1 c pesto.

Ingredients:

Beet greens – from about 6 beets, washed well

1/2 c lightly packed fresh basil leaves

1 clove garlic

1/2 c hazelnuts – toasted

1/2 c Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese – grated

3/4 c olive oil (more or less depending on taste and texture)

Kosher salt

Fresh cracked pepper

Directions:

Blanch the beet greens: boil a large pot of water. Set another bowl of ice water next to the stove, and a colander in the sink. When the water boils, add the greens and leave them in for about 10 seconds. Then drain them in the colander and immediately put into the ice water. Drain the greens again once they are cooled and squeeze out the excess water.

Add the greens, basil, and hazelnuts to the bowl of a food processor, and pulse until the ingredients are finely chopped. With the processor running, add Parmigiano-Reggiano and drizzle in the olive oil until desired consistency is reached. Season with kosher salt and fresh cracked pepper.

Roasted-Beet Salad With Goat Cheese and Walnuts

Recipe adapted from Mark Bittman

This salad is a great use for your salad mix and beets this week. It's great alongside grilled chicken breasts. Makes 4 servings.

Ingredients:

3 large or 6 medium beet

1/2 c walnuts

6 c. cut lettuce mix, washed and dried

1/3 c olive oil

2 T red-wine vinegar

1 T minced shallot

2 t Dijon mustard

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 ounces goat cheese

Directions:

Heat the oven to 400. Wash the beets, and while they are still wet, wrap them individually in foil. Put them on a rimmed baking sheet and cook, undisturbed, until you can pierce them easily with a thin-bladed knife, 60 to 90 minutes. Once the beets have cooled, peel them (I like to rub the skin off under running water), and cut them into chunks.

Put the walnuts in a dry skillet over medium heat and cook, shaking the pan frequently, until fragrant and beginning to darken, 3 to 5 minutes.

Rinse and dry the greens and put them in a large bowl; add the walnuts. Combine the oil, vinegar, shallot and Dijon in a jar with a sprinkle of salt and pepper. Screw the lid on tightly and shake vigorously until the dressing becomes thick and creamy. Taste and adjust the seasoning.

Pour some of the dressing onto the greens and toss to coat; pile the greens on 4 plates. Put the beets in the bowl, toss with some of the dressing and arrange them on top of or around the greens. Crumble the goat cheese on top, and serve.

Quick Pickled Beets

Recipe adapted from simplyrecipes.com

Ingredients:

1 bunch medium beets

¼ c cider vinegar

1 T sugar

1 T olive oil

½ t dry mustard

Salt and pepper

Directions:

Remove greens from beets, save for future use if desired. Cut beets to uniform sizes so they will cook evenly. Steam or boil around 30 minutes or until done. (Alternatively, you can roast them by wrapping them whole in foil and cooking them in a 350°F oven for about an hour.) A fork easily inserted into the beet will tell you if the beets are done or not.

Drain the beets, rinsing them in cold water. Use your fingers to slip the peels off of the beets. The peels should come off easily. Discard the peels. Slice the beets.

Sautéed Beet and Potato Hash

Adapted from Farmer John's Cookbook

This is an easy hearty side dish. It's delicious with steamed beet greens (or other greens) and seasoned, baked, or broiled tofu.

Ingredients:

3 T. vegetable oil

2 small onions, diced

4 medium red or white potatoes, peeled, grated

2 medium beets, peeled, grated (2-3 cups)

2 t. fresh thyme leaves or 1 t. dried thyme

1 t. minced garlic (about 2 medium cloves)

salt

1/2 t. freshly ground black pepper

Directions:

Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add the onions; cook and stir until soft and translucent, 5-7 minutes.

Stir in the potatoes, beets, thyme, and garlic. Season with salt to taste. Cook, turning it occasionally, until the potatoes and beets are tender and slightly crispy, 15-20 minutes.

Remove the skillet from heat. Season generously with pepper, and more salt if desired to taste.