

BEETS

Chilled Beet Soup

- 6 medium beets
- 2-3 bouillon cubes
- salt and freshly ground pepper
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- Optional: herbs or crème fraiche

Place about 2 quarts of salted water, 6 beets and bouillon cubes in pot and boil for about an hour (until beets are cooked through).

Allow to beets to cool, peel skin off beets, and cut into quarters.

Warm olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Stir in onions and garlic; cook until lightly browned, and allow to cool.

In batches, add sautéed onions, about 1 cup of beet stock, and cook beets in a blender, and pulse until liquefied.

Place back in pot and let cool in refrigerator. Ladle into bowls, and garnish herbs or crème fraiche.

Beet and Goat Cheese Salad with Pistachios

- 3 large red beets (1 2/3 lb without greens)
- 2 large golden beets (1 lb without greens)
- 1/4 cup minced shallot
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 cup pistachio oil
- 4 oz soft mild goat cheese
- 3 tablespoons salted shelled pistachios (not dyed red), coarsely chopped
- 1 oz mâche (also called lamb's lettuce), trimmed (4 cups)

Special equipment: a 2 1/2-inch round cookie cutter (without handle; at least 2 inches high)

Preheat oven to 425°F.

Separately wrap red and golden beets tightly in double layers of foil and roast in middle of oven until tender, 1 to 1 1/2 hours. Unwrap beets.

While beets are cooling slightly, whisk together shallot, lemon juice, salt, and pepper in a small bowl, then add oil in a stream, whisking.

When beets are cool enough to handle, slip off and discard skins. Separately cut red and golden beets into 1/4-inch dice and put in separate bowls. Add 2 1/2 tablespoons dressing to each bowl and toss to coat.

Farfalle with Beets, Beet Greens and Pine Nuts

- 1/3 cup pine nuts
- 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 2 large onions, quartered lengthwise through root end, sliced crosswise (about 4 cups)
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 bunches 2-inch-diameter golden beets with fresh healthy greens; beets peeled, each cut into 8 wedges, greens cut into 1-inch-wide strips
- 12 ounces farfalle (bow-tie pasta)
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese plus additional for serving

Heat heavy large skillet over medium heat. Add pine nuts and stir until lightly toasted, about 3 minutes. Transfer to small bowl. Add 2 tablespoons oil and onions to same skillet and sauté until beginning to soften and turn golden, about 10 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low and continue to sauté until onions are tender and browned, about 30 minutes longer. Add garlic and stir 2 minutes. Scatter beet greens over onions. Drizzle remaining 2 tablespoons oil over; cover and cook until beet greens are tender, about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, cook beets in large pot of boiling salted water until tender, about 10 minutes. Using slotted spoon, transfer beets to medium bowl. Return water to boil. Add pasta to beet cooking liquid and cook until tender but still firm to bite, stirring occasionally. Drain, reserving 1 cup pasta cooking liquid. Return pasta to pot.

Stir onion-greens mixture and beets into pasta. Add pasta cooking liquid by 1/4 cupfuls to moisten. Season with salt and coarsely ground black pepper. Stir in 1/3 cup Parmesan cheese. Divide pasta among shallow bowls. Sprinkle with pine nuts. Serve, passing additional cheese.

CARROTS

Carrot Top Soup

- 1 bunch (6 small to medium) carrots, tops and the roots
- 2 thyme or lemon thyme sprigs
- 2 Tbsp olive oil

- 2 Tbsp chopped dill, parsley, celery leaves, or lovage
- 3 Tbsp brown rice
- sea salt and freshly ground pepper
- 2 large leeks, white parts only
- 6 cups Vegetable Stock

1. Pull or pluck the lacy leaves of the carrot greens off their stems. You should have between 2 and 3 cups, loosely packed. Wash, then chop finely. Grate the carrots, or if you want a more refined-looking soup, finely chop them.

2. Heat olive oil over moderate heat in a soup pot. Add the carrot tops and carrots, rice, leeks, thyme, and dill. Cook for several minutes, turning everything a few times, then season with 1 ½ teaspoons of salt and add the stock. Bring to a boil and simmer until the rice is cooked 20 to 25 minutes.

3. Taste for salt, season, with pepper, and serve.

SWEET ONIONS

Roasted Beet and Sweet Onion Salad with Tarragon

- 2 pounds whole trimmed beets
- 2 sweet onions, unpeeled
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons country-style mustard
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh tarragon (or 1½ teaspoons dried tarragon)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 400°. Rub beets with 1 tablespoon oil and wrap in aluminum foil. Wrap onions in aluminum foil, separately from beets. Roast beets and onions 45 minutes to 1 hour, or until soft when pricked with a fork. When cool enough to handle, peel the beets by rubbing off their skins. (If your beets are different sizes, remove the smaller ones as they are done and continue cooking the larger ones. Cut the beets into wedges.

Aliza Green's Belgian Beef, Beer and Sweet Onion Stew

In Belgium, where they say everybody eats well because the food is so good, this hearty stew would be made with one of the famed local beers. Here, flavorful beef from the chuck (or shoulder) is well browned and then simmered in a mixture of onions and beer. A little brown sugar for sweetness and vinegar for sharpness rounds it all out. To slice the beef yourself, place it in the freezer for about an hour, or until it is firm but not frozen and it will be easy to slice.

Serves 6 to 8.

- 1/4 pound bacon, cut into thin strips
- 3 large sweet onions, sliced thinly

- 1 cup flour (for dusting)
- 3 pounds beef chuck, cut across the grain in 1/3-inch thick strips
- 2 bottles (24 ounces) dark beer
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons dark brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
- Salt and black pepper
- 4 bay leaves

Serve with: 1 pound egg noodles, cooked and tossed with browned butter and chopped parsley

In a large Dutch oven, brown the bacon till fat is rendered. Remove bacon bits and reserve both bits and fat. Sauté onions in half the bacon fat till well browned. Remove onions from the pan. Add the remaining bacon fat to the pan. Dust the beef slices with flour, shaking off excess, and brown well on all sides in batches. Do not crowd the pan, or the beef will steam instead of browning. Remove beef slices from pan. Add 3 tablespoons flour to the fat in the pan and stir to make a thick paste. Pour in the beer, vinegar, thyme, salt, pepper and bay leaves. Bring the liquid to the boil.

Layer the beef, onions, and liquid in the Dutch oven and bring to the boil on top of the stove. Cover and place in a 300° oven for 2 to 2 1/2 hours, or until the beef is fork-tender. Serve over the noodles.