

A Recipe from Thomas Buckborough & Associates...

Roasted Organic Golden & Red Beet Stacks With Fresh Herbed Goat Cheese - A Beautiful And Elegant First Course & Salad

One of our favorite first courses: It's not only delicious, but it looks like a festive party dish whether it's July or December. Everything can be done a day ahead, leaving only assembly prior to serving. This recipe was developed by Laura Klein. Laura, founder of OrganicAuthority.com, is an organic chef who encourages everyone to eat as many organic products as possible—they're healthier and generally better-tasting. But you can use conventional products if you don't have access to organic ones. - Serves 8.

Ingredients

1-1/2 pounds large (at least 3" diameter) golden and red beets, washed and trimmed
1 cup rice wine vinegar
1 cup granulated sugar
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 recipe herbed goat cheese (see below), cut into eight round slices
1 to 1-1/2 cups mixed organic baby lettuces, washed and dried
1/4 cup Organic Blood Orange Almond Vinaigrette
Fresh Organic Basil Oil (substitute an infused basil oil like Salute Santé or Avocado Oil)
Balsamic Glaze (below)

Directions

Roast The Beets

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Place the beets in a small roasting pan and pour in enough cold water to reach about one quarter of the way up the sides of the beets. Roast the golden beets in a separate pan from the red beets so the colors do not bleed together. Cover the pan with foil and roast the beets until they are tender: 2 hours to 2 hours 15 minutes, depending on their size. To check for doneness, gently insert a toothpick into a beet. It should slide through easily. Remove the beets from the pan, cool and peel.

2. Cut each beet into 1/4"-thick round slices. Cut each slice with a 2-3" round cookie cutter. (You will need ten rounds.) Cut trimmings into 1/4" dice and reserve 1/2 cup of dice for garnish.

3. In a sauté pan, bring 1/2 cup of vinegar and 1/2 cup of sugar to a boil. Stir to combine and until sugar is dissolved. Lower heat to a simmer and poach beets one minute per side. Poach the golden beets first separately from the red beets to prevent the beets from bleeding onto one another. With a slotted spatula, remove and place on a baking tray lined with parchment paper. Cover and refrigerate until needed. Repeat with the red beets. NOTE: You can prepare the dish up to this point one day ahead.

Assemble

When ready to assemble, heat the olive oil in a small sauté pan. Arrange the slices of herbed goat cheese in the pan and warm slightly, turning them with a small spatula just to warm both sides. This has to be done quickly or the cheese will melt.

Make Balsamic Glaze

NOTE: Use a heat diffuser when reducing balsamic vinegar. If you boil it too hard the acid will remain and make the glaze too sharp.

1. Heat 2 cups balsamic vinegar in a heavy medium saucepan over medium heat until you see steam rising from the vinegar. Decrease the heat and reduce the vinegar for 2 to 3 hours until it is thickened and is like maple syrup.

2. You should have about 1/2 cup of the glaze. Store glaze in a plastic squeeze bottle and bring to room temperature when needed.

Make The Herbed Goat Cheese

Ingredients

3 teaspoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
3 teaspoons chopped fresh chives
2 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme leaves
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
One 9-ounce log of fresh goat cheese
Plastic wrap

Directions

1. Combine the parsley, chives, thyme and pepper in a bowl. Lay enough plastic wrap on a flat surface to tightly wrap around the cheese log. Place herb mixture on plastic wrap.
2. Roll the cheese log in the mixture, coating all sides while retaining the shape of the log. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate until needed. NOTE: This can be done a day ahead.

Assemble The Beet Stacks

1. Starting with a red beet round, place one round on a firm, flat surface and begin to layer. Top with a slice of goat cheese, then a golden beet round, a second slice of cheese, another red beet round, a third slice of cheese and a beet round. (Continue until you have five layers of beets and four layers of cheese.)
2. Depending on the size of the beets, you can either leave the rounds whole or cut them in half, placing them on their back when plated so you can see the gorgeous alternating colors between the cheese.
3. Repeat with the remaining beets and cheese.

To Serve

1. This dish looks best on plain white plates. Drizzle plates with Fresh Organic Basil Oil and Balsamic Glaze. Arrange the stacks of beets in the center of each plate with drizzled oil and glaze.
2. Toss the baby lettuces with the Organic Blood Orange Almond Vinaigrette and mound half of the lettuces in the middle and in-between the stacks of beets. Sprinkle the reserved diced beets on top of the greens. Serve immediately.

Chef's Tip

This is truly an impressive dish and fairly easy to do if prepared ahead. I have served this dish to people who do not like beets and they love it. My advice, don't tell your friends what they are eating until they have taken a bite. As always, use as many organic ingredients you can find for optimum flavor and health.

