

TO VEGETABLES
with love

Beets and peaches with roasted garlic yoghurt

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The first salad I ever cooked for Arthur Street Kitchen salad service was a roasted beetroot salad with chickpeas and lemon saffron yoghurt. It was an earthy salad, shiny and colourful, but quite a daring one as my first boxed delivery. Beetroot is not the household name as broccoli or cauliflower are, but in those days, I found that my customers loved the unexpected. Perhaps you all still do? Incidentally, you can find this recipe in the 5th anniversary revised edition of Community, which was released with 20 new recipes and stories in 2019.

So, this recipe is a bit of a flashback. From that first salad, I have the beetroot and yoghurt combination, but I've added sweet peaches which instantly brightens up all the flavours. Roasted red onions add a jammy creaminess. The yoghurt sauce has depth and umami from the roasted garlic.

There are many ways to roast beetroot. I chose to dress them simply in olive oil, salt and pepper, and then wrap in foil for roasting. The foil enclosure creates a warm chamber for the beetroot to cook within, while also allowing them to retain all their juiciness. When ready, the skin slips right off.

While we are turning the oven on, I've maximized the opportunity by adding red onion and garlic to roast alongside the beets. Roasted alliums like onion and garlic deliver incredible depth of flavour – the pungency and bitterness found in their raw form transforms into sweetness and silkiness.

If you're looking to save time, you can absolutely use store-bought pre-cooked beetroot. I use them a lot in my everyday cooking, especially when I'm looking to throw together a super quick dinner.

Serves 2 as a main or more as a side

340g (12 ounces) beetroot (beets), washed
extra virgin olive oil
sea salt and black pepper
1 small red onion, cut into thick wedges
4-5 cloves garlic, unpeeled
240g (1 cup) vegan yoghurt such as oat or coconut (or use regular greek yoghurt)
handful of salad greens

2 ripe peaches (about 300g / 10.5 oz), deseeded and sliced
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
30g (1/4 cup) roasted walnuts, roughly chopped

Preheat oven to 400°F / 200°C.

Place each beet onto a piece of foil, drizzle with a little olive oil, and season with sea salt and black pepper (if your beets are large, cut in half or quarters; for small beets, leave as is). Wrap up the beets and place onto a baking tray. To the same tray, add the red onions in a little pile, keeping them together and separate to the foiled beets, and drizzle with olive oil and season with sea salt and black pepper. Finally, add the garlic cloves to the same tray. Place in the oven and roast for 30 minutes, until the onions are soft and golden around the edges. Remove the onions and garlic from the tray, and then place the beets back into the oven, roasting for another 10-15 minutes (total time for beets should be 40-45 minutes), or until the beets are tender.

Peel the roasted garlic and discard the skins. Place the yoghurt into a small blender or food processor and add the roasted garlic along with 1/2 teaspoon of sea salt. Blitz until completely smooth.

Unwrap the beets and remove the skin. Slice them.

To assemble the salad, place the salad leaves on a large plate or platter. Top with beets, followed by the red onions, and peaches. Spoon over the roasted garlic yoghurt. Drizzle over balsamic vinegar, a little olive oil and season with sea salt and black pepper. Top with walnuts and serve.