

Borscht

If you've cooked ahead by roasting beets on Sunday, that's great! If needed, cook them early in the day today.

Earthy, rich and colorful beets are the major feature in this famous root vegetable soup. This has been a staple food in Russian, Eastern Slavic and Jewish cultures for centuries.

You'll enhance the nourishment and interest with shredded carrots, red potatoes and cabbage. Finish the meal with some cucumber salad and artisan rye bread.

Preparation time: 3 hours (If you're cooking beets today) - Servings: 4

Organize Your Ingredients!

Notes on Organizing

Prep and organize your ingredients on small plates or in bowls so they can be easily accessed as you assemble the soup and salad. Today you'll chop 2-1/3 C. onion: 1/3 C. finely chopped onion for the cucumber salad and 2 C. chopped onion in the Borscht. You'll need 1 C. yogurt: 1/2 C. in the cucumber salad and the remaining 1/2 C. for garnishing the soup.

Borscht

3 large cooked beets (peeled and diced into 1" pieces)

1 tsp. olive oil
1 clove garlic (smashed and chopped)
2 C. yellow onion (chopped)
2 C. red or green cabbage (sliced and chopped)
chopped greens from beets (if you've got them)

2 medium red potatoes (cut into 1" chunks)
1 C. carrots (shredded)
4 C. low-sodium vegetable broth
3 T. apple cider vinegar
1 tsp. ground caraway seed
1 tsp. ground coriander
1/2 tsp. dry dill weed

Cucumber Salad

2 C. cucumber (peeled/finely chopped)
1/3 C. yellow onion (finely chopped)
1/2 C. plain, nonfat yogurt
1 T. rice wine vinegar
a pinch of dry dill weed

Remaining Items

1 loaf Artisan Rye Bread
1/2 C. plain, nonfat yogurt (stirred smooth)

Let's Prepare, Cook, and Plate This!

Basic Assembly Instructions

If the beets have greens attached, wash and chop them. Set aside. You'll add them to the borscht as instructed. If you need to cook beets, throw them in the oven early in the day. Bake them for 1 hour (covered with a couple T. water) at 350°. Let beets cool for 1/2 hour. Wearing latex gloves, rub beets under cold running water to remove skin. Chop them for the soup as part of the prep.

Borscht

1. Place chopped, cooked beets in a bowl and set aside.
2. Measure oil into a deep soup kettle and sauté garlic, onion, cabbage and chopped greens (if you have them) in the kettle until cabbage and onion begin to brown.
3. Add cooked beets, chopped potatoes, carrots, broth, vinegar, caraway, coriander and dill. Bring to boil and cook 30 minutes. You may cover pan if you wish but it isn't necessary. Set a timer.
4. Turn off heat and let rest on the burner for 45 minutes to an hour. (Make the cucumber salad while the soup rests.)
5. About 15 minutes before you wish to dine, wrap bread in foil and place in a 200° oven.
6. Rewarm soup before serving.

Cucumber Salad

Stir chopped cucumber and finely-chopped sweet onion together in a bowl.

In a separate bowl, stir yogurt, vinegar and dill together. Fold yogurt and cucumber/onion mixtures together and let stand until ready to serve.

Serve the Meal

Ladle 2 C. soup into bowls and top with a dollop of stirred yogurt. A dollop is about 2 T. of yogurt.

Serve with cucumber salad and bread on the side.

What I've Learned from this Recipe

Borscht can have a variety of ingredients in it including onions, cabbage, carrots, potatoes, rutabagas, turnips etc. You get the picture. Beets are always the main ingredient and the Borscht can be as simple as beets, onions, seasonings and broth.

Let us know what you think, and ask any questions you may have! chezdon@plate6.com