

Borscht

Serves 4

Late September/early October the local farm begins the beet harvest and our kitchen is filled with the smell of roasting beet and our walls, counters and kitchen staff sprinkled with red beet juice - giving us lots of opportunities to play pranks on each other. In addition to it's wonderful taste and colour, beet has many health benefits and we have lots of recipes which feature this amazing vegetable.

There are many versions of Borscht (and several ways of spelling it too!), this recipe is one which emerged after several experiments. If you prefer you can use roasted beet or pre-cooked, vacuum packed. You can also puree this soup. Weights are for peeled vegetables.

1 medium beet peeled and quartered
1 small onion, quartered and finely sliced
1 medium carrot, cut into 1" matchsticks
4oz/125g turnip (rutabaga) cut into 1" matchsticks
1 clove garlic, minced
1 medium potato, quartered and thinly sliced
4oz/125g white cabbage finely shredded
1½ tbsp tomato paste
2 pints/1 ltr vegetable stock
1 tsp dried dill
1 tsp brown sugar
2 tbsp sunflower oil
1 tbsp cider vinegar
salt and black pepper to taste
sour cream to serve (optional)

Put the beet into a small pan with barely enough water to cover. Cook until just beginning to soften. Drain, reserving cooking liquid, cool and slice into matchsticks. Return to cooking liquid and set aside.

Heat oil in a large saucepan and saute onion, carrot, turnip and garlic on a low setting for 5 minutes. Add tomato paste and continue cooking for a further 3 minutes. Add stock, potatoes and herbs. Cover and simmer for 5 minutes. Add cabbage, beet with reserved liquid and sugar. Simmer for 15 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Season to taste. Add cider vinegar and serve with sour cream.

Please feel free to share this recipe with others. If you use this in another publication we would appreciate a reference to Two Whales as the originators of this recipe. Thank you.

