

FEBRUARY IS FOR BEETS!

Beets are a nutrient-packed vegetable option for children. Aside from boasting a vibrant colour, they are a good source of fiber. Fiber is important for children because it helps their bodies regulate blood sugar levels and maintain cholesterol levels.

In addition to fiber, beets deliver antioxidants to children's bodies. These antioxidants, called betalains, carotenoids, and flavonoids, aid in preventing illness and keeping their brains healthy and thinking!

If your kids already have a sweet tooth, chances are they will love beets! Beets are naturally sweet and much more nutritious than many sugar-laden processed foods. You can enjoy beets from root to leaf!

Beets contain iron. Both kids and adults need healthy amounts of iron in the diet in order to make new blood cells in order to carry oxygen to the different parts of the body. The iron in beets is best absorbed when eaten with Vitamin C or with animal products.

Attached to the beet's green leaves is a round or oblong root, the part most of us think of when hearing the word "beet." Although typically a beautiful reddish-purple hue, beets also come in varieties that feature white, golden/yellow or even rainbow colour roots. Despite a difference in color, the two beets are essentially the same when it comes to nutritional value and both add plenty of essential vitamins and minerals to your diet.



Golden beets have a slightly sweeter, milder flavour compared to the red or purple beets but nutritionally the two are practically identical. The Chiogga or Candy Stripe beets have a sweet, earthy flavour.

Grate them!

Fresh, raw beets can be finely grated into salads for colour or used as a garnish for soup. Be sure to peel them first.

Roast them!

Peel & cut beets into quarters or wedges and roast at 400° for 20-30 mins.

Mash them!

Mash roasted beets with chickpeas for a hot pink hummus!

Toss them!

Toss roasted beets with goat cheese for a classic salad. The flavour of beets pairs really well with the sharp, distinctive flavours of goat cheese.

ROASTED BEET HUMMUS

Ingredients

- 1 roasted beet peeled and chopped
- 15 oz can cooked chickpeas, drained
- 2/3 cup tahini
- 2-3 zest & juice lemons (about 1/3 cup)
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp kosher salt

Directions

- Using your food processor or blender, add ingredients as listed. Blend until you reach your desired consistency.
- You can top your hummus with big salt flakes, a drizzle of olive oil, or chopped parsley, sliced radishes or pine nuts.

ROASTED BEETS

Recipe from Ina Garten
Makes 6 servings

Ingredients

- 12 beets
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 1/2 tsp fresh thyme leaves, minced
- 2 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp raspberry vinegar
- Juice of 1 large orange

Directions

- Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.
- Remove the tops and the roots of the beets and peel each one with a vegetable peeler. Cut the beets in 1 1/2" chunks. (Small beets can be halved, medium ones cut in quarters, and large beets cut in eighths.)
- Place the cut beets on a baking sheet and toss with olive oil, thyme leaves, salt and pepper. Roast for 35-40 minutes, turning once or twice with a spatula, until the beets are tender.
- Remove from the oven and immediately toss with the vinegar and orange juice. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and serve warm.

