

Roasted Beet Salad

serves 4–6

This is a super-flavorful and beautiful, colorful dish for your summer or autumn table. Vary the accompanying vegetables to match what's seasonal.

8 golf-ball-sized OR 4 tennis-ball-sized beets; preferably yellow, red, and chioggia striped

1 T. olive oil

1 bulb fennel

2 golf-ball-sized salad turnips

3/4 cup sugar snap or snow peas

2 T. fresh sliced herbs; your choice of basil, Thai basil, anise hyssop, mint, chives, garlic chives, lemon balm

1 1/2 T. extra virgin olive oil OR toasted nut oil

1 T. white balsamic vinegar

Teeny drizzle of aged balsamic vinegar (opt.)

Salt to taste

Preheat oven to 450. Wash and trim stems and long root off beets and coat with 1 T. olive oil. Place in a baking dish with a tight-fitting lid and roast until completely soft (45 minutes to 1½ hours, depending on size and density of beets). Set aside to cool.

Meanwhile, cut tops off fennel. Reserve the feathery fronds to use as garnish. Cut the fennel bulb in half, top to bottom. Cut out the core. Using a sharp knife or mandolin, cut the fennel in super-thin slices. Trim the top and bottom off the turnips. Taste the skin to see if it is tough or bitter; peel if it is. Cut into super-thin slices. Trim the ends (and strings if necessary) from the peas. Cut in thin, long, diagonal slices.

Mix all the vegetables together. Add your choice of fresh sliced herbs. Peel and cut the beets into slices or chunks. Add the oil, vinegar, and salt. Stir well. Serve garnished with fennel feathery fronds, edible flowers, or herb sprigs.

Feel free to substitute other vegetables to accompany the beets. I try to get something in the salad that is crunchy, something with a little sharpness, and something with a little “jazz.”

A nice optional addition is a shaving of nice sharp Italian cheese on top. Toasted nuts also taste great on top.

Enjoy!