

# XCentric Ideas

A stack of four dark red, sliced beets is the central focus, resting on a white plate. The beets are cut into thick, round slices, with the top slice slightly offset. To the left of the stack, several more slices are scattered. A vibrant red sauce is drizzled around the base of the stack and on the plate. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting.

Recipe ideas from Internet  
All photos my own

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# Beetroot fun facts

Bet you didn't know it, but beetroot is a **Hangover cure**. Beta cyanin, the pigment that gives beetroot its colour, is an antioxidant so the humble beetroot could be the key to beating your hangover. Beta cyanin speeds up detoxification in your liver, which enables your body to turn the alcohol into a less harmful substance that can be excreted quicker than normal.

You may want to know this or not but beetroot is also known as an **aphrodisiac** - One of earliest known benefits of beetroot is its use as an aphrodisiac during the Roman times (maybe that's why The Lupanare, the official brothel of Pompeii, which still stands, has its walls adorned with pictures of beetroots). Sceptical? It is not all folklore as beetroot contains high amounts of boron, which is directly related to the production of human sex hormones.

**Sugar rush** - Beetroot has one of the highest sugar contents of any vegetable. Up to 10 per cent of beetroot is sugar, but it is released slowly into the body rather than the sudden rush that results from eating chocolate.

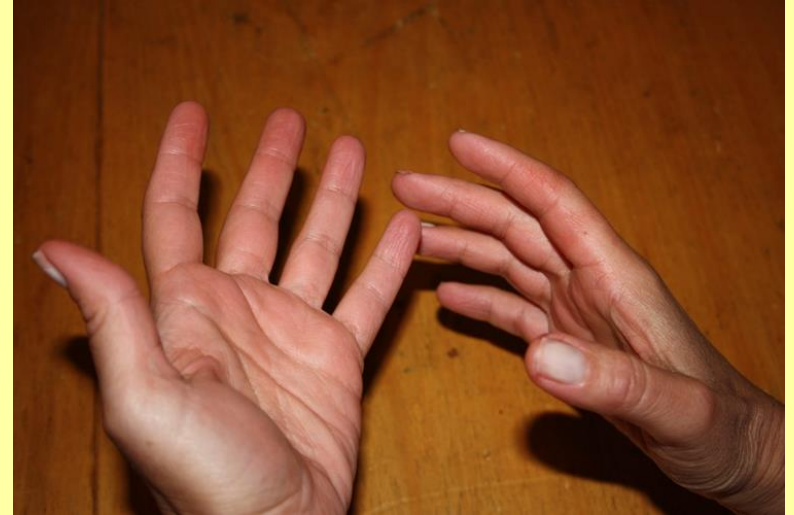
Turning heads - Since the 16th century, beet juice has been used as a natural **red dye**. The Victorians used beetroot to dye their hair.

Bottoms up - Beetroot can be made into a **wine** that tastes similar to Port.

Beetroot is a **water-soluble dye**, and hot water seems to 'fix' the colour stain more, so use lukewarm or cold water to avoid staining.

Beetroot also contains Betaine, a substance that relaxes the mind and is used in other forms to treat **depression** and contains Tryptophan which is also found in chocolate and contributes to a sense of well being.

# Beetroot stains



No need to use gloves when working with beetroot.

Use table salt or rock salt, stand at a low-flowing cold-water tap, rub the salt into your hands, add water to make a paste and wash off.

You can also use lemon juice with it, but I've tried it only with salt and it works!



# Cook Beetroot

Years ago, I cooked beetroot on the stovetop. I promised myself – NEVER, EVER AGAIN. My stove was splattered in red!

For this issue, I've tried another way ... the microwave.

Peel the raw beetroot with a potato peeler. Add to a microwave dish with a lid (or a glass dish with a lid.)

Add boiling water to submerge the beetroot halfway.

Cook on High for 12 – 15 minutes, depending on your microwave. Test it after 12 minutes.

# Beetroot falafels

100g raw, grated beetroot  
400g can chickpeas, rinsed and drained  
Garlic clove, chopped  
Handful of flat-leaf parsley or curly parsley  
1 tsp ground cumin  
1 tsp ground coriander  
2 tbsp plain cake flour / Smash (instant potato flakes)  
1 small onion, roughly chopped  
1/2 tsp Harissa paste (*I used paprika*)  
2 tbsp sunflower oil *plus* oil for frying



Pat the chickpeas dry with kitchen paper.

Tip into a food processor along with the onion, garlic, parsley, spices, flour, oil and a little salt. Blend until fairly smooth, stir in the beetroot, then shape into balls with your hands.

Heat oil in a non-stick frying pan, add the falafel balls, flatten with your spatula/egg lifter, then quickly fry for 3 mins on each side until lightly golden. (Or bake in 180 oC oven for about 20 minutes, turn them over halfway.)

Serve with toasted pitas, tomato salsa and a green salad.

Or on a bun with crispy lettuce and tomato slice.



# Beetroot bread

*Although you cannot taste the beetroot, it looks absolutely gorgeous and pink!*

500g self raising flour  
1 x 60 g packet white onion soup powder  
100g cooked, roughly chopped beetroot

500 ml buttermilk  
Salt, pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 180 oC.

Grease 1 very big bread tin, or 2 smaller ones. In a food processor with the dough blade, add the self raising flour, soup powder, pepper and buttermilk and process till it forms a ball. Add the chopped cooked beetroot and pulse a few times. Season.

Fill up the pan(s). Bake for 50 minutes or till test pen comes out clean. Let rest for a few minutes, then gently turn out onto cooling rack. With a bread knife, slice slowly and serve.

My own recipe

# Beetroot tzatziki



66 g cooked beetroot, peeled, cubed  
3 tbsp natural yoghurt / Greek yoghurt  
1 tsp crushed garlic  
Salt and pepper to taste

Blend everything till smooth in processor. Use as a dip. Or as a spread on your Beetroot bread.

My own recipe



# Beetroot pesto

70 g beetroot, peeled, steamed, cubed

20 g breadcrumbs (*or leave out crumbs and add finely chopped pine nuts / walnuts*)

Oil to taste

Lemon juice to taste

1 wheel feta

Salt to taste

Blend everything together in processor. Taste to adjust seasoning. This is fab as a 'butter' or a pesto.

Or use on toast triangles for a party.

My own recipe



# Beetroot risotto

1 cup normal rice (Tastic, or no name brand)  
4 cups boiling water  
7 tsp beef stock granules  
*(or spices or other stock granules)*  
3 tablespoons butter/margarine  
Garlic, if you want  
Grated ginger, if you want  
Coarsely grated black pepper  
Pinch of salt

## **Finishing touches:**

8 – 9 small peeled and cooked beetroots  
1 – 2 tablespoons oil (*olive/truffle/sunflower*)  
¼ cup Grated cheese (parmesan, gouda, cheddar)

Use a microwave dish with a lid (I use a Pyrex glass dish with a lid) that fits into your microwave.

Add the first 8 ingredients to your dish (NOT THE BEETROOT, OIL AND CHEESE.) Stir to let the butter/margarine melt in the boiling water.

Put the lid on, microwave on High, for 10 minutes. Remove, stir, put lid on and microwave for another 10 minutes on High.

Stir again, put lid on and microwave for 8 minutes on High. Take 3 beetroots, cube it and puree it with little bit of water. Stir the beetroot puree into the risotto. Put the lid on, microwave for 2 minutes on High. Check to see if your rice is cooked and the dish looks like risotto. If rice is not cooked enough, microwave for another few minutes.

Take the rest of the beetroots, cube them and stir them into the risotto. Stir in the oil and cheese and serve. Its also magic the following day.



*My own recipe*



# Beetroot frittata

- 1 cup beetroot, peeled, raw, grated
- 1 onion, sliced
- Oil/butter to fry in
- Cumin seeds (optional)
- Garlic (optional)
- Salt, pepper to taste
- Other herbs/spices to taste
- 1/3 cup cheddar cheese, grated
- 1/3 cup mature cheddar cheese, grated
- 1/4 cup powdered parmesan cheese (or fresh)
- 3 large eggs
- 1/2 cup milk / cream

Preheat oven to 180 oC. Fry garlic, chilli and cumin in butter. Add the onion and stir-fry till golden brown. With a fork, blend the eggs and milk together, add salt, pepper/herbs/spices. Add the egg-milk mixture, stir and remove from stove.

*(If you used a pan that is oven-friendly, continue with recipe. Otherwise, pour the whole mixture into a greased oven pie dish.)*

Add the raw, grated beetroot, stir well. Sprinkle cheeses on top and bake till set.