

Simple tomato basil and beetroot salad

5 ripe organic beefsteak tomatoes
5 medium sized beetroots
3 tbs balsamic vinegar
3 tbs brown sugar
Sprig of thyme
Bunch of basil
Good quality extra virgin olive oil
Red wine vinegar
Sea salt flakes
Cracked pepper

For the beetroots.

Preheat the oven to 165C

Line a baking tray with 2 layers of foil.

Wash the beets thoroughly, scrub of any mud and dirt. Remove the leaves but leave the stalk base to keep the moisture in. Place whole in the tin. Sprinkle the balsamic vinegar, brown sugar and thyme sprigs into the tray, pour in 3 tablespoons of water and seal tray completely with another 2 layers of foil.

Bake in the oven for 1.5 hours, then check to see if cooked through by piercing with a knife. If it slips in easily they are done. If not, reseal tray and cook until done.

Allow to cool slightly, keeping them covered and moist. Once you can handle them, peel off the outer layer of skin, they should slip out of their skins easily just using your hands but don't forget to wear gloves or you will have very pink hands for the rest of the day. Slice into ½ cm rounds.

Now slice the tomatoes to the same sized rounds.

Pick the basil and shred into long strips.

You will need a nice big plate to serve the salad on.

Place a single layer of slightly over lapping slices beetroots on the plate, repeat this process with the tomatoes then sprinkle on some basil, a little salt and pepper, drizzle with olive oil. Continue to layer the beetroot then tomatoes in smaller circles until you have built a pyramid of layered tomato and beetroot. Top with a drizzle of red wine vinegar, olive oil and basil leaves to garnish.

You can also crumble some goats cheese over the top of your salad if you so desire.