BEETS

Health Benefits:

The beet is distinctive because both the root and the leaves can be eaten. The beet root is a good source of potassium and carotene, while the beet greens contain iron, potassium; calcium and vitamin A. Beets are low-fat, low in sodium, cholesterol free, and a good source of folate.

Good body cleanser and detoxifier.

Preparation:

Beets have a sweet earthy flavor and compliment many foods. The greens can be sautéed, steamed or shredded, while the beet root, can be boiled, baked, pickled, or eaten raw.

There is no need to peel the beets as the skin helps retain nutrients and coloration, simply scrub the beets clean.

They can take a while to cook so cutting them into smaller pieces will shorten cooking time.

Storage:

Beets are hardy and they will keep well as long as they are kept cold. Beet greens can be stored in a damp cloth or air tight container in the fridge.

Recipe:

Beet Salad

 4-8 beets

 3 tbsp oil

 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar

 2 tbsp chopped parsley

 Pinch of salt

 Chopped walnuts (optional)

1. Finely slice the beets and steam for 45-60 minutes.

2. Add the remaining ingredients and refrigerate for an hour.

Beet Pesto (includes beets and greens)

 4 beets with greens

 1 red onion, chopped

 2 garlic cloves, chopped

 1 cup walnuts, toasted

1. Wash the beats leaving the greens attached, steam till tender.

2. When beets are cooked, slip skins off under cool water & set aside (remove leaves from stems and discard if stems seem woody). Wash & dry leaves, chop coarsely.

3. In a skillet, cook onions and garlic in 1/3 c olive oil till softened.

4. Add beet greens and cook 5 to 7 minutes. Transfer to a processor and puree with the cooked beets, cut into quarters. Add rest of ingredients & puree again, adding more olive oil if necessary.

The pesto keeps refrigerated for 2 weeks or freezes. You can add parmesan cheese if you wish.