



Silky Spring Beet Soup

This simple yet hearty soup serves as a lovely color counterpoint to the Spring green of the other courses in this month's menu. Beet soup can be served warm or chilled, depending on your mood or the season. A dollop of crème fraîche or sour cream will add a tangy creaminess to the final soup.

8 servings

Ingredients

1 tablespoon olive oil
8 beets (about 1 ½ pounds), peeled and chopped
2 medium potatoes, peeled and chopped
1 medium onion, chopped
1 teaspoon sweet paprika
6 cups vegetable stock
1 tablespoon honey
½ teaspoon kosher salt
¼ cup crème fraîche, for garnish
2 tablespoons finely chopped chives, for garnish

Equipment

Heavy-bottomed soup pot
Food processor or immersion blender

Preparation

In a heavy-bottomed soup pot, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add beets, potatoes, onion and paprika, and stirring often, cook for about 8 minutes or until onions are softened. Add stock, honey and salt; bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and simmer for about 25 minutes or until vegetables are tender.

In blender or food processor, purée the beet mixture, in batches, until smooth. (Soup can be prepared to this point and refrigerated in airtight container for up to 2 days or frozen for up to 1 month.)

[Chef's Note: When puréeing hot foods, it is important not to fill the blender or processor beyond half-full. The hot air from the liquid needs room to expand, or you could have a dangerous explosion of heat, forcing the top off the blender or an overflow of the processor container. Alternatively, use an immersion blender and purée the soup right in the pot. If using this method, strain away some of the cooking liquid first, then purée, and add liquid back in a little at a time to assure the desired consistency.]

Service

Return soup to a clean saucepan, and gently heat until simmering. Do not boil. Ladle into soup bowls. Garnish each with dollop of crème fraîche and chives.

[Chef's Note: This silky soup can also be enjoyed chilled in the warmer months. Store covered in the refrigerator until service.]

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