

Vibrant Chickpea, Beet & Feta Salad with Zesty Lemon-Garlic Vinaigrette

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TIME
20 min

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INGREDIENTS

Chickpeas: 1 can (15 oz), drained and thoroughly rinsed.

Beets: 2 medium cooked beets, peeled and diced into 1/2-inch cubes. (You can roast them yourself or use the vacuum-sealed pre-cooked ones found in the produce aisle for a major time-saver!)

Feta Cheese: 1/2 cup crumbled feta. (I recommend buying a block in brine and crumbling it yourself for the best texture.)

Extra Virgin Olive Oil: ... cup of high-quality oil.

Fresh Lemon Juice: 2 tablespoons (about half a large lemon).

Garlic: 1 clove, finely minced or pressed.

Salt and Pepper: To taste.

Fresh Parsley: A handful, chopped, for a hit of herbal freshness.

DIRECTIONS

- 1.** Prepare the Base: In a large mixing bowl, combine your rinsed chickpeas and diced beets. If you are using freshly roasted beets, make sure they have cooled completely to room temperature before mixing, otherwise, they will melt the cheese.
- 2.** Whisk the Vinaigrette: In a small glass jar or bowl, whisk together the olive oil, fresh lemon juice, and minced garlic. Season with a pinch of sea salt and freshly cracked black pepper. Emulsify the dressing until it looks slightly thickened.
- 3.** Dress the Salad: Pour the lemon-garlic dressing over the chickpea and beet mixture. Toss gently. You'll notice the chickpeas start to take on a beautiful pink hue from the beet juices-this is perfectly normal and looks gorgeous!
- 4.** Add the Finishing Touches: Gently fold in the crumbled feta cheese. I prefer to do this last and very lightly so the cheese stays in distinct white chunks rather than turning completely purple.
- 5.** Garnish and Serve: Top with plenty of fresh chopped parsley. You can serve this immediately, but letting it sit for 15-20 minutes allows the flavors to meld beautifully.

SWAPS & NOTES

The Beets: If you aren't a fan of red beets, try golden beets! They are slightly sweeter and less "earthy," plus they won't stain your hands or the rest of the salad ingredients quite as much.

The Cheese: If feta is too salty for you, goat cheese (chevre) is a fantastic creamy alternative.

Added Greens: While this is a hearty "composed" salad, you can serve it over a bed of baby arugula or spinach to stretch the

servings further.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

If you stir too vigorously, the whole salad will become a uniform shade of magenta.

Rinse your chickpeas: Make sure to rinse the canned chickpeas until the water runs clear.

This removes the "canned" taste and any excess sodium.

Fresh Garlic is Key: Don't use the jarred minced garlic for this dressing.

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