

Roasted Beets with Lemon Pepper Ricotta and Hot Honey

What you need:

- Red Beets
- Golden Beets
- 1 Lemon
- 4 to 8 oz Whole Milk Ricotta (depending on serving size)
- Salt
- Olive oil
- 1/2 Cup Champagne or Apple Cider Vinegar
- 1/2 Cup of Sherry vinegar
- 1/4 Cup of Soy sauce
- 1 oz Honey
- A few splashes of your favorite vinegar based hot sauce (Frank's Red Hot or Tabasco are my top picks)
- Gloves for handling red beets
- Finely chopped Herbs: parsley and/or chives for plating

How to roast beets like me, Jef:

Preheat oven to 350°

You can cook your red and golden beets simultaneously, just be sure to use separate foil pouches

Red Beets:

Wash the beets

Place beets on a large piece of foil inside of a baking dish, coat with olive oil and sprinkle with salt. Fold the foil up around the beets but before closing it, pour in the sherry vinegar and soy sauce. The amount that you need depends on how many beets you're cooking - *I always like to cook big batches of beets and have them for the week to use in lots of dishes*

My suggested ratio is 2:1 vinegar to soy: I'll mix up $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vinegar with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of soy sauce. You only need enough to cover the bottom but having more in there won't hurt anything and you can save the liquid after roasting to use in a salad dressing or for all kinds of things.

Fold the foil up to seal the pouch and keep the steam in while they cook.

Place the baking dish in the oven and cook for 30 minutes to 1 hour depending on the size of your beets. They're ready when you can easily insert a knife with no resistance.

When done, remove the beets from the oven, open the foil and let them cool at room temp until they're comfortable enough to handle.

Beets are easiest to peel while they're warm. Put on your gloves if you have them. The steaming helps to loosen the skin; simply rub the skin off with a paper towel. Any stubborn spots can be scraped with the blade side of a paring knife or a spoon.

Once peeled, cut into bite sized pieces. I like to cut different shapes, wedges from some, cubes from others.

Golden Beets:

Wash the beets.

Place golden beets on a large piece of foil just as we did the red beets. They can roast together in the same pan in separate foil pouches.

Coat beets with olive oil and sprinkle with salt. Fold the foil up around the beets and before closing it, pour in the champagne or cider vinegar and a little bit of water.

Seal the pouch to keep the steam in while they cook. Cook alongside your red beets until they are done. Allow to cool and peel once room temperature - you won't need gloves for golden beets.

Ricotta:

While the beets are roasting, you can mix up your ricotta.

Place Ricotta into a mixing bowl. Using a microplane, zest the entire lemon and add it to the ricotta. Cut the lemon in half and add about 1 Tbsp of lemon juice. Add a lot of freshly ground black pepper to taste and ½ tsp kosher salt. Mix and set aside.

Hot honey:

Mix the honey and desired amount of hot sauce until smooth. You can also add a few dashes of smoked paprika to this; it adds a nice, smokey flavor and more heat without thinning the consistency.

Plating:

Using a spoon, place the desired amount of ricotta on the plate and spread it to make a bed for the beets. Arrange the beets on top of the ricotta and drizzle with olive oil followed by hot honey. Sprinkle the herbs on top with a little of the Maldon salt.

This dish looks beautiful on small plates, served individually as a salad or appetizer course, or plated on a large platter for a family style dinner.

Wait to plate the dish until you're ready to serve - the juice from the red beets will run and stain the ricotta.



Pro tip: Do not skip the baking dish part. Trust me, the foil will most likely leak a little bit. It almost always does. It's much easier if it leaks into your dish and not the bottom of your oven.

Second pro tip: Sherry vinegar can be a little tricky to find sometimes. Feel free to use your favorite vinegar. Malt and red wine are great alternatives.

Other suggestions:

Use goat cheese instead of the ricotta.

Top this with something crunchy like buttery breadcrumbs or candied walnuts.

Give it a try and please let us know what you think!

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