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Roasted Beet & Carrot Lentil Salad with Tangy Orange Mustard Vinaigrette

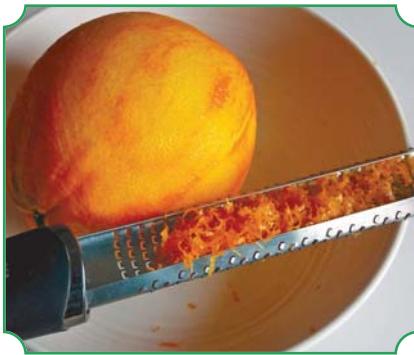
NATURALLY DELICIOUS RECIPES • Janice Feuer-Haugen

Our Montana Winter temperatures usually stay with us long past spring's official March starting date. So, I offer a new recipe to you for a hearty salad to help brighten the days until spring actually arrives.

Colorful, satisfying and deeply flavored *Roasted Beet & Carrot Lentil Salad* plays the natural sweetness of roasted beets and carrots against a backdrop of robust and firm-textured French green (le Puy) lentils. The roasted carrots add brightness. Fresh parsley, mint and scallions bring freshness. Crumbled goat cheese or feta give a touch of creaminess. And to top it off, the refreshingly tart and *Tangy Orange Mustard Vinaigrette* makes this salad especially delicious.

Tangy Orange Mustard Vinaigrette

It took me a number of attempts to get a salad dressing with intense enough orange flavor and balanced acidity to stand up to the earthy lentils and beets. In my final version, red wine vinegar provides the acidity. And the intense orange flavor comes from orange zest and frozen orange juice concentrate.



Whether lime, lemon, tangerine, grapefruit or orange, the zest is the colorful top layer of a citrus fruit's peel. This layer contains the fruit's oils, which add a bright, citrus flavor wherever you include this zest. The easiest way to grate the zest is with a very sharp rasp. Note: Avoid grating beyond the colorful top layer, for underneath is the somewhat bitter tasting white pith.



Le Puy Lentils for Salads

Unlike red lentils, yellow lentils or the common brown lentils, French Green Lentils, also known as le Puy lentils, hold their shape when cooked. This is especially important for salads, baked casseroles, veggie burgers and hearty soups.

Good for Your Heart, Blood Sugar Levels, Digestion, Energy, and for the Planet

Nutritional powerhouses, lentils are a rich source of dietary fiber. With virtually no fat, lentils are considered a good to excellent source of molybdenum, B vitamins, protein, folate, copper, magnesium, manganese, iron and zinc.

When you have a choice, choose organic lentils from Montana, the number one lentil producer in the U.S. Get to know Timeless Natural Food, a farmer-owned company in rural Montana that "grows organic and heirloom varieties of lentils, chickpeas and specialty grains in a timeless fashion." Their lentils are grown on dryland farms which are never irrigated. Only watered by a scant 12 to 14 inches of annual precipitation. Here's the amazing part—as legumes, lentils are a soil-building plant that converts atmospheric nitrogen into fertilizer for itself and other crops.

Recipe on next pages...

Roasted Beet & Carrot Lentil Salad

with Tangy Orange Mustard Vinaigrette

- With washed and well-scrubbed beets, it's fine to leave on their skin. If you want to remove their skin, it more easily comes off after roasting.
- Naturally gluten-free

Serves 6 as a main course
Active time: 1 ½ hours
Total time: 1 ¾ hours

INGREDIENTS

ROASTED BEETS & CARROTS

- 1 ½ pounds beets, washed and well-scrubbed
- 1 ½ tablespoons olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- 10 twists freshly ground pepper
- ¼ cup water
- 1 pound medium carrots, washed and scrubbed (peeled if not organic)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Large pinch sea salt

LENTILS

- 4 cups water
- 2 cups French green (le Puy) lentils, rinsed and drained
- 2 bay leaves
- ¾ teaspoon salt

SALAD

- ½ cup thinly sliced scallions
- ½ cup coarsely chopped parsley (1 medium bunch)
- ¼ cup thinly sliced fresh mint
- 2 ounces crumbled fresh goat cheese or feta cheese (½ cup)

TANGY ORANGE MUSTARD VINAIGRETTE

- ⅓ cup defrosted frozen orange juice concentrate
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon homemade cultured mustard or other whole-grain mustard
- 1 ½ tablespoons freshly grated orange zest
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- Dozen twists freshly ground pepper
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil

INSTRUCTIONS

- Heat the oven to 400 degrees.
- PREPARE THE BEETS:** Remove the root and slice off the stem end where the greens were attached. Halve medium beets, quarter large beets, and leave small beets whole. Toss them with 1 ½



tablespoons olive oil, ¼ teaspoon sea salt and 10 twists freshly ground pepper. Place the beets cut side down in a baking dish. Add ¼ cup water. Tightly cover the baking dish with foil. Bake about 80 minutes

or until easily pierced with a fork. Remove from the oven and remove the foil.

- PREPARE THE CARROTS:** Cut thin carrots in half lengthwise. Cut thicker carrots in quarters lengthwise. Then cut the carrots in ¾-inch pieces. Toss them with 1 tablespoon olive oil and a large pinch of salt. Place in a single layer on a parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet. Cover tightly with foil. Bake at 400 degrees for 25 minutes (in the same oven with the beets). Remove the foil and



bake another 25 minutes or until easily pierced with a fork. Remove from the oven and set aside.

- PREPARE THE LENTILS:** In a 2-quart (or larger) saucepan, bring 4 cups of water to a boil. Stir in the rinsed and drained lentils and bay leaves. When the water returns to a boil, cover the pan and lower the heat to medium low. Simmer for 30 minutes. Stir in ¾ teaspoon salt.





Combining the salad ingredients

Continue to cook covered for another 10–15 minutes until tender. Remove from the heat. Discard the bay leaves. Drain any excess liquid from the lentils. (Perhaps saving it for lentil soup.) Transfer the drained lentils to a large mixing bowl.

5. While the beets and carrots are roasting and the lentils cooking, prepare the Tangy Orange Mustard Vinaigrette, the scallions, parsley, mint and goat cheese.

6. **FOR THE TANGY ORANGE MUSTARD VINAIGRETTE:** Place all of the vinaigrette ingredients in a 2-cup jar. Cover the top of the jar with a piece of plastic wrap. Screw the lid on tightly and shake the jar, mixing and thickening the dressing in the process. Toss the dressing with the drained, hot lentils.

7. When the beets are cool enough to handle, cut them into ½-inch dice.

Add them and the roasted carrots to the bowl with the lentils. Put aside 1 teaspoon each of the scallions, parsley and mint. Toss the rest with the vegetables and lentils.

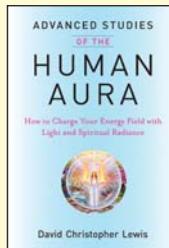
8. Gently mix in all but 1 tablespoon of the crumbled goat cheese or feta. Adjust the salt and pepper to taste.

9. Just before serving, garnish with the remaining herbs and goat cheese or feta.

10. For the best flavor enjoy Roasted Beet & Carrot Lentil Salad with Tangy Orange Mustard Vinaigrette when just made and still slightly warm, or at room temperature as a hearty main course or side dish.

11. **Roasted Beet & Carrot Lentil Salad** stores well in the refrigerator for about 3–7 days. ■

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