

ROASTED ROOT VEGETABLE AND SAUSAGE RAGOUT WITH CREAMY, CHEESY, GRITS

It started as this recipe from Whole Living, but I rarely follow a recipe verbatim. In reality, I kind of read something I like and then use it as a jumping off point based on what I have in the frig/pantry. This is a good example of that practice. Also, most of my stuff serves 2, because that's how I cook. There was extra here, but I'd double it if you were planning for 4.

Ingredients:

- 1 large onion
- 3 carrots
- 2 parsnips
- 1 potato (I used purple ones because they are pretty and I had them)
- 4 Brussels sprouts (halved)
- 2 beets (fresh ones. Nothing from a can here!)
- ½ teaspoon of granulated garlic (or finely mince 2-3 cloves of the good fresh stuff)
- 1 Tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil
- 14 oz can of diced tomatoes (or you can use a pint of cherry tomatoes if you happen to have them)
- 1 1/4 cup of low sodium stock (vegetable or chicken)
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 teaspoon each of thyme, rosemary, and parsley
- ½ teaspoon of balsamic vinegar
- ¼ lb ground sausage
- creamy, cheesy, grits
- salt and pepper

Directions:

- 1) Preheat your oven to 475 degrees Fahrenheit
- 2) Wash all the vegetables and then peel the carrots and parsnips (you don't have to if you washed them well enough)
- 3) Dice all of the vegetables into large chunks and place in a bowl. Toss with olive oil and garlic and pour vegetables onto a cookie sheet.
- 4) Roast for 20-30 minutes, turning the sheet or stirring the vegetables halfway through the cooking time.
- 5) While the vegetables are roasting, cook the sausage until brown. (I'd suggest using a Dutch oven or a deep pan because later everything has to fit in this.)
- 6) Add the tomatoes and stock to the sausage and cook for 5 minutes on medium. If you're using fresh tomatoes, mash them up a little to make more of a sauce.
- 7) Add the bay leaf, thyme, parsley, rosemary, and vinegar and cook for another 5 minutes.
- 8) Add a pinch of salt and a pinch of pepper. (You can always add more.)
- 9) Around this time you should start making your grits*
- 10) When the vegetables are finished, take them out of the oven (remember to turn off the oven) and pour them into the tomato and sausage mix and cook for another 3ish minutes. (Feel free to cook on low until your grits are done. It won't hurt it.)
- 11) Take out the bay leaf.
- 12) Pour the vegetable and sausage ragout over the grits and serve immediately. Don't be afraid if there is a strong red color when you mix things. That's just beet juice. If that bothers you, roast the beets separately and add them on top of the ragout and grits instead of mixing it all together. I made this on Valentine's Day though, so it was kind of appropriate.