

Beets with Watercress and Orange (“Fields of Greens” Annie Somerville)

1 lb beets, about 2 inches in diameter
3 Tbsp fresh orange juice
1 Tbsp Champagne vinegar
1/8 tsp salt
pepper
1 bunch of watercress

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Trim away the beet greens and save them for pasta or a sauté. Rinse the beets under cold water and place them in a small baking dish with ½ inch water. Cover the dish and bake until the beets are tender, 35 to 40 minutes, depending on their size. Test them for doneness with a paring knife or a skewer. Cool and peel, then slice them into ¼-inch rounds or wedges.

Combine the orange juice with the vinegar, the salt, and a few pinches of pepper; pour over the sliced beets. The color of red beets will run, so marinate them separately if you’re using them with golden or Chioggia beets.

Pluck the small sprigs of watercress, discarding the long stems and bruised leaves; wash and dry in a spinner.

Place the watercress on a serving platter and arrange the sliced beets on top, alternating the colors if you’re using more than one variety of beets. Sprinkle with freshly ground pepper.

Tip: To peel beets easily, dip them in a bowl of cool water as you peel them. The water helps to loosen the skin and makes the peeling fast and easy. (If the beets are difficult to peel, it’s a sure sign they’re undercooked.) Dip them a final time to remove any traces of skin, then set aside to drain. If you’re using more than one variety of beet, be sure to peel the red ones last to keep them from discoloring the others.