



Summer Borscht

Borscht originated in Eastern Europe and is an incredibly versatile soup. This variation, served cold, is fantastic in hot weather.

Martha Stewart Living, March 1998 <http://www.marthastewart.com/332241/summer-borscht>

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Rated

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- **Yield Serves 6**

Ingredients

- - 1 1/2 pounds red beets, scrubbed and stalks trimmed to 1/2 inch
 - 1 tablespoon olive oil
 - 1 small onion, finely chopped
 - 1 clove garlic, minced
 - 2 carrots
 - 1 leek, trimmed of tough green ends and coarsely chopped
 - 1 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste
 - 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste
 - 1/4 cup fresh dill, loosely packed
 - 1/4 cup white wine
 - 1 3/4 cups Homemade Chicken Stock [Homemade Chicken Stock](http://www.marthastewart.com/261561/homemade-chicken-stock) (<http://www.marthastewart.com/261561/homemade-chicken-stock>), or canned low-sodium chicken broth, skimmed of fat
 - 1/2 small cucumber, peeled and seeded
 - 6 tablespoons creme fraiche or sour cream
 - 6 teaspoons red-wine vinegar, (optional)

Directions

1. Fill a medium saucepan with water, and bring to a boil. Add beets, and boil until beets are fork-tender, about 45 minutes. Drain beets, reserving cooking water, and let stand until cool enough to handle. Rub off skins.
2. Heat olive oil in a medium stockpot over medium heat. Add chopped onion and minced garlic, and saute until translucent, about 5 minutes.

3. Coarsely chop 1 1/2 carrots, and add to stockpot. Add leek, salt, and pepper. Coarsely chop half of the dill, and add to stockpot. Cook until carrots are almost tender, about 10 minutes.
4. Cut beets into 1-inch chunks, and add to stockpot. Add wine, 2 cups of the reserved cooking liquid, and chicken stock. Let simmer until broth is flavorful, about 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Remove the stockpot from heat, and transfer hot soup to a large bowl. Set bowl in ice-water bath to cool; skim off any fat.
5. Using the small hole of a box grater, grate remaining 1/2 carrot and cucumber. Serve soup with a dollop of creme fraiche, garnished with grated carrot, grated cucumber, and remaining fresh dill. Give each serving a splash of red-wine vinegar, if desired.