Botwinka (whole beetroot soup)

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Beetroots are full of antioxidants and are highly effective at detoxifying the liver.

Botwinka is often served around Easter and spring when the young beets are in abundance. Because the recipe uses whole [beetroots](#), including the leaves and stems, it is quite filling and there is little waste.

Hard-boiled eggs are a traditional and most common side to this soup, but crushed baby potatoes are also popular.

Ingredients (serves 4)

- A bunch of baby beetroot with stems attached (approximately 6 beets)
- 2 carrots
- 1 parsnip
- 2 sticks celery
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 3 cups vegetable stock
- 3 cups water
- Optional: 150g baby beetroot leaves or baby spinach leaves if you can't find beet leaves
- ¼ cup lemon juice (or 1⁄8 cup lemon juice plus 1⁄8 cup white vinegar)

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- 1 tbsp white sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp sour cream (or milk of choice if allergic to dairy or vegan)

Toppings

- 4 hard-boiled free-range eggs
- Optional: 8 medium-sized baby potatoes, boiled in skins and crushed

METHOD

Wash beetroots, stems and leaves thoroughly. Cut off the stems and chop, including leaves, into one-cm pieces. Peel beetroots, carrots and parsnip (use plastic gloves to protect skin from staining) and dice all into one-cm cubes. Cut celery sticks lengthways and chop into small cubes.

Heat oil in a large stockpot. Add peeled beetroot (but not the stems or leaves yet), carrots, parsnip and celery and allow to heat through. Add stock and water, bring to a boil and cook for 15 minutes. At this stage, add beetroot stems, leaves and baby beetroot leaves, if using. Season with lemon juice, sugar, salt and pepper. Cook for a further five to 10 minutes then turn off the heat.

In a separate bowl, mix half a cup of the broth with the sour cream until smooth and add to the pot, stir through to combine.

Divide soup between serving bowls and serve with a side of hard-boiled eggs and crushed boiled potatoes, if using.

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