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Sometimes the simplest ideas are the most stunning, in looks and flavour. Sweet earthy beetroot, tangy blood orange, smoky red peppers, creamy goats cheese and crunchy pistachio jewels – and very little effort involved. This super little salad will wow family, friends and guests and be enjoyed by all. Fantastic as a starter or served with other dishes or a meal in its own right.

### **Beetroot and Blood Orange Salad with Roasted Red Pepper, Caramelized Pistachio and Goats Cheese**

Serves 4

250 grams beetroot

60 grams Pistachio nuts

1 tablespoon maple syrup

2 red peppers

3 blood oranges, peeled and thinly sliced into ¼ cm rounds, remove pith and pips

120 grams goats cheese, crumbled

Small handful purslane or land cress

2 tablespoons pomegranate seeds

#### **Dressing**

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1 tablespoon raspberry vinegar or red wine vinegar

1 ½ teaspoons honey

Cracked black pepper

1. Place beetroot in a saucepan and cover with cold water, bring to boil. Turn the heat to low and simmer until tender, 40–60 minutes depending on the beetroot size. Drain. When cool, cut off the roots and peel with your fingers. With a Mandoline, carefully slice the beetroot into thin circles, set aside until required.
2. Preheat the oven to 180c . Cut the peppers in half. Remove the seeds and the membranes. Roast the peppers until the skin blisters and turns black – approx. 30 minutes. Remove from oven and cover with cling film, or place in a plastic bag until cool. The skins should peel away from the peppers easily when cooled. Cut into thin strips.
3. Dry roast pistachio's on a small pan over medium heat for 1-2 minutes. Add 1 tablespoon maple syrup to lightly coat the nuts and toast for another 30-60 seconds until syrup has evaporated. Remove from heat, transfer to parchment paper and leave to cool.

4. Peel the oranges in such a way that you remove all the white pith. Slice off a good chunk from the top and bottom (eat these bits) and cut the remainder crosswise into circles ½ cm thick. Set aside until required
5. To make dressing: Mix all ingredients in a small jar, shake well. Set aside until required.
6. Arrange beetroot slices, orange slices, red pepper, pistachio nuts, purslane, goats cheese and pomegranate seeds on a platter. Drizzle with oil dressing and serve at once.

#### **Maggie's Tips**

- ✓ I used 'Fivemiletown' goats cheese in this salad as it has a mild flavour. Similar cheese such as 'St Tola' and 'Bluebell' work equally as well. Choose your favourite.
- ✓ If you cannot source blood orange, normal oranges are fine
- ✓ Exchange pistachio nuts for walnuts.
- ✓ Salad ingredients can be prepared a day ahead. Keep separate, remove ingredients from fridge at least 1 hour before eating. Arrange on platter just before service.