

EPICUREAN ESSENTIALS

Early Wonder Beet and Collard Green Borscht

- 5-6 large beets
- 2 T. vegetable oil
- 1 ½ lbs. stew beef
- 3 qt. stock
- 3 small onions, chopped
- 3 med. carrots, chopped
- 12-16 large collard green leaves, ribs removed and leaves shredded
- 1 T. balsamic vinegar
- chopped fresh dill, for garnish
- sour cream, for garnish
- pumpernickel bread

Preheat oven to 400°F. Scrub beets, wrap in foil and roast until soft, about 1 ¼ hours. Cool and peel.

Meanwhile, heat a large heavy pot over medium-high heat; add oil and tilt the pot to coat the bottom with oil. Add beef, season with salt and pepper and brown on all sides. Add stock or water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and cook until meat is tender about 1 ½ hours. (Roasting the beets and braising the meat may be done a day ahead.)

Add the chopped onion and carrot to the beef and cook until tender, about 20 minutes. Add the shredded collard greens and grate in the roasted and peeled beets. Cook until the collard greens are wilted, about 5 minutes; then stir in the balsamic vinegar.

Serve borscht topped with a dollop of sour cream and chopped fresh dill along with a thick slice of pumpernickel bread.

Serves: 6-8 adults