

EARLY PREPARATION HELPS END DAY NICELY

When you're busy it's great to know dinner will be ready and waiting when you get home.

A hearty soup, slices of bread, wedges of cheese and a fruit dessert is a satisfying supper that can be prepared ahead and served when you're ready.

Start with Borscht, topped with a dollop of sour cream. Make it a day ahead or put all the ingredients in a slow cooker and let it simmer slowly while you're away.

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Borscht is a dish which encompasses a variety of soups ranging from one that's very thin to some which are very thick and contains a lot of meat. Regardless, it always contains grated fresh beets which give the soup its inviting texture and rich color.

When serving beets as a vegetable course, the United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association of New York recommends cooking the beets whole in their skins with the roots uncut and an inch of stem left on to prevent loss of color.

Once cooked, the beets' skin will slip off easily.

However, when preparing borscht the fresh beets are peeled and shredded before cooking because you will retain the color in the soup.



Tangy Borscht accompanied by dark bread and wedges of cheese make a supper that can be prepared ahead and served when you're ready.

Although the recipe which follows does not call for any meat, you can add some ground beef for extra flavor and nutrition if you wish.

Fresh Beet Borscht
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 medium onion, minced
1 garlic, minced
1 carrot, sliced

1 medium turnip, diced
1 large tomato, seeded and chopped
1 pound fresh beets, peeled and shredded
1 tablespoon wine vinegar
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
10 cups beef stock or broth
3 cups shredded cabbage
1 pound potatoes, peeled and diced
Sour Cream
Chopped fresh dill

In a large saucepot or Dutch oven, heat oil, saute onion and garlic until soft. Add carrot, turnip, tomato, beets, vinegar, salt, pepper and beef stock. Bring to boiling. Reduce heat. Cover. Simmer 30 minutes. Add cabbage and potatoes. Simmer 25 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Serve garnished with sour cream and dill.

Makes: 6 to 8 servings (three quarts).

Fresh Baked Blueberry Crisp

1 cup graham cracker crumbs
¼ cup butter or margarine, melted
¾ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
one-eighth teaspoon ground clove
1 teaspoon vanilla
4 cups (2 pints) fresh blueberries
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed

lemon juice, divided
1 tablespoon water
Whipped cream (optional)

Combine graham cracker crumbs and butter. Press one-third cup crumbs into a 1½-quart baking dish. In small bowl, stir together sugar, cinnamon, salt, nutmeg and clove; add vanilla. Spoon half the blueberries over crumbs. Sprinkle with half the sugar mixture. Sprinkle with 1 tablespoon lemon juice and water. Repeat layers with one-third cup crumbs, remaining blueberries, sugar mixture and lemon juice. Top with remaining one-third cup crumbs. Cover. Bake in a 350 degree F oven 40 minutes. Uncover. Increase oven to 400 degrees F and bake 10 minutes longer. Cool to room temperature. Serve with whipped cream, if desired.

Makes: 6 to 8 servings.

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