

Grilled Beets with Herbs and Preserved Lemon

In my house, beets make excellent decorations, but they're rarely the main event—mostly because I tend to chop them up and shove them into salads more quickly than they can stand up for themselves. Here, they shine between layers of crème fraîche and fresh herbs, punched up a bit with preserved lemon.

If I haven't made my own, I buy preserved lemons at Picnic in Seattle, because the owners, Jenny and Anson Klock, do a consistently excellent job. To use them here, cut them into quarters. Push the lemon's meat out of the fruit and discard it, then use a small knife to trim the thin white layer of pith away from the peel. Once you have just the yellow peel, it's ready to chop and use.

Serves 4

3 fist-sized red beets, roasted, peeled, and cut into 3/4-inch rounds
2 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for serving
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
2 tablespoons crème fraîche
1/4 cup lightly packed fresh herbs (leaves only)
Peel of 1/4 preserved lemon, pith trimmed, very thinly sliced
Chunky sea salt, for serving

In a large bowl, mix the beet slices together with the olive oil and salt until well blended.

Heat a grill pan over medium-high heat. (You can use a regular heavy-duty pan instead, if you prefer.) When hot, add the beets, and cook, undisturbed, until well marked on both sides, 6 to 8 minutes total, turning the beets once during cooking.

Meanwhile, smear the crème fraîche onto a serving plate. Pile the beets on top, then scatter the herbs and preserved lemon on top. Drizzle the beets with additional olive oil, sprinkle with chunky sea salt, and serve.