Beet and Dill Bean Checkerboard

9 spread squares on a platter, about 100 g each; serve with separately chosen dippers | Active 25 min | Cook 0 min | Total 85 min

Ingredients

- 450 g/1 lb drained ready-to-eat canned white beans, rinsed
- 150 g/5 1/4 oz plain cream cheese
- 60 g plain pasteurized yogurt (1/4 cup)
- 30 ml lemon juice (2 tablespoons)
- 15 ml olive oil (1 tablespoon)
- 1 small garlic clove, 3 g, finely grated
- 2 g fine salt (about 1/3 teaspoon)
- 180 g/6 1/3 oz commercially cooked ready-to-eat beet, drained and diced
- 8 g fresh dill, washed and dried, divided 2 g in spread and 6 g on top

Set out

Food processor, Colander, Two bowls, Scale, Lemon juicer, Knife and board, Two spoons and small spatula, Flat 30 × 30 cm/12 × 12 in serving platter with cover, Refrigerator and insulated cooler

Allergens

Milk. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Blend beans, cream cheese, yogurt, lemon juice, olive oil, garlic and salt until thick and mostly smooth. Scrape the bowl thoroughly so all the measured ingredients enter the spread.

2. Weigh the base and divide it equally between two bowls, roughly 360 g each. Blend one half with all the beet. Stir 2 g finely chopped dill into the pale half. Keep separate clean spoons for the colors.

3. Divide the red spread into 5 equal portions and the pale spread into 4 equal portions. On the covered platter, arrange 3 rows of 3 alternating colors, starting and ending each outside row with red. Spread each into a roughly 7 cm/2 3/4 in square, mounded rather than perfectly level.

4. Divide the remaining 6 g dill over the 4 pale squares. Cover without pressing on the surface and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Serve chilled with a clean spoon; dippers are chosen separately and are not included in the yield.

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Bring it

Transport the covered platter flat in a cooler with frozen packs, maintaining 40°F/4°C or below. Set out a small portion and keep the rest cold. Count travel and display without temperature control together: 2 hours maximum, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C.

Finish at the gathering

No oven or blender is needed. Request refrigerator space or a larger ice-filled tray; remove the cover and put out two clean serving spoons immediately before people eat.

Make it yours

Use nine alternating scoops in a shallow bowl when a broad platter will not fit the cooler. The two-color idea works for a quiet winter lunch as well as a busy party.

Ingredient labels

Cream cheese and yogurt contain milk. Dippers add their own allergens and must be labeled separately. Check canned bean and cooked beet labels.

A useful detail

The red portions are a little larger because beet is added after the base is divided. Approximately 900 g total spread makes 9 modest buffet portions; it is not a complete meal.

Another way

Use 180 g ready-to-eat cooked carrot instead of beet for an orange-and-cream board; chill the carrot first.

Replace dill with 8 g washed fresh parsley at the same 2 g/6 g allocation.

Keep it well

Keep covered at 40°F/4°C or below and use within 2 days, or the earliest opened dairy/bean deadline. Follow the Bring it handling limits. Do not drain away old liquid to extend storage. Freezing the assembled spread can split its dairy texture and bleed the colors.