



# Mediterranean-inspired roast carrot, beetroot & lentil salad

## Ingredients

- 2 bunches Dutch carrots
- 2-3 whole beetroots
- 200g marinated goat cheese in olive oil (you will use the oil)
- sea salt and pepper
- 3 garlic cloves, unpeeled
- 1.5 cups water
- 1 cup (250g) brown rice
- A few handfuls of walnuts (if fresh are available, use 8-10 whole shelled nuts)
- 1½ tbsp Australian honey
- 1 bunch mint
- 1½ tbsp white wine vinegar
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 2 x 400g tins brown lentils

Recipe by  
**Sandra Villella**  
Jean Hailes  
Naturopath



This mouth-watering salad will nourish you from head to toe. It's great for your gut, your heart and even your brain.

🕒 Prep & cooking time: 50-60 minutes. 🍴 Serves 4

Vegetarian. Gluten free

## Method

Heat oven to 240°C (220°C fan-forced). Line two oven trays with baking paper. Trim and scrub or peel carrots. Cut each beetroot into about 16 wedges. Put carrots in a bowl with 1 tbsp of oil and seasoning from the marinated goat cheese, toss to coat. Put carrots and garlic cloves on one of the trays, leaving room for beetroot.



Put beetroot in same bowl (by prepping beetroot separately, it won't stain the carrots). Add 1 tbsp oil from the goat cheese, season with salt and pepper, toss to coat, then add to tray and put in oven. Roast for 40-45 minutes, or until tender. (Note: you will be taking the garlic out earlier.)

While vegies are roasting, place water and rice in a medium saucepan with lid on and bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer 20-25 minutes, until water is absorbed and rice is tender. Remove from heat, allow to sit a further 5 minutes with lid on.

While rice is cooking, put walnuts on the second oven tray. Drizzle with 2 tsp honey, season with salt and pepper, toss to coat. Roast for 4 minutes, or until caramelised. Remove from oven and toss the walnuts with the melted honey to evenly coat. Allow to cool and set on tray.

Once roasted, remove garlic cloves from oven. Squeeze garlic from skins into a medium bowl and mash with a fork. Set aside ¼ of the mint leaves for garnish, then chop the remaining leaves, discarding the stems. To the garlic add the chopped mint, 2 tbsp oil from the goat cheese, 1 tbsp honey, the white wine vinegar and Dijon mustard. Season with salt and pepper and whisk until well combined.

Rinse and drain lentils. Add lentils and rice to the garlic and mint dressing, toss to combine. Divide the lentil and rice mixture, roast vegetables and walnuts among plates. Crumble over the goat cheese and sprinkle remaining mint leaves to serve.



## Mediterranean-inspired roast carrot, beetroot & lentil salad

### Nutritional information

Food affects mood. More and more research shows that highly processed foods increase the risk of depression, while a balanced whole food diet can help prevent depression and improve mood.

A healthy, wholefood diet nourishes and restores the important gut bacteria (microbiota). These trillions of little guys in your gut have an important role in promoting brain health, as they can influence mood. The Mediterranean diet is the diet of choice for good mental health, as it is based on the traditional eating patterns of Southern Greeks and Italians in the 1960s, as well as the traditional diets of Spain and Portugal. It's high in vegetables, fruit, wholegrains, legumes, fish, extra-virgin olive oil (EVOO), herbs and nuts (such as walnuts, featured in this recipe). It included dairy foods, often from sheep and goats, and red meat occasionally – and red wine with meals only.

Like the Mediterranean diet, this dish is plant-based. The lentils and rice combine to provide a complete protein. Brightly coloured vegetables – such as the beetroot and carrot in this dish – contain various phytochemicals (plant compounds) that are rich in antioxidants, as do fresh herbs. The EVOO is also high in antioxidants, which help fight potential damage caused to the body's cells by free radicals, which include the body's own immune system, pollution and UV radiation. Antioxidants may also help to protect our nerve cells from oxidative damage that may impair their function and therefore influence brain health.

Topped with feta for extra protein, and a source of calcium, this salad will nourish you, your gut and brain.