

BEET, WILD MUSHROOM, AND POTATO CASSEROLE

THE COMPLETE VEGETARIAN COOKBOOK

2 tablespoons vegetable oil (we use olive oil)
1 medium onion, chopped
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 1/4 cups vegetable stock
1 1/2 lbs cooked beets, peeled and chopped
5 tablespoons light cream (we use soy milk)
2 tablespoons creamed horseradish
1 teaspoon hot mustard
1 tablespoon wine vinegar
1 teaspoon caraway seed
2 tablespoons butter (1/4 stick)
1 shallot, chopped
8 ounces wild mushrooms, trimmed and sliced (we use a bag of frozen or fresh shitakes)
3 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped

For the potato border

2 lbs floury potatoes, peeled
2/3 cup milk (again, we use soy milk)
1 tablespoon fresh dill, chopped
salt & freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Lightly oil a 9-inch round baking dish. Heat the oil in a large saucepan, add the onion and cook until soft, without coloring. Stir in the flour, remove from the heat and gradually add the stock, stirring until well blended.

Return to the heat, stir and simmer to thicken, and then add the beets cream, creamed horseradish, mustard, vinegar, and caraway seeds. Stir to mix.

To make the potato border, bring the potatoes to a boil in salted water and cook for 20 minutes. Drain well and mash with the milk. Add the dill and season with salt and pepper.

Spoon the potatoes into the prepared dish and make a well in the center. Spoon the beet mixture into the well and set aside.

Melt the butter in a large nonstick frying pan and cook the shallot until soft, without browning. Add the mushrooms and cook over moderate heat until their juices begin to run. Increase the heat and boil off the moisture. When quite dry, season with the salt and pepper and stir in most of the chopped parsley.

Spread the mushrooms over the beet mixture, cover the dish and bake for about 30 minutes. Serve immediately, garnished with the reserved parsley.