



Borani Laboo (Persian Beetroot & Yoghurt Dip)

Borani (sometimes written burani or boorani) are Persian vegetable dips made with a tangy yoghurt base, they're ideal for stimulating appetite and cutting through rich stews and other dishes. Spinach is commonly used and there's a delicious eggplant version. I love the earthy flavour of this beetroot borani, as well as the flash of brightness it brings to the table. It's best made with fresh beetroot, but I've used canned ones at a pinch and I doubt anyone knew the difference. It's great as a side dish or with bread as part of a mازه (Persia's mezze) and I've seen it piled into little lettuce cups as finger food which looks fabulous too. It keeps well in the fridge for at least 3 days; if the yoghurt weeps a little just give it a stir and another drizzle of oil before serving.

Serves 2–4 as a side dish

INGREDIENTS

- 2 baby beetroot (or 1 larger one), leaves trimmed
- ½ cup thick natural yoghurt
- ½ teaspoon dried mint
- Pinch salt flakes, crushed
- Extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling
- Herb leaves, for garnishing (optional)



METHOD

1. Place beetroot in a saucepan of boiling salted water and cook for 30–45 minutes, depending on size, until tender.
2. Set aside until cool enough to handle.
3. Meanwhile, place yoghurt in a mixing bowl and add dried mint, rubbing it between your hands to crush it.
4. Stir to combine well and loosen up the yoghurt; taste and add salt (remember that some yoghurt is saltier than others).
5. Wearing gloves so as not to stain your skin, rub the skin off the beetroot.
6. Grate the beetroot coarsely into the mixing bowl and gently fold through the yoghurt.
7. Taste and add more salt if needed.
8. Cover and refrigerate until needed.
9. Transfer to a serving bowl, drizzle with oil and scatter with a few herb leaves if you like.