

# Booktopia

## An Exclusive Stephanie Alexander Recipe for Booktopia: Avocado, Grapefruit and Beetroot Salad with Toasted Walnuts

SERVES 4

2 pink grapefruit or 3 blood oranges  
12 golf-ball sized beetroot, washed, leaves trimmed (set big leaves aside for braising but wash and dry any small ones and add to salad)  
olive oil, for cooking  
50 g walnut halves  
1 large avocado  
4 handfuls salad leaves, washed and dried

### WALNUT OIL DRESSING

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  
1 teaspoon walnut oil  
½ teaspoon red-wine vinegar  
1 tablespoon finely chopped chives (optional)  
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

### EXTRA EQUIPMENT

salad spinner  
disposable gloves

The colours of this salad are so beautiful and the contrasting texture and flavour of the buttery avocado, sharp tang of the grapefruit, crispness of the green leaves and the sweetness of the beetroot are delightful. In winter, many farmers' markets offer marvellous freshly shelled new season's walnuts. If you are doubtful about the freshness of the walnuts you can buy (long-stored walnuts are quite disgusting) substitute toasted pine nuts or roasted almonds.

Using a small or large sharp knife carve skin from grapefruit or blood oranges. Holding a grapefruit in one hand over a large bowl to catch all the juices, slip knife down one side of a single segment and then down other side of the segment, cutting flesh away from membrane. Drop segment into the bowl. Continue until all segments are in the bowl, then work on the next grapefruit. Squeeze 'skeletons' so that the juice falls over the segments.

Preheat oven to 180°C. Put beetroot into a baking dish filled with water to a depth of 1 cm, then add a splash of olive oil and cover with foil. Bake for 45 minutes or until tender. Toast walnuts in a frying pan over medium heat, tossing them for about 5 minutes, or place on a small tray in the oven and roast for about 5 minutes or until golden. Tip into a small bowl to cool.

To make the dressing, mix the ingredients in a separate bowl and set aside. Uncover baking dish and, when beetroot are cool enough to handle, put on disposable gloves and slip off skins. Halve each beetroot and drop into bowl with the dressing.

Halve avocado and remove the stone. Using a large spoon, slip flesh out of the skin. Place each half cut-side down on a chopping board and cut into 1 cm thick slices. Set out 4 salad plates. Toss salad leaves with beetroot, then place a quarter in the centre of each plate. Arrange avocado and grapefruit around beetroot. Taste remaining dressing, then add a little grapefruit juice and drizzle over salad. Scatter over walnuts and serve at once.

