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Rainbow Layered Root Vegetable Gratin

Adapted from NY Times Ombre Gratin

Serves 6

8x8 square baking pan

This recipe can be doubled and prepared in a 9x13 pan.

Ingredients-have your ingredients prepared in advance as suggested in the ingredient list.

Do ahead recipe note:

For the red potatoes and the sweet potato, you can slice them ahead of time. Place them in a bowl and cover with water until you are ready to begin your recipe. Strain them, pat them dry with paper towels, and then season as instructed.

The beets and butternut squash can also be sliced ahead of time and set aside. No need to cover these with water.

- 1 ½ tablespoons unsalted butter, melted, plus more for greasing the dish
- 4 garlic cloves, minced fine
- 2 cups half-and-half
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
- ¾ teaspoon grated nutmeg
- ¾ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 ¼ pounds red potatoes (about 3 medium red potatoes), scrubbed
- Kosher and black pepper, to taste
- 1 large beet (about 6 ounces)
- 7 ounces Gruyère or Swiss cheese, grated (about 3 cups)
- ¾ cup parmesan, grated
- 1 large sweet potato (about 5 ounces), peeled, halved lengthwise, and sliced into ¼-inch-thick slices
- 1 pound butternut squash (the neck of 1 squash), peeled, quartered lengthwise, and sliced into ¼-inch-thick slices

Equipment:

- 8x8-inch square baking dish (or 9x13-inch if doubling the recipe)
- Small saucepan (for melting butter)
- Mixing bowls (at least 3: one for the cream mixture, one for the cheese, one for seasoning the vegetables)
- Mandoline slicer (or very sharp knife for slicing vegetables)
- Cutting board
- Vegetable peeler (for sweet potatoes and butternut squash)
- Garlic press or knife (for mincing garlic)
- Measuring spoons (for butter, thyme, nutmeg, salt, and pepper)
- Measuring cups (for half-and-half, cheeses)
- Spatula or spoon (for mixing the cream and cheese)
- Paper towels (for patting vegetables dry after slicing)
- Aluminum foil (optional, for covering the baking dish if needed)

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This recipe can be doubled and prepared in a 9x13 pan.

1 ½ tablespoons unsalted butter, melted, plus more for greasing the dish

4 garlic cloves, minced fine

2 cups half-and-half

1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves

¾ teaspoon grated nutmeg

¾ teaspoon kosher salt

1 ¼ pounds red potatoes (about 3 medium red potatoes), scrubbed

Kosher and black pepper, to taste

1 large beet (about 6 ounces)

7 ounces Gruyère or Swiss cheese, grated (about 3 cups)

¾ cup parmesan, grated

1 large sweet potato (about 5 ounces), peeled, halved lengthwise, and sliced into ⅛-inch-thick slices

1 pound butternut squash (the neck of 1 squash), peeled, quartered lengthwise, and sliced into ⅛-inch-thick slices

Do ahead recipe note:

For the red potatoes and the sweet potato, you can slice them ahead of time. Place them in a bowl and cover with water until you are ready to begin your recipe. Strain them, pat them dry with paper towels, and then season as instructed.

The beets and butternut squash can also be sliced ahead of time and set aside. No need to cover these with water.

1. Set a rack in the middle of the oven and another right below it. Heat the oven to 375 degrees. Butter a 8 x8 -inch baking dish; set aside.
2. Combine the melted butter, minced garlic, half and half, thyme, nutmeg, and kosher salt in a mixing bowl and set aside.
3. Combine the two cheeses in a bowl, set aside.
4. Using a mandoline (or very sharp knife;), slice the unpeeled red potatoes crosswise ⅛-inch thick. In a bowl, toss the potatoes with 1½ teaspoons salt and ¾ teaspoon pepper until evenly seasoned. Set aside. For tip about cutting potatoes and vegetables ahead, see note above.
5. Peel, trim and halve the beets, then slice them ⅛-inch thick using a mandoline (or very sharp knife). Place the sliced beets into a separate bowl and toss with ¾ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Shingle the sliced beets in the baking dish, overlapping slightly, in two even layers, then sprinkle them evenly with ¾ cup grated cheeses.
6. In the bowl, season the sliced sweet potatoes with 1 teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper; toss to coat. Shingle them on top of the cheese-topped beets in 2 to 3 even layers, then press them gently to compress the vegetables evenly, eliminating any air pockets. Sprinkle the sweet potatoes with ¾ cup grated cheeses.
7. In the bowl, season the squash with ¾ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper; toss to coat. Shingle the squash over the cheese-topped sweet potatoes in 2 even layers, press to compress the mixture, then sprinkle the squash with ¾ cup grated cheese.

8. Shingle the potatoes on top in 2 to 3 even layers, then slowly pour the cream mixture evenly over the sliced vegetables and top the remaining grated cheese. Set on the middle rack of the oven and place a large sheet pan directly underneath on the rack below to catch any drips. Bake until the vegetables soften, and the cream is bubbling, about 1 1/2 hours. The vegetables should be soft when pierced with a paring knife. Remove from the oven and let rest for 30 minutes before cutting. Be patient here. If you slice the gratin before it has a chance to set up, the layers will slide and not hold together. This is excellent prepared one day in advance, refrigerated, and reheated, covered in a 325-degree oven until warmed through.

