

SPINACH



Spinach is in season from May through June and August through September.

Tips for selecting spinach

Choose leaves that are crisp and are dark green. Avoid leaves that are limp, damaged, or spotted.

Storage

After washing, thoroughly dry with a salad spinner or blot with paper towels. Wrap in dry paper towels and seal in a plastic bag for storage. Spinach is highly perishable and will not remain fresh for more than one week.

Preparation

One pound of fresh spinach equals about 1 cup of cooked spinach. Loose spinach can be very gritty straight from the garden, so it must be thoroughly rinsed. Spinach grows in sandy soil that clings to the leaves.

Key nutrients

Spinach is loaded with vitamins and minerals!

- Calcium for strong bones
- Fiber to prevent constipation
- Folate to help prevent birth defects and reduce the risk of heart disease
- Magnesium for overall health
- Potassium to maintain normal blood pressure
- Vitamin A for vision, healthy skin, and resistance to infection
- Vitamin C for healthy gums, skin, and blood

Recipes

Sautéed spinach leaves

$\frac{3}{4}$ pound fresh cleaned spinach leaves
1 tablespoon olive oil
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
Salt and black pepper to taste
Place a large nonstick pot over high heat and add oil, spinach, and nutmeg. Add salt and pepper, then cook and toss quickly until spinach is wilted. Drain and serve hot. Serves 2; 155 Cal; 14 g fat.

Skillet lasagna

$\frac{1}{2}$ pound ground beef, pork, or turkey
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped onion
1 15-ounce can tomato sauce
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups water
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon garlic
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon oregano and basil
3 cups uncooked noodles
1 pound fresh chopped spinach
1 cup cottage cheese
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup shredded mozzarella
Brown meat in a large skillet. Drain and rinse to remove some of the fat. Combine with onion, tomato sauce, water, and spices. Cover and bring to boil. Add noodles, then cover and simmer for 5 minutes. Stir in spinach and simmer another 5 minutes then stir. Spoon cottage cheese over the top and sprinkle with shredded mozzarella. Cover and simmer for another 10 minutes. If mixture gets too dry, add a little more water. Refrigerate leftovers. Serves 4; 295 Cal; 12 g fat.



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