

Spinach (Greens)

Interesting facts: Spinach is a native plant of Persia (modern day Iran). It was introduced to China in the 7th century. It was most probably brought to Europe in about the 12th century and to the US in 1806. In the 1930's U.S. spinach growers credited Popeye with a 33% increase in domestic spinach consumption. Oxalate, found in spinach, may cause kidney stones in some predisposed individuals. California produces 74 percent of the fresh spinach grown in the United States.

How to select: Always buy organic as it is on the EWG's "Dirty Dozen" list for pesticide residue. The fresher the better. Research has shown that fresh spinach starts losing its nutritional benefits within days of harvest. Choose spinach that's stored in a cooler rather than the shelf

What to avoid: Wet or limp leaves.

How to clean and store: Wash your spinach just before using – not before storing.

How to prepare and use: Juice or Smoothies, Raw, Sautéed, Soups and Stews

Juice or Smoothies: Add to your favorite smoothie or use in vegetable juices.

Raw: Make a spinach salad.

Sautéed: Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the spinach to the skillet and cover; allow to cook 5 minutes. For added flavor, stir in the garlic salt and cover again for another 5 minutes; remove from heat. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese to serve.

Recipe idea:

Cleansing Broth Soup: Steam for 8 minutes: 1-2 chopped organic carrots, 3 stalks chopped celery 1-2 zucchini, chopped, 3-4 ounces of chopped cabbage, 4 ounces spinach leaves. Place in blender and blend until smooth: 1 cup unsweetened almond milk or full fat milk and 1-2 tablespoons olive oil, 1-2 tablespoons tamari (wheat free soy sauce), ½ cup water. Pour into soup bowls and top with a drizzle of olive oil and salt and pepper.

Spinach Salad: One package of spinach leaves, ¼ cup toasted nuts, 2-3 ounces goat cheese or blue cheese crumbled, ½ cubed avocado. Drizzle with your favorite dressing.