

# How to Cook Spring Greens

Dark leafy greens are one of the healthiest things you can put on your plate, and also some of the most delicious. Here's the basic starting recipe - let your imagination take it wherever you like.

Ingredients to serve 2 people:

1 generous Tbs. Olive oil

1 clove of garlic, smashed and peeled

1 pound tender greens, such as spinach, Swiss chard, beet greens, escarole - chopped roughly and any large or tough stems removed\*

Juice from ½ a lemon

Salt and pepper

1. Heat oil in a large, deep skillet over medium heat
2. Add garlic, and let it get just golden
3. Remove garlic clove with a slotted spoon or tongs, discard
4. Add greens to skillet, toss with tongs to coat with the oil
5. Saute greens until wilted, when done take off the heat and add lemon juice
6. Salt and pepper to taste

My favorite additions:

1. About ¼ tsp red pepper flakes, added to the oil with the garlic (leave them in)
2. A chopped shallot or small onion, added after you remove the garlic
3. A slice of chopped bacon or pancetta, brown in the oil before adding the garlic

You can also add anything chopped tomatoes, garbanzo or cannellini beans, olives or a tapenade, or chopped nuts.

Cooked greens are delicious on their own, and add body and flavor to soups, stews, whole grains and egg dishes. They are full of vitamins (Bs, C, E, K, folic acid, carotenes) and minerals including iron, potassium and calcium. Not to mention fiber and antioxidants. All for about 40 calories a cup (cooked).

\* The stems of Swiss chard are delicious: just chop them like an onion and saute them before adding the greens since they take longer to cook. This adds a little crunch and some beautiful color to your dish.