

# SWISS CHARD



**SWISS CHARD** (botanical name *Beta vulgaris*) is a beet grown for its leaves rather than for its root.

First cultivated in parts of Europe and in the Mediterranean, chard is still appreciated for its distinctive, acid-sweet flavor. There are several varieties of Swiss chard: red, green, and even rainbow (some stalks are red, others are yellow or green, all on the same plant!). Swiss chard, like many other greens, is available in the Northeast in the spring and fall.

## STORAGE

- ◆ Wrap **unwashed** Swiss chard in a damp towel and place in the refrigerator drawer. It will keep **3-4 days** stored this way.
- ◆ **To freeze**, wash, chop, and blanch for 3 minutes, until bright green. Rinse with cold water, drain, and pack into freezer bags.

## PREPARATION

- ◆ Wash chard in cold water with a bit of salt added. Chop leaves and stems (larger stems will take longer to cook).
- ◆ Small, young chard can be eaten **raw** in salads or **cooked, steamed, sautéed, or stir-fried**.
- ◆ Chard is best prepared **sautéed or steamed**. It is ready when it is wilted and tender. Note: Chard will bleed its color onto other foods when cooked together.
- ◆ **Chard can be substituted into any recipe that calls for spinach.**

### ***Nutritional Information***

Swiss chard is high in Vitamins A, C, and K. Vitamin A is important in vision, growth and development, skin health, immune function and reproduction. Vitamin C is important in immune response, wound healing, and allergic reactions. Vitamin C also helps with iron absorption. Vitamin K is involved in blood clotting.

# Swiss Chard Recipes

## Steamed Chard

- 1 bunch chard
- 2 large garlic cloves, minced
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil

Wash chard leaves well and remove discolored parts. In a pan with lid combine leaves and about 1/4 inch of water. Cover and steam until chard has wilted. Remove leaves and drain water. Return pan to stove top. Over medium flame heat olive oil. Add onions and cook until onions become golden. Add garlic cook 2 minutes more. Add chard leaves, stir to mix. When chard is heated through serve immediately.

Recipe adapted from [FoodBook for a Sustainable Harvest](#), by Elizabeth Henderson and David Stern, copyright 1994 by Elizabeth Henderson and David Stern.



## Stuffed Chard Leaves (Serves 6 to 8)

- 1 onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup oil
- 2-1/2 cups cooked brown rice
- 1/2 cup chopped parsley
- 1-1/2 cups low-fat cottage cheese
- 3/4 cup raisins
- 1 teaspoon dill
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg, beaten
- 16 large Swiss chard leaves
- 2 cups tomato sauce

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and grease a baking dish. In medium pan, heat oil. Add onion cook until it turns golden. In a bowl, using a spoon, mix cooked onion, rice, parsley, cottage cheese, raisins, dill, salt and egg. Wash and dry chard and remove the stems. Place 2 tablespoons filling on the underside of each leaf, a third of the way from the bottom of the leaf. Fold the leaf to make a square packet with the filling inside. Place the packet, seam-side-down in prepared casserole dish and pour tomato sauce on top. Cover and bake for 20-30 minutes. Any extra filling can be baked and served with the stuffed leaves.

Recipe adapted from: Laurel's Kitchen, found in [FoodBook for a Sustainable Harvest](#), by Elizabeth Henderson and David Stern, copyright 1994 by Elizabeth Henderson and David Stern.



## Swiss Chard and Dill Pilaf

- 3 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1-1/2 cups chopped onion
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 cup long-grain, converted white rice
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- Pepper to taste
- 1 pound chard leaves, de-stemmed and washed
- 2-1/2 cups water or vegetable stock
- 6 Tablespoons lemon juice
- 1/2 cup fresh dill

In a 4 quart heavy pot heat olive oil. Add onions and garlic and cook slowly until soft (about 6 minutes). Stir in rice, nutmeg, salt and pepper, mixing well. Stir in chard and water or stock. Bring to a boil, lower heat, cover and simmer for 15 minutes or until rice is tender. Remove from heat, stir in lemon juice and the dill, mixing well. Adjust seasonings and serve.

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