



Eating Greens!

I've been asked often, "How do you cook those bags of greens?" You know, those big bags of collards, turnip greens, mustard greens and kale you find in the produce section?

Leafy dark greens are packed with rich nutrients. They are rich in vitamins A (from beta-carotene) and C. They are also good sources of calcium, iron, folate and magnesium. They contain lutein and zeaxanthin, which are believed to help protect against cataracts and macular degeneration. So it makes sense to eat plenty of them!

Except perhaps for spinach, many don't buy greens because they are not sure how to prepare them. Of course if you are from the South, you probably grew up eating turnip greens boiled to death and flavored with salt and bacon grease (my first introduction to turnip greens when I visited my husband-to-be and ate with his family. I only eat turnip greens this way when I visit my in-laws. I enjoy my mother-in-law's greens but I personally prepare my greens less overcooked.

The past summer/fall was wonderful as we grew our own organic kale and collards. We are planning to grow more in the coming spring. Nothing tastes better than freshly harvested greens! But the bagged ones from the produce section and even the frozen ones also serve their purpose.

Here are some ideas that you might want to try. They are among my family favorites.



1. Mashed potatoes with Greens

Make your favorite mashed potatoes and stir in cooked and drained mustard greens, collards and turnip greens. I love simmering garlic cloves with potatoes as they really enrich its flavor. Then I mash the garlic together with the potatoes.

The next two recipes are modified from the recipes found on the Glory Foods bags.

2. Greens and Seasoned Tomatoes

- 1 bag greens
- 2 tbsps Italian seasoning or combination of basil, oregano, and rosemary
- 1 can (14-16 oz) seasoned tomatoes, chopped or halved

Rinse the greens, then put them in a large pan and add enough water to cover. Bring to boil, reduce heat and let simmer for 10 minutes. Drain off half the water. Add Italian seasoning, tomatoes and as much liquid from the can as you like (I use all). Continue to heat until dinner.

For dinner tonight I added half a bag of corn and some left over chicken into the pan. We had the greens and brown rice for our simple no-fuss meal.



3. Garlic Greens

1 bag greens
4 tbsps vegetable oil (I like virgin coconut or olive oil)
2-3 tbsps, minced garlic (4 large cloves)
salt and pepper
hot pepper sauce

Steam greens until tender. Saute garlic in oil. Add the greens and season with salt and pepper. Add a few drops of hot pepper sauce if you like.

4. Steamed Greens

This is how we usually eat our collards and kale. After washing and rinsing them, I steam them for 3 minutes. I like them bright green. Then we eat them as a side dish. Sometimes I drizzle lemon juice and melted butter over them. Sometimes I shake a tiny bit of sea salt. Mostly, we just have them plain with whatever we're having for dinner. It could be spaghetti or quinoa or rice. I even have them with my sandwiches, LOL.

For my son, I usually cut them into little pieces and mix them with his rice/pasta, other vegetables and some meat.

You can make it more interesting by trying different dressings. My husband likes his with seasoned rice vinegar. Sprinkle some toasted black sesame seeds. Yum!



This is a fun dressing for steamed and chopped collards if you have no peanut allergies.

Peanut Dressing

1/2 cup plain sour cream
1/4 cup chunky peanut butter
1/4 cup orange or pineapple juice
1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
1 dash ground cumin
1 dash sweet paprika

5. Soup

A favorite meal of mine using greens is “Whatever Soup”.

Its preparation is simple and it's very satisfying especially on cold days. I usually have it for lunch

I basically throw whatever vegetables I have in the fridge into a pot of hot water or broth. Broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, beans, cabbage, bok choy, etc. I also include some leftover rice or pasta, if any. Then I throw in LOTS of GREENS! Sometimes I may add leftover chicken meat or an egg. If it's water I'm using as the base, I usually make some miso paste and stir it into the soup. This is one great way to eat lots of vegetables. For variety, add sliced onions and some chopped garlic with the vegetables. A slice of ginger is fun too.

**So there you have it! 5 ideas for you.
Surely one will appeal to you!**