



IN THE KITCHEN  
WITH  
*LeeAnn*



# Spinach Lovers

October is National Spinach Lover’s Month. Spinach isn’t just for Popeye any more. It has become one of the most popular green vegetables in the nation. March 26 th has been declared as National Spinach Day. Spinach can be served fresh or cooked by steaming, boiling or sautéing.

The health benefits of eating spinach are numerous. Spinach contains over 15 different vitamins and minerals that are helpful to our body’s health. It also promotes heart health.

In the 1930’s the United States had a 33% increase of spinach consumption. That increase was attributed to the popularity of the Popeye character and his cartoon. Children observed his brute strength after eating a can of spinach. Fans of Popeye wanted to be just like him. Crystal City, Texas, erected a statue of Popeye in 1937. This city is a major producer of spinach. Just think – If Popeye had liked escargot instead of spinach, he would be known as Popeye the Snailorman!

The state of California is the number one supplier of spinach in the United States. Other major contributing states include Arizona, New Jersey, Texas, Colorado, Maryland, and Arkansas. Alma, Arkansas, has an annual spinach festival each April and claims to be the “Spinach Capital of the World.”

Spinach is best when served fresh. It will last for about 1 week in the refrigerator before it begins to lose its freshness. Freezing whole spinach is simple. Pick out any leaves that have begun to lose their freshness. Place them in a ZipLoc freezer bag, squeeze out excess air and place in the freezer.

The first frozen spinach was advertised in Life magazine in 1949 by the Bird’s Eye food company. This vegetable could now be readily available to the consumer.

Another valuable quality of spinach is the fact that it will help you to eat less. Supplementing your diet with spinach will help you to feel full and not eat so much at mealtime.

Even if you aren’t a spinach eater, I hope you will give these recipes a try. I think you’ll be glad you did. Thanks for reading.

**SPINACH BALLS with MUSTARD SAUCE**  
(This is one of my son’s favorites)

- 2 (10 oz.) pkg. frozen chopped spinach (Cook and drain well)
  - 4 beaten eggs
  - 1 ½ sticks butter, melted
  - ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
  - 2 cups herbed stuffing mix
  - 1 large onion, chopped
  - ½ tsp. thyme
  - ½ tsp. salt
- Combine all ingredients well. Form into 1 inch balls and chill for 2 hours. Bake on cookie sheets lined with parchment paper at 350 degrees for 20 minutes. Serve with mustard sauce.
- Mustard Sauce:**
- 1 cup mayonnaise
  - 1/3 cup milk
  - ¼ cup prepared mustard
  - 4 tsp. lemon juice
- Combine all ingredients and chill before serving.

- SPINACH MADELEINE**
- 2 (10 oz.) pkg. frozen chopped spinach
  - 2 Tbsp. chopped onion
  - ½ cup evaporated milk
  - ½ cup vegetable liquor (from the cooked spinach)
  - 1 (8 oz.) Velveeta, Mexican style (Hot or Mild)
  - 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
  - ¾ tsp. celery salt
  - 4 Tbsp. butter
  - 2 Tbsp. flour
  - ¾ tsp. garlic salt
  - ¼ tsp. salt
  - ½ tsp. black pepper
  - Red pepper to taste
- Ritz crackers/melted butter for topping

Cook spinach according to package directions; drain well, reserving ½ cup of the vegetable liquor. Melt butter in saucepan over low hear, add flour and stir until blended and smooth. Add onion and cook until soft, but not brown. Add liquids slowly, stirring until thick and smooth. Add seasonings and cheese that has been cubed; stir until melted. Combine with the spinach and place into a casserole dish that has been lightly greased. Top with buttered, crushed Ritz crackers. Cook at 350 degrees for 30-40 minutes.

*\*I sometimes place a layer of quartered artichoke hearts in the bottom of the casserole before adding the spinach mixture.*

*\*\*This also makes a great dip.*

- BEEF FLORENTINE**
- 2 lbs. ground beef
  - 1 onion, chopped
  - 1 tsp. minced garlic
  - 1 (15 oz.) can tomato sauce
  - 1 (12 oz.) can tomato paste
  - 1 (4 oz.) jar sliced mushrooms, drained
  - 2 tsp. Italian seasoning
  - Salt and Pepper to taste

# Operation Christmas Child aims to reach millions of children with hope this year

## Press Release

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to cause fear and uncertainty, Samaritan’s Purse is calling on churches and families to pack more shoebox gifts than ever before for Operation Christmas Child—making sure millions of children experience the Good News and great joy of the holiday. Samaritan’s Purse is committed to its mission of reaching millions of children across the globe with hope.

“Much of the world has been gripped with fear, and this is especially hard for children,” said Franklin Graham, president of Samaritan’s Purse. “Now more than ever, these boys and girls need to know God loves them. Operation Christmas Child delivers the hope found only in Jesus Christ.”

The Samaritan’s Purse project has been collecting and delivering shoebox gifts—filled with school supplies, hygiene items and fun toys—to children worldwide for more than two decades. This is a mission project that everyone can still be a part of, even with COVID-19 restrictions. Simply pack shoeboxes with school supplies, hygiene items and fun toys. Then, bring them to one of more than 4,000 Drop-Off Locations during National Collection Week Nov. 16-23. Drop-Off Locations will be listed starting in early November at samaritanspurse.org and can be searched by city or ZIP code.

Even if churches and groups are not yet meeting, families are encouraged to pack shoebox gifts

- 8 oz. shredded Mozzarella cheese
- 2 (10 oz.) pkg. frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained
- 16 oz. carton small curd cottage cheese

Brown and drain ground beef and onion; add garlic, tomato sauce, tomato paste, mushrooms and seasoning. Mix well and simmer for 15 minutes. Mix cottage cheese and mozzarella cheese. Spray a 13 x 9 inch baking dish with cooking spray and layer as follows: half the meat sauce, half the cheese mixture, spinach, cheese and top with remaining meat sauce. Add some additional mozzarella or parmesan cheese on top. Bake at 350 degrees for about 45 minutes.

*\*Any recipe with the word Florentine in the title, will have a significant amount of spinach in the dish.*

*\*Lee Ann Fleming is a Holmes County native, food columnist and has garnered fame for her recipes featured in the film, **The Help**. Fleming can be reached at lafkitchen@hughes.net.*



More than 1.1 million children in Botswana have received an Operation Christmas Child shoebox since Samaritan’s Purse began delivering gifts there in 2001.

(Courtesy Photo)




Boys in the Caucasus nation of Georgia rejoice to receive shoebox gifts and The Greatest Gift Gospel booklets.

(Courtesy Photo)

at home. Through Operation Christmas Child’s network of thousands of churches around the world, God uses

these simple gifts to make an eternal impact.



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**Khamauri Rogers**

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EXPENSES	
Personnel	\$
Supplies	\$
Contractual/Other	\$ 122,402
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 122,402
Dumpster trash is collected by the City of Lexington and disposed by Leflore County Landfill.	
City of Lexington 112 Spring Street Lexington, MS 39095 662-834-1261 or fax 662-834-1261 lexingtoncityof@bellsouth.net	