

Cheesy Creamed Spinach: Classic Comfort Side Dish

Few side dishes offer the luxurious comfort and rich flavor of perfectly made



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1 min

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INGREDIENTS

1 lb fresh spinach, washed and stems removed (about 10-12 cups loosely packed)
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 cup whole milk
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup heavy cream
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese
Salt and pepper to taste
Pinch of nutmeg (optional, but highly recommended!)

Swaps and Notes:

Spinach: Fresh spinach is best for flavor and texture. If using frozen spinach, thaw it completely and squeeze out as much water as possible before adding it to the pan. You'll likely need about 10-12 ounces of frozen, thawed spinach.

Butter: Unsalted butter allows you to control the salt content. If using salted butter, reduce the added salt.

Garlic: Freshly minced garlic provides the best aroma and flavor. Garlic powder can be used in a pinch (about $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon), but it won't be as robust.

Milk/Cream: Whole milk and heavy cream create the richest sauce. For a slightly lighter version, you can use more whole milk and less heavy cream, but the texture will be thinner.

Cheese: Adjust the ratio of mozzarella and Parmesan to your preference. Other good melting cheeses like Gruyère or white cheddar could also be added. Freshly grated Parmesan offers superior flavor to pre-grated.

Nutmeg: The pinch of nutmeg is a classic addition to creamed spinach, enhancing the creamy, savory flavors without being overtly noticeable. Don't skip it if you want that authentic taste!

Flour: This helps thicken the sauce. If you prefer a gluten-free option, you can use a gluten-free all-purpose flour blend or omit the flour and use a cornstarch slurry (1 tbsp cornstarch mixed with 2 tbsp cold water, added slowly while stirring) for thickening.

Directions:

Melt Butter & Sauté Garlic: In a large pot or deep skillet (one with a lid is helpful for wilting the spinach), melt the unsalted butter over medium heat. Add the minced garlic and cook for about 1 minute, stirring constantly, until it becomes fragrant. Be careful not to let the garlic brown or burn.

Wilt Spinach: Gradually add the fresh, washed spinach to the pot. You might need to add it in batches if your pot isn't large enough to hold all 1 lb at once. Stir the spinach constantly as it wilts down, which happens quickly. Once all the spinach is wilted and tender-crisp, continue to cook for another minute to evaporate any excess moisture.

Add Flour & Cook Roux: Sprinkle the all-purpose flour evenly over the wilted spinach. Stir constantly for about 1 minute, allowing the flour to cook out its raw taste and combine with the butter and spinach. This creates a light roux, which will thicken your sauce.

Pour in Liquids: Slowly pour in the whole milk and heavy cream, whisking constantly to prevent lumps. Continue stirring until the mixture begins to thicken and smooth out, which should take a few minutes. Bring it to a gentle simmer.

Add Cheeses: Reduce the heat to low. Add the shredded mozzarella cheese and grated Parmesan cheese to the simmering mixture. Stir continuously until both cheeses are completely melted and the sauce becomes wonderfully smooth and creamy.

Season: Season the creamed spinach with salt and pepper to taste. If desired, add a small pinch of nutmeg. Taste and adjust seasonings as needed.

Serve: Remove from heat immediately. Serve hot as a luxurious side dish, or spoon it over toasted bread for a delicious, comforting meal.

Tips for Success:

Dry Spinach Well: While washing is important, shaking off as much excess water as possible and

even lightly patting the spinach dry can prevent a watery sauce.

Don't Overcook Spinach: Spinach wilts very quickly. Cook just until wilted to maintain its vibrant color and tender texture.

Whisk Constantly: When adding the flour and then the liquids, whisking consistently is key to a smooth, lump-free sauce.

Low Heat for Cheese: When adding the cheeses, keep the heat low. High heat can cause the cheese to separate or become stringy rather than smoothly melting into the sauce.

Freshly Grate Parmesan: If possible, grate your own Parmesan cheese for a superior flavor and melting consistency.

Taste and Adjust: Always taste your sauce before serving and adjust salt, pepper, or nutmeg to your personal preference.

Serving Suggestions and Pairings:

Steak: A natural pairing, from a simple pan-seared sirloin to a grilled ribeye.

DIRECTIONS

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13. **Taste and : Adjust:** Always taste your sauce before serving and adjust salt, pepper, or nutmeg to your personal preference.
14. **Serving Suggestions and Pairings:** Cheesy Creamed Spinach is a classic accompaniment and pairs beautifully with a variety of main courses. It's especially delicious with:
15. **Steak:** A natural pairing, from a simple pan-seared sirloin to a grilled ribeye.
16. **Roasted : Chicken or Turkey:** The creamy richness complements poultry wonderfully.
17. **Fish:** Especially rich fish like salmon or cod.
18. **Pork : Chops or Pork Tenderloin.**
19. **As a vegetarian main served over toasted crusty bread or alongside a baked potato.**
20. **For other delicious and comforting main or side dishes, you might also enjoy:**
21. **My This : Tomato Skillet with Okra and Sausage is My Favorite Quick Dinner Packed with Southern Flavor.**
22. **Or a hearty bowl of : This Cajun Chicken Sausage Gumbo is My Favorite Bowl of Southern Comfort.**
23. **Storage and Leftover Tips:** Leftover Cheesy Creamed Spinach can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3-4 days. To reheat, gently warm it in a saucepan over low heat, stirring frequently, adding a splash of milk or cream if the sauce seems too thick. You can also microwave individual portions, stirring halfway through. Keep in mind the texture might change slightly upon reheating, but the flavor will still be fantastic.
24. **More Recipes You Will Love:** If you enjoyed the comforting and easy nature of this creamed spinach, you'll love exploring some of these other fantastic recipes:
25. **For another comforting meat dish, check out : These Easy Turkey Wings are My Favorite Comfort Food for Lazy Sundays.**

SWAPS & NOTES

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