

# Swiss Chard – The New Kale?

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I recently heard or read an article that declared that people were getting bored of Kale and that Swiss Chard was the new Kale. I am not so sure of that. If people are getting bored of Kale then they need to vary their diets more ;)

I do have to admit that Rainbow Chard (a version of Swiss Chard) is definitely beautiful to look at (see picture). Swiss Chard is a leafy green very similar to Kale with the same nutrient profile of being rich in Iron and Anti-oxidants. You can prepare it exactly the same way – it is a hearty green that does not wilt easily. It is slightly bitter but I find it less bitter than Kale. They are definitely kissing cousins.

I do recommend varying your greens and Swiss Chard is very plentiful right now, so dig in and enjoy. If you are not a fan of Kale I highly suggest taking a try at Swiss Chard because it is a bit less bitter. You may have found the dark leafy green that will win you over!

It is still bitter cold here in New England so I am going to offer a recipe that will warm your insides while giving you a fabulous nutrition profile. This recipe can be adjusted very easily to be a bit more spicy or make a white sauce instead of a red sauce and you have something gourmet!

Spring is coming I promise and until then...enjoy your winter vegetables! Their time is almost up!

– Your Chef Lara



# Meatless Butternut Squash and Chard Lasagna

Winter squash and chard are filling yet low-calorie stars in this mouthwatering meatless lasagna. Flavor fully rich in color and deliciously laden with vitamins and minerals, your family will never notice it is meat-free.

## YIELD

10 Servings

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## INGREDIENTS

- 1 (2 pound) butternut squash
- Sea salt and freshly grated black pepper to taste
- 1 tablespoon olive oil, divided
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 shallot
- 8 ounces baby spinach leaves, washed, drained but left damp
- 1 container (16 ounces) part-skim ricotta
- 1/2 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 bunch red chard, washed, drained, but left damp
- 1 jar (28 ounces) spicy marinara sauce [or homemade]
- 8 uncooked whole-wheat lasagna noodles
- 1 1/2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese

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## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Chop the shallot. Remove stems from chard and coarsely chop.
2. With a knife or fork, poke holes or small slits all over the squash. Place on a microwave-safe plate and microwave on high for 5 to 6 minutes or until a knife inserts easily into the skin. Microwaving instead of baking the squash saves time and makes it easier to peel. Roasting it after cutting it in half is also an option.
3. Let squash stand for 5 minutes or until cool enough to handle. Use a vegetable peeler to remove skin. Cut squash in half lengthwise and using a spoon, remove seeds. Slice thinly and season with salt and black pepper. Set aside.

4. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and spray a 13x9x2-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
5. In a large nonstick saucepan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Cook garlic and shallot, stirring frequently, until soft, 3 to 4 minutes. Add spinach and cook, stirring until wilted, 3 to 4 minutes.
6. Transfer spinach and any liquid to a medium bowl to cool slightly. Stir in ricotta, Parmesan, oregano, nutmeg, and cinnamon. Set aside.
7. In the same saucepan, add chard and season with salt and pepper. Press down and stir with a spatula for 1 to 2 minutes. Cover and cook until wilted, stirring occasionally, and adding a bit more water if pan gets dry, about 5 to 6 minutes. Set aside.
8. Pour 1/2 cup marinara into the prepared baking dish, using the back of a spoon to evenly spread. Lay 3 or 4 noodles in sauce. Spread half of the ricotta cheese mixture on noodles. Layer with butternut squash. Lay 3 or 4 noodles on squash and cover with half of the marinara sauce. Cover with chard and spread remaining ricotta cheese mixture on top. Cover with remaining noodles and sauce. Sprinkle with mozzarella.
9. Spray a large piece of foil with nonstick cooking spray and use it to tightly cover dish. Bake lasagna until sauce is bubbly, about 50 to 55 minutes. Remove foil and cook 5 to 10 minutes more to brown cheese. Remove from oven and let stand for at least 15 minutes before cutting.

**10. TO FREEZE:**

11. Individual servings: Divide lasagna into 10 freezer and microwave safe containers
12. For a crown: Let lasagna cool completely. cover with a sheet of plastic wrap placed directly on the lasagna. Cover pan tightly with aluminum foil.

**13. TO REHEAT:**

14. Let lasagna thaw in refrigerator overnight.
15. Microwave: Individual portions can be reheated in the microwave on high for 2 to 3 minutes or until heated through.
16. Oven: Preheat oven to 375 degrees. If reheating single portions, placed desired number of pieces into baking dish. If reheating entire pan, carefully take foil off baking dish and remove plastic wrap. Cover baking dish with foil and cook in oven for 35 to 40 minutes or until lasagna is hot and bubbling.