



Spigarello, the leafy green that's capturing the hearts of foodies and chefs alike, is more than just a trendy ingredient. Whether you're an experienced cook or new to the kitchen, Spigarello's versatility and unique taste make it a fantastic addition to your culinary repertoire. In this blog post, we'll explore everything you need to know about cooking with it, from its taste profile to delicious recipes and tips for making the most out of this leafy green. Let's dive in and expand your culinary horizons!

Introduction to Cooking with Spigarello

Spigarello, often referred to as the "Italian broccoli leaf," is a leafy green vegetable that hails from Southern Italy. It's gaining popularity in kitchens around the world, thanks to its mild, sweet flavor and tender texture. Similar in appearance to kale, it is a versatile ingredient that can be used in a variety of dishes. But what makes it truly special?

In this blog post, you'll learn about the unique taste profile of it, how to prepare it for cooking, and various techniques to incorporate it into your meals. We'll also share some mouth-watering recipes and tips to help you get started. By the end, you'll be ready to experiment with this dish in your own kitchen and discover why this leafy green is a must-have ingredient.

The Taste Profile of Spigarello

Spigarello offers a unique flavor that sets it apart from other leafy greens. Its mild, slightly sweet taste is often compared to a cross between broccoli and kale. Unlike kale, it lacks the bitterness that some people find off-putting. This makes it a versatile ingredient that can be enjoyed by everyone.

The leaves of it are tender and slightly chewy, providing a pleasant texture in both raw and cooked dishes. When cooked, it retains a bit of its crispness, adding a delightful bite to your meals. Whether you're using it in a salad, stir-fry, or soup, its unique taste will elevate your dish and provide a fresh, healthy twist.

Preparing Spigarello for Cooking

Before you start cooking with Spigarello, it's important to know how to properly prepare it. Here are some simple steps to get you started:



1. **Wash the Leaves:** Begin by thoroughly washing the leaves under cold running water. This will remove any dirt or debris that may be clinging to the leaves.
2. **Trim the Stems:** While the stems of it are edible, they can be a bit tougher than the leaves. Trim any particularly thick or woody stems, or simply chop them into smaller pieces to ensure even cooking.
3. **Chop or Tear the Leaves:** Depending on your recipe, you can either chop the leaves into bite-sized pieces or tear them by hand. This will make it easier to incorporate it into your dishes and ensure even cooking.

Now that your Spigarello is prepped and ready to go, let's explore some basic cooking techniques to get the most out of this versatile green.

Basic Cooking Techniques for Spigarello

There are several ways to cook it, each bringing out different aspects of its flavor and texture. Here are a few basic techniques to get you started:

1. **Sautéing:** Heat a bit of olive oil in a pan over medium heat. Add chopped Spigarello and sauté for 3-5 minutes, until the leaves are wilted and tender. Season with salt, pepper, and a squeeze of lemon juice for a simple yet delicious side dish.
2. **Blanching:** Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Add the this leaves and cook for 1-2 minutes, until bright green and tender. Drain and plunge into ice water to stop the cooking process. Blanched it can be used in salads or as a base for other recipes.
3. **Steaming:** Place this leaves in a steamer basket over boiling water. Cover and steam for 3-5 minutes, until tender. Season with your favorite spices or a drizzle of olive oil for a healthy and flavorful side dish.

Recipe Spigarello Stir-Fry

Stir-frying is a quick and easy way to enjoy Spigarello's natural flavors. Here's a simple recipe to get you started:

Ingredients:

- 1 bunch of Spigarello, washed and chopped
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced



- 1 red bell pepper, sliced
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- Optional toppings sesame seeds, chopped scallions

Instructions:

1. Heat olive oil in a large pan or wok over medium-high heat.
2. Add minced garlic and sliced bell pepper, and stir-fry for 2-3 minutes.
3. Add the chopped Spigarello and continue to stir-fry for another 3-4 minutes, until the leaves are wilted and tender.
4. Stir in soy sauce and sesame oil, and cook for an additional minute.
5. Serve hot, topped with sesame seeds and chopped scallions if desired. Enjoy!

Recipe Spigarello Salad

Spigarello's tender leaves make it a perfect addition to salads. Here's a refreshing recipe to try:

Ingredients:

- 1 bunch of Spigarello, washed and chopped
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1/2 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1/4 cup toasted pine nuts
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. In a large bowl, combine the chopped it, cherry tomatoes, red onion, feta cheese, and toasted pine nuts.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, balsamic vinegar, salt, and pepper.
3. Drizzle the dressing over the salad and toss to combine.
4. Serve immediately and enjoy the fresh, vibrant flavors!



Recipe Spigarello Soup

A warm bowl of Spigarello soup is perfect for chilly days. Here's a comforting recipe to try:

Ingredients:

- 1 bunch of Spigarello, washed and chopped
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 1 can white beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Optional toppings grated Parmesan cheese, crusty bread

Instructions:

1. Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat.
2. Add chopped onion and minced garlic, and cook until softened, about 5 minutes.
3. Add the chopped Spigarello, vegetable broth, white beans, and dried thyme.
4. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 15-20 minutes, until the Spigarello is tender.
5. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
6. Serve hot, topped with grated Parmesan cheese and crusty bread if desired. Enjoy!

Pairing Spigarello with Other Ingredients

One of the best things about its versatility in the kitchen. It pairs well with a variety of ingredients, making it a great addition to many dishes. Here are some ideas for pairing it with other ingredients:

1. **Garlic and Lemon:** The bright, tangy flavors of garlic and lemon complement its mild taste perfectly. Try sautéing Spigarello with garlic and finishing with a squeeze of lemon juice for a simple yet flavorful side dish.
2. **Cheese:** It pairs well with a variety of cheeses, from salty feta to creamy goat cheese. Add crumbled cheese to Spigarello salads or sprinkle grated Parmesan over steamed Spigarello for a delicious combination.



3. **Nuts and Seeds:** Add some crunch to your dishes with toasted nuts and seeds. Pine nuts, almonds, and sesame seeds are all great options that add texture and flavor.

By experimenting with these pairings, you can create a wide range of delicious and unique dishes featuring Spigarello.

Using Spigarello in Vegan and Vegetarian Dishes

Spigarello is a fantastic ingredient for vegan and vegetarian dishes, thanks to its hearty texture and rich flavor. Here are some ideas for incorporating it into your plant-based meals:

1. **Vegan Stir-Fry:** Replace the soy sauce with a gluten-free alternative and add tofu or tempeh for a protein-packed vegan stir-fry.
2. **Vegetarian Pasta:** Toss cooked pasta with sautéed Spigarello, cherry tomatoes, and crumbled feta for a quick and easy vegetarian dinner.
3. **Vegan Buddha Bowl:** Create a nourishing Buddha bowl by combining cooked grains, roasted vegetables, and sautéed Spigarello. Top with a drizzle of tahini dressing for a delicious and satisfying meal.

With its versatility and delicious flavor, it is a great addition to any vegan or vegetarian diet.

Nutritional Value Retention When Cooking Spigarello

When cooking Spigarello, it's important to retain as much of its nutritional value as possible. Here are some tips to help you preserve its vitamins and minerals:

1. **Quick Cooking Methods:** Opt for quick cooking methods like sautéing, blanching, or steaming to minimize nutrient loss. The longer you cook Spigarello, the more nutrients it may lose.
2. **Minimal Water:** When boiling or blanching it, use minimal water to reduce the risk of leaching nutrients. Alternatively, use the cooking water in soups or sauces to retain the nutrients.
3. **Avoid Overcooking:** Overcooking Spigarello can lead to a loss of nutrients and a mushy texture. Cook it just until tender to preserve its nutritional value and pleasant texture.

By following these tips, you can enjoy the [health benefits of it in every bite](#).



Tips for Storing Cooked Spigarello

Proper storage is key to maintaining the freshness and flavor of cooked Spigarello. Here are some tips to help you store it correctly:

1. **Refrigeration:** Store cooked Spigarello in an airtight container in the refrigerator. It should keep fresh for up to 3-4 days.
2. **Freezing:** If you have a large batch of cooked Spigarello, consider freezing it for longer storage. Place the cooked Spigarello in a single layer on a baking sheet and freeze until solid. Transfer to a freezer-safe container or bag for up to 3 months.
3. **Reheating:** To reheat cooked Spigarello, simply sauté it in a bit of olive oil or add it to soups and stews. Avoid microwaving, as this can lead to a loss of texture and flavor.

By following these tips, you can enjoy the delicious taste of it even when you're short on time.

Common Mistakes When Cooking Spigarello

While cooking Spigarello is relatively simple, there are a few common mistakes to avoid:

1. **Overcooking:** Overcooking Spigarello can lead to a mushy texture and a loss of nutrients. Cook it just until tender to preserve its flavor and texture.
2. **Using Too Much Oil:** While a bit of oil can enhance the flavor of it, using too much can make it greasy. Use a light hand when sautéing or drizzling with oil.
3. **Neglecting Seasoning:** Spigarello's mild flavor benefits from a bit of seasoning. Don't forget to add salt, pepper, and your favorite herbs and spices to bring out its best qualities.

Avoiding these common mistakes will help you get the most out of your Spigarello dishes.

Advanced Recipes with Spigarello

Once you've mastered the basics, it's time to take your Spigarello cooking to the next level. Here are some advanced recipes to try:

1. **Spigarello Pesto:** Blend sautéed Spigarello with garlic, olive oil, nuts, and Parmesan cheese for a unique twist on traditional pesto. Use it as a sauce for pasta or a spread for sandwiches.



2. **Spigarello and Ricotta Stuffed Shells:** Fill jumbo pasta shells with a mixture of sautéed Spigarello, ricotta cheese, and herbs. Top with marinara sauce and bake until bubbly for a comforting and delicious dinner.
3. **Quiche:** Combine sautéed Spigarello with eggs, cream, and your favorite cheese for a flavorful quiche. Bake until golden and set, and serve warm or at room temperature.

These advanced recipes will impress your friends and family and showcase the versatility of it.

Experimenting with Spigarello in Your Kitchen

Don't be afraid to get creative with Spigarello in your kitchen. Here are some ideas for experimenting with this versatile green:

1. **Smoothies:** Add a handful of raw Spigarello to your morning smoothie for a nutrient boost. Its mild flavor pairs well with fruits like bananas and berries.
2. **Pizza:** Top your favorite pizza dough with sautéed it, garlic, and your choice of cheese for a delicious and unique pizza.
3. **Egg Dishes:** Stir chopped it into scrambled eggs, omelets, or frittatas for a nutritious and flavorful breakfast.

By experimenting with it in different dishes, you can discover new and exciting ways to enjoy this delicious green.

Conclusion The Versatility of Spigarello in Cooking

Spigarello is a versatile and delicious leafy green that can elevate your cooking to new heights. From simple stir-fries and salads to advanced recipes and creative experiments, there are endless ways to enjoy it in your meals.

Whether you're a seasoned cook or just starting out in the kitchen, it offers a unique flavor and texture that can enhance a variety of dishes. By following the tips and recipes in this blog post, you'll be well on your way to mastering the art of cooking with it.

Ready to take your cooking skills to the next level? Explore more of our recipes and tips, and don't hesitate to reach out to our team for personalized advice and recommendations. Happy cooking!



FAQs

What is Spigarello?

Spigarello is a leafy green vegetable that is part of the Brassica family, which also includes broccoli, kale, and cabbage. It has a mild flavor and is highly versatile in a variety of dishes.

Where can I buy Spigarello?

Spigarello can often be found at farmers' markets, specialty grocery stores, or through local organic produce suppliers. It's becoming increasingly popular, so keep an eye out for it in your local supermarket's produce section.

Can Spigarello be eaten raw?

Yes, Spigarello can be eaten raw! It's delicious when added to salads or blended into smoothies. Its mild flavor makes it a great addition to many raw dishes.

How do I store fresh Spigarello?

To store fresh Spigarello, wrap it in a damp paper towel and place it in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. It should last for up to a week. Make sure to wash it thoroughly before use.

What are the nutritional benefits of Spigarello?

Spigarello is rich in vitamins A, C, and K, as well as minerals like calcium and iron. It's also a good source of dietary fiber and contains antioxidants, making it a nutritious addition to your diet.

Can I substitute Spigarello in recipes that call for kale or spinach?

Yes, it can be substituted in most recipes that call for kale or spinach. It has a similar texture and flavor, though it might be slightly milder in taste. Adjust seasonings as needed to suit your palate.

Is Spigarello suitable for a vegan or vegetarian diet?

Absolutely! Spigarello is a plant-based food that is perfect for vegan and vegetarian diets. Its versatility means it can be incorporated into a wide range of vegan and vegetarian



dishes.

Can Spigarello be frozen?

Yes, it can be frozen. Blanch it quickly in boiling water, then transfer it to an ice bath to cool. Once cooled, drain and pack it into freezer-safe bags or containers. It will keep in the freezer for up to three months.