



Lynn's Spanakopita

Ron Tiessen is the mastermind behind the Pelee Island Heritage Centre and was its first director. The annual Springsong event was cooked up jointly by Ron and Lynn Tiessen, Graeme Gibson, and Margaret Atwood. Ron was also the initiator of the Botham Cup Pelee Island Bird Race. In celebration of Springsong's 20th anniversary, Lynn offers this classic spinach pie from Greece, where the Tiessens spend their winters. In summer, the pie is a favourite with their guests at [Lake Muse B&B and Cottage](#) Kali Orexi! (Καλή όρεξη)

INGREDIENTS

2 LBS fresh spinach or 1 pkg frozen spinach (300 grams)
½ CUP olive oil, divided
1 CUP finely chopped spring onions (or cooking onions)
1 CUP crumbled feta cheese
1 CUP cottage cheese
3 TBSP grated kefalotiri or parmesan cheese
2 TBSP chopped parsley
1 TSP chopped fresh dill
4 eggs slightly beaten
¼ TSP nutmeg
 Salt and pepper to taste
1 PKG phyllo pastry (250 grams)

SERVES 6-8

METHOD

Lightly oil a 9 x 13 baking dish. Preheat oven to 375°F.

Wash spinach well; spin dry. Remove stems and roughly chop. If using frozen, thaw, drain, and squeeze out all water.

Heat ½ cup oil in large skillet. Gently sauté onion at medium heat until translucent. Add spinach and sauté at low temperature until limp and all liquid is evaporated.

Stir together cheeses, herbs, eggs, nutmeg, salt, and pepper. Add spinach and mix well.

Line baking dish with 5 sheets of phyllo pastry, brushing each sheet with oil. Add spinach filling and spread evenly. Lay 5 or more sheets on top, brushing each sheet with oil (about ½ cup in total). Trim phyllo and tuck cut edges into sides of pie. Precut through the top layer to make serving easier.

Brush top with oil and bake 45 minutes.

NOTE: If using frozen phyllo pastry, thaw in fridge overnight. If phyllo starts to dry while assembling the pie, lay a barely damp cloth over it. Don't worry if the phyllo cracks: the crunch is in the layers.

This recipe doubles well to make two pans, using up the box of phyllo pastry all at once. Freeze the extra pan before baking. Thaw before baking or bake from frozen, allowing more time.

Serve fresh from the oven or cool to room temperature, as the Greeks do. Pair with roasted cherry tomatoes and a green salad with a simple garlicky lemon vinaigrette.