

SPINACH STUFFED TOMATOES

Makes 6 servings, 1/2 tomato each

Tomatoes and Filling

- 3 medium sized tomatoes
- 8 oz. fresh baby spinach
- 3 T. grated aged Parmesan
- 1/3 C. sour cream
- 1/3 C. mayonnaise (Hellman's or Duke's)
- 1/8 t. freshly grated nutmeg (if you have it on hand), or else 1/8 t. ground nutmeg
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper

Topping

- 3/4 C. plain Panko bread crumbs
- 2 T. butter
- 1/8 t. granulated (dried) garlic

Prep the Tomatoes

- Optional Step: if you prefer, blanch the tomatoes one at a time in boiling water for 20 seconds. Set aside briefly, then remove peeling.
- Cut tomatoes in half horizontally and scoop out the pulp and seeds and discard them.
- Place empty tomatoes, cut side down, on some paper towels to drain them while you prepare the spinach filling.

Make the Filling

- Roughly chop half of a 16 oz. container of baby spinach.
- Place 2 T. water in a large saucepan with a lid and bring to a quick boil.

- Put the chopped spinach in the hot pan and put the lid on immediately. Turn off the heat but leave the pan on the burner to steam the spinach for 2-3 minutes. If you think the residual heat will scorch the spinach, move the pan to a cooler place but keep the lid on.
- Mix together the Parmesan, mayo, and sour cream. Add the nutmeg and some black pepper. Wait to taste for salt until after you have added the spinach.
- Put the steamed spinach in a colander and press out any liquid before you add it to the dairy mixture. Mix well.
- Portion out the spinach filling into the six tomato halves and place them on a parchment-lined cookie sheet.

Make the Topping

- Melt the 2 T. butter in a small pan.
- Add the granulated garlic and Panko breadcrumbs to the butter and mix well.
- Portion out the breadcrumbs on top of the filled tomatoes.

Bake

- Bake in a pre-heated 350° oven for about 10 minutes until the spinach filling is hot and the breadcrumbs are slightly golden. Overbaking will cause the tomatoes to collapse, so watch them carefully.
- Remove tomatoes from the oven and plate immediately (or set aside if you want to serve them room temp.)

These are a wonderful accompaniment to many fish and chicken recipes. They also make a great appetizer or first course. This recipe uses only 3 tomatoes, but they are so delicious that you might want to double that amount to serve 6 people.