

# PASSOVER PERFECTION



## TWO JEWS MAKING FOOD, EPISODE 28 MATZO SPINACH PIE & MANDEL BREAD

### SEPHARDIC MATZAH SPINACH PIE RECIPE

by Susan Barocas

#### INGREDIENTS

20 oz. frozen chopped spinach, thawed  
5 or 6 sheets of plain matzo  
2 Tbsp. olive oil  
1 medium onion, finely chopped  
Salt to taste  
One 14 oz can artichoke hearts, drained and diced  
½ cup fresh dill with thinner stems, finely chopped  
1 cup (about 4 ounces) crumbled feta  
2/3 cup grated Parmesan or Romano cheese, divided  
1 ½ cup milk (can be low-fat)  
½ tsp. ground black pepper  
1/8 tsp. nutmeg (optional)  
3 large eggs, divided

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Put the spinach into a fine mesh strainer and set in the sink or over a bowl to drain.

- Fill a large baking pan with tepid water. Break two sheets in half as equally as possible. Add the matzah to the pan of water for 2 minutes, making sure they are submerged. (You can gently lay a couple heavy pieces of silverware across the top of the matzah to hold down.) The matzah should be pliable, but still hold its shape. Take each sheet out by lifting it holding onto two corners. Let some of the water drip off for a moment, then lay the softened matzah in a single layer on a thick dish towel or two. You can do the matzah in batches depending on the size of your pan with water.
- Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and a couple pinches of salt, stir and sauté about 5 minutes until the onion starts to soften. Mix in the chopped artichoke and cook another 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, as the artichokes and onions begin to take on a little color.
- As the mixture cooks, use a large spoon or your hands to squeeze the as much liquid as possible out of the spinach. Set the squeezed spinach into a large mixing bowl, breaking up the clumps. When the onion and artichokes are ready, add to the bowl with the spinach and stir to blend the vegetables. Add the dill, feta, 1/3 cup grated cheese, milk, pepper and nutmeg, if using. Mix until well blended, then taste for saltiness. Depending on the saltiness of the feta, add salt as needed. Beat two eggs and stir into the mixture until well blended.
- Put 1 tablespoon olive oil in an 8 x 11.5-inch (2 quart) glass baking dish. Swirl the oil to cover the bottom and a bit of the sides, then put the dish in the preheated oven for 4 to 5 minutes. Heating the baking dish will help create a good bottom crust and keep it from sticking. As soon as the dish comes out hot, cover the bottom completely with about 1 1/2 sheets of matzah, slightly overlapping. The matzah should sizzle as it hits the oil. Spoon half the spinach mixture onto the matzah and gently spread evenly. Cover with another layer of 1 1/2 sheets of matzah, then the remaining spinach mixture making sure it's even. Add the top layer of matzah, covering the filling edge to edge. Use the extra half piece of wet matzah to fill in any of the layers as needed.
- Beat the remaining egg and tablespoon of oil together. Pour the mixture all over the top of the matzah. Some will drip down the sides and that's fine. Use a pastry brush to spread any pools of egg so the coating on the matzah is even. Bake for 40 minutes, then sprinkle the remaining 1/3 cup grated cheese evenly over the top. Continue baking another 10 to 12 minutes until the top is golden brown. Let stand 10 minutes before cutting.
- Serve warm.

## **AMY'S FAMOUS MANDEL BREAD**

*Makes 2 large loaves*

### **INGREDIENTS**

2 cups sugar

½ cup salted butter (2 reg. sticks)

6 eggs  
2 ¾ cup matzo cake meal  
½ tsp. salt  
¾ cup potato starch  
12 oz. semi-sweet chocolate chips  
Cinnamon/Sugar

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees
- Cream sugar and butter, then add eggs one at a time, beating after each addition.
- Sift cake meal, salt, and starch. Slowly add to the wet mix. Add chocolate chips and mix well.
- Form into 2 loaves (like Biscotti) on a non-stick cookie sheet (or use silpat - don't use cooking spray or oil). Once formed, sprinkle both generously with cinnamon/sugar blend.
- Bake at 350 for 40-45 minutes until edges turn brown
- As soon as possible, transfer to a cooling rack and shortly after slice – first down the center, long-ways, and then across in ½ inch slices like biscotti

**NOTE:** Best when slightly underdone, so don't overbake!