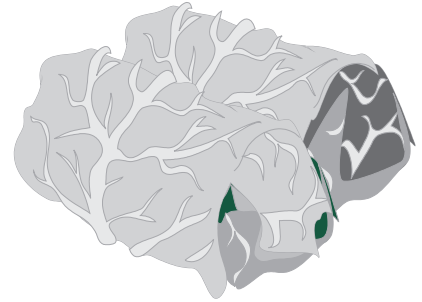


Swiss Chard

Beta vulgaris cicla



Nutrition:

Like other dark green, leafy vegetables, Swiss chard is an excellent source of vitamins, minerals and other healthful nutrients, being particularly high in vitamins A, C and K, beta-carotene and dietary fiber. However, like these other vegetables, nutrients are lost in the water while cooking Swiss chard and it is best if you can use the cooking liquid in a sauce or a soup. Some sources suggest adding it to the liquid used for preparing rice or other grains. Swiss chard is also a good source of B-vitamins, vitamin E, iron, folate, magnesium, manganese, copper and zinc. (1,2,5)

Storage:

Store unwashed Swiss chard by wrapping the leaves in damp paper towels before placing in a plastic bag. In the crisper drawer of the refrigerator, Swiss chard should last for 5 to 7 days. (1,4,5)

Preparation:

Swiss chard needs to be “swished” around in a sink of lukewarm water to remove any soil that clings to the leaves. The leaves of Swiss chard can be rather large, so you may choose to trim the stem ends, then cut out the stems and wash them separately from the leaves. This can be convenient if you are cooking them separately anyway. The stems of older leaves may be a bit tough, so be sure to remove the strings of the stem by pulling them away from the stalk as you would for celery. Chop stems for cooking as you would for celery. Slice or chop the leaves according to your recipe. If using the leaves uncooked, spin them dry in a salad spinner, or place them in a colander covered with a layer of paper towels and allow them to dry for a few hours. If you are cooking the leaves it is fine to leave water clinging to the leaves. The moisture will assist in the cooking process. (1,3,4,5)

Cooking Methods:

Remember that nutrients are lost in the water while cooking Swiss chard and it is best if you can use the cooking liquid in a sauce, a soup, or for cooking rice or other grains. Do not use aluminum cookware when preparing Swiss chard, as it contains oxalates that will discolor the

cookware. The stems will take longer to cook, so be sure to start the stems cooking a few minutes before adding the leaves. To preserve the most nutrients and color, cook Swiss chard as quickly as possible.

Blanch: Blanching Swiss chard is a good option if you are planning on using it in a baked dish. This is especially true if the leaves are old and tough. Blanch in boiling water for two minutes, then drain and pat dry before adding to your baked dish. Blanching is best if done only with small quantities.

Braise: Using a heavy skillet with a small amount of butter or oil, add water or broth - just enough to cover the greens. Cover and cook over low heat for 3 to 4 minutes until tender-crisp. Adding seasoned stock makes the chard more flavorful.

Sauté: Swiss chard is particularly well suited to sautéing in a bit of olive oil (3 tablespoons per 4-6 cups of Swiss chard) and one or two cloves of minced garlic. First, sauté the stems with the garlic for 3 minutes before adding the shredded leaves for another 2 to 4 minutes. The liquid from the greens should have evaporated and the leaves should be tender when done - not soggy.

Steam: This is an excellent way to cook Swiss chard, whether in small or large quantities. Swiss chard can be steamed very easily in only the water that clings to the leaves after washing, though the cooking time will vary a bit, depending on the age of the Swiss Chard and the amount being prepared. The leaves can be steamed whole, or they can be sliced or chopped. Swiss chard can also be steamed in a heavy skillet using up to a 1/2-inch of water or broth, or steamed in a vegetable steamer basket. Cooking time: 5 to 7 minutes.

(1,3,4,5)

Tips and Suggestions:

- * Tender, chopped Swiss chard leaves can be added to **green salads** and is especially attractive when Ruby or Rainbow chard is used.
- * Chopped, cooked Swiss chard can be added to **stuffing**.
- * Add blanched, sliced Swiss chard to your favorite **lasagna recipe**.
- * Ribbon-sliced Swiss chard leaves makes a tasty and attractive addition to **broths, soups and stews**.
- * Sliced Swiss chard leaves and/or stems is good when added to **stir-fry combinations**.
- * Sauté Swiss chard with pine nuts and olive oil, then serve over pasta with **crumbled Feta cheese**.
- * Try **substituting Swiss chard** in recipes calling for spinach or kale.

- * Cooked Swiss chard can be **served chilled** with olive oil and lemon slices.
- * Young, tender leaves are excellent when **sautéed in butter** and served topped with bread crumbs or Parmesan cheese.

(1,3)

Yields:
1 pound fresh =
17 cups roughly chopped
12 cups finely chopped
4 cups blanched or steamed
1 pound fresh steams = 5 cups sliced

Joy of Gardening Cookbook

Swiss Chard and Potatoes

Mary Jo Sliger

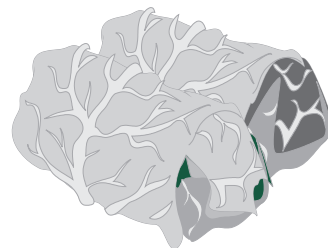
Ingredients

3 large bunches Swiss chard,
stems removed

2 to 3 pounds potatoes,
peeled

1 stick butter

2 cloves garlic, minced



Directions

Boil potatoes in salted water until tender.

Drain potatoes, cool and cut into chunks.

Tear chard into pieces and cook in salted water until tender. Drain chard.

In a large skillet, melt butter and add garlic.

Toss the potatoes and the Swiss chard together in the butter and heat through.