

Joan Oakley's LEEK AND MUSHROOM GRATIN.

Serves 4

450g leeks, cleaned and sliced
110g mushrooms wiped and sliced
2 tablespoon oil
1/2 pint stock or water
1 bay leaf
Juice 1/2 lemon
110g grated cheddar cheese
1/4 pint milk
2-3 tablespoons white wine
50g bread crumbs
Salt and pepper

Preheat oven mark 6, 200°C

Prepare the vegetables and fry them in half the oil to seal in the flavour.

Add the stock or water, bay leaf and lemon juice, cook uncovered for 10 minutes.

With a slotted spoon transfer the vegetables to a greased ovenproof dish.

Sprinkle half the cheese over the leeks and mushrooms.

Boil the remaining liquid until it reduces by about a half.

Mix this with the milk and wine and season to taste.

Pour it over the vegetables.

Mix the remaining cheese with one tablespoon of oil and breadcrumbs. Sprinkle this over the vegetables.

Bake for 15 - 20 minutes until brown and crispy.

Terry Oakley's **Spanakopita Recipe**

(Spinach and Feta cheese pie, using filo pastry)

Serves 2 (may be enough left over for lunch the next day)

Ingredients

450g Spinach (either fresh or frozen)

1 small onion finely chopped

1 teaspoon fennel or cumin seeds

½ teaspoon of dried Thyme

50g Feta

A squeeze of lemon juice

Two tablespoons of Extra Virgin Olive oil

Six sheets of filo pastry (half a pack)

½ teaspoon sesame seeds

25g pine nuts (toasted)

Preheat the oven to 180degrees (fan)

Toast 25g pine nuts in a dry frying pan. Set aside.

Prepare 450g spinach leaves, cutting out the stems and slicing. Rinse twice. (Kale or Chard leaves are alternatives though slightly tougher.)

Cook the spinach in a saucepan with the lid on with only a little water for about four minutes until wilted. Or use from frozen, pour boiling water over the frozen spinach in a colander until defrosted.

Squeeze out any moisture and chop finely. Set aside.

In a frying pan add a little olive oil and cook a teaspoon of fennel or cumin seeds for a minute before adding the chopped onion cook until tender (5-10 minutes on a low heat).

Add the chopped spinach, a dash of lemon juice, and the thyme, Season to taste. Mix in an egg.

Lightly oil an oven-proof dish, about 25cm by 20cm. Then brush one sheet of filo pastry with olive oil and place a second sheet on top of it. Place it in the dish allowing it to overlap the sides. Repeat with another two sheets, placing these at a slightly different angle. Finally do two more sheets together. Place half the spinach mixture in the dish, top with crumbled feta and the toasted pine nuts, then the remaining spinach.

Fold over the pastry edges. Brush the top with more olive oil and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Place in the oven for 35 minutes.