

SPICY SAUTÉED DANDELION GREENS

2 pounds Dandelion Greens (2 big bunches), tough stems removed and leaves cut crosswise into 4-inch pieces
1/4 cup Olive Oil
2 Large Garlic Cloves (more if desired)
1/2 tsp. Dried Hot Red Pepper Flakes
1/2 tsp. Salt

1. Cook greens in a 6- to 8-quart pot of boiling salted water until ribs are tender, 4 to 5 minutes, then drain in a colander. Rinse under cold water to stop cooking and drain well, gently pressing out excess water.
2. eat oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over moderate heat until hot but not smoking, then cook garlic, stirring, until pale golden, about 30 seconds. Increase heat to medium-high, then add greens, red pepper flakes, and salt and sauté, stirring, until liquid greens give off its evaporated, about 4 minutes.
3. Top with grated Parmesan cheese if desired.

SWISS CHARD WITH TOASTED BREADCRUMBS

2-1/2 *tblsp.* Butter
1/2 cup Fresh Breadcrumbs
Salt and Ground Pepper
2 pounds Swiss Chard (1 big bunch)
Pinch of Sugar, if desired

1. In a 5-qt saucepan, melt 1/2 *tblsp.* butter over medium heat. Add fresh breadcrumbs and a pinch each of salt and pepper. Cook, tossing, until golden brown, 1 to 2 minutes. Set aside and wipe pan with a paper towel.
2. Trim Swiss Chard and slice crosswise 3/4 inch thick, keeping stems separate from greens.
3. In pan, melt 2 *tblsp.* butter over medium-high. Cook stems, stirring, until tender, 4 to 6 minutes. Add greens, cover and cook over medium-low until wilted, 5 minutes. Uncover; cook, stirring, over medium-high until pan is dry, 6 to 8 minutes.
4. Season with salt and pepper, add a pinch of sugar, if desired. Top with breadcrumbs.

IDEAS FOR SORREL:

Sorrel is delicious in a mixed salad. It's tangy flavor blends well with spicy or bitter flavors as well, so try it mixed with dandelion greens, mustard greens, arugula, kale, or Swiss chard, either cooked or fresh.

Sorrel pairs well with fish and chicken, and it's quick and easy to make a rub with some chopped fresh garlic, chopped sorrel, salt and pepper, even add spices like cumin or curry powder. Then rub into the meat, let it rest a bit and roast.



WHISTLING TRAIN Farmletter

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IT'S BEEN A BEAUTIFUL WEEK!

and that spells plant growth. The arugula, pea vines, carrots, and radishes are all coming along, and we got a big planting of peas and fava beans in the ground. The chard has grown back nicely and the leaves are large enough to harvest now. We have a few leeks remaining so we've decided to use them up this week before they start to flower and develop a core, making them less than ideal to eat.

The dandelion greens are also growing back nicely, and since they're a common spring tonic in other countries, we're including them this week. They are bitter, but if you mix them with the sweeter chard or rapini, and even with the tangy sorrel, you'll cut the bitterness significantly, and still benefit from their liver-cleansing properties. Don't be afraid to cook the dandelions—heat helps to cut the bitterness, as does an acidic dressing, like lemon juice or vinegar.

We've taken the plunge and ordered a new big greenhouse frame—it comes next week and is half again as big as the frames we have now—30' x 96'. That gives us room for 50% more tomato plants than we had last year. We need to have it all put together by the end of April when the tomato plants arrive. If all goes well, we'll be putting up two more just like it in August for winter crops. The prospect of having one-third of an acre under cover next winter is very exciting. We'll be able to grow a lot of tasty greens—and maybe even some other treats—to get us through the kale months.

All the transplants we started in February will be ready to set out this week. Once the weather got warm, the baby plants really started to take off. We've got thousands of lettuce plants, and our initial planting of broccoli and cabbage. We start transplants every week now, to make sure we have a continual harvest through the entire summer. And, we have just a few more weekends to ourselves—farmers markets start April 30. Then we'll have to work hard to keep our Mondays free.

THIS WEEK'S MENU:

Turnip Rapini (light)
Broccoli Rapini (dark)
Leeks
Beets
Swiss Chard
Dandelion Greens
Sorrel
Eggs

Recipes on the back!

COMING SOON:

Green Garlic
Stinging Nettles
Pea Shoots
Radishes
Arugula