

# Taste

## Go for green



**Living light**

SANDY FRAZER

**P**OPEYE'S enthusiasm for spinach was warranted. Spinach is packed with nutrition. It contains beta-carotene (antioxidants that boost immunity and help fight cancer), folate (a form of vitamin B that is very important in the prevention of birth defects and anaemia), as well as vitamins A and C, calcium, iron, potassium and fibre.

Spinach is low in kilojoules and also provides a good dose of protein per serving. And studies show spinach may even help keep your brain younger and more active.

When buying spinach, look for dark green leaves. If they are wilted, limp, spotted or browned, they have lost most of the vitamin C. Spinach can also be found frozen or canned but fresh spinach is available all year and is easy to grow yourself.

Spinach can be prepared using a variety of cooking methods and can be easily incorporated into many dishes and used in different cuisines. Its versatility makes it easy to use in meat, fish and vegetable dishes, in souffles, flans, frittatas, risottos, stuffings, pasta sauces, dips — even a creamy soup.

Use it in an Asian stir-fry with chopped capsicum, red onion, chilli, grated fresh ginger and season with soy sauce and rice vinegar. Cook spinach in a pan lightly sprayed with olive oil until limp and then toss in a little cinnamon, pine nuts and sultanas for a Middle Eastern flavour. Saute some onion, add spinach, a can of creamed corn and curry powder to taste, and serve over basmati rice for a delicious Indian-inspired dish. Or simply combine with some ricotta cheese, chopped tomato, basil, salt and pepper and toss through hot pasta for an Italian touch.

Baby spinach leaves are wonderful in salads. Combine them with pear slivers, sliced red onion and a splash of balsamic vinegar. Or mix them with cannellini beans, roasted red capsicum, kalamata olives and toss through an oil-free dressing.

### Spinach dip

**2 cups plain non-fat yoghurt**

**½ cup 99% fat-free mayonnaise**

**1 tsp crushed garlic**

**½ tsp salt**

**¼ tsp pepper**

**1 tsp sugar**

**1 x 250g package frozen spinach, thawed and thoroughly drained**

**4 spring onions, finely chopped**

In a mixing bowl, stir the yoghurt, mayonnaise, garlic, salt, pepper and sugar together. Stir spinach and spring onions through and transfer to a serving dish. Cover and refrigerate for an hour.

■ To contact Sandy Frazer visit [www.livinglite.com.au](http://www.livinglite.com.au)



## Specials for dad



**Eating in**

JUDITH SWEET

**T**HE celebration of Father's Day seems to be one we have "acquired" from the US. There is some debate about the origin of this special day but, regardless of when it was first observed, it is recorded that Senora Dodd, of Spokane, Washington thought up the idea while she was at church listening to a Mother's Day sermon.

Dodd recognised the selflessness and courage her father had shown to her family. Her father, William Smart, a Civil War veteran, was widowed at the birth of his sixth child; he raised the new baby and the other five children while running a farm in eastern Washington state.

In 1909 Sonora Dodd asked the minister of her church if he would dedicate a service to fathers; the minister was unable to oblige on the date requested — June 5, which was William Smart's birthday — but held a service on June 19. Since then in Washington state Father's Day has been celebrated on the third Sunday in June.

Years later, president Calvin Coolidge made it a national event to "establish more relations between fathers and their children and to impress upon fathers the measure of their obligations".

In 1966, Lyndon Johnson signed a presidential proclamation putting an official stamp on Father's Day as a national day celebrated on the third Sunday of June.

Many countries mark this day — Scandinavian countries celebrate it in November, Brazil in August, Germany on Ascension Day and in Britain it's on the

same day as in the US. My Dad, now in his 80s, really loves cherry cake, so this recipe is for him. It is a recipe from the *Good Housekeeping Cookbook*, published in the early '50s.

### Rich cherry cake

This is cooked in a loaf tin.

**200g butter**

**200g sugar**

**2 eggs**

**90g glace cherries**

**Few drops of vanilla**

**250g self-raising flour**

**½ tsp salt**

**1-2 tbsp milk to mix**

**salt**

Heat the oven to 170C. Cut the cherries into quarters and mix them through the flour. Cream together the butter and sugar, then mix in the eggs one at a time. Add the vanilla essence, then fold in the sifted flour. You will need a few tablespoons of milk to bring it to a "spoonable" consistency. Prepare a loaf tin by greasing and then lining it with greaseproof paper. Spoon the mixture into the tin and cook for about 1¼ hours — the time will depend on the size of the dish. If it is a narrow, deep tin, it will take the time stated but if it's a wide tin with this depth, check it after 45 minutes. If desired, before baking put a few halved cherries on top of it and sprinkle with caster sugar to give a crisp, sugary surface.

### Honey crackles

When I see honey crackles, I always feel a

touch of nostalgia. The father of my sons, who died when they were very young, used to love them. If he was still with us, I'm sure there would have been some around on Father's Day.

They are very simple to make — certainly easy enough for "little people" to be involved. They will most likely need two spoons to place the crackles into the paper cups. For an added touch, the top can be sprinkled with slivered almonds.

**3 tbsp butter**

**2 tbsp sugar**

**1 tbsp honey (not leatherwood)**

**5 cups slightly crushed cornflakes**

**paper patty pans**

**Preheat the oven to 170C.**

In a large saucepan melt the butter, sugar and honey and stir until dissolved. Allow to boil for one minute.

Remove from the heat and immediately stir in the slightly crushed cornflakes. Mix them through until all the cornflakes have a coating of the honey mixture.

Place about 30 patty pan papers on a tray. Heap the mixture into each paper and give a press down with a spoon to make sure that all the cornflakes are connecting.

Cook for 4 or 5 minutes — they burn easily, so be watchful.

Remove from the oven. Allow to cool and become crisp and store in an airtight container.

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