

COOK'S ILLUSTRATED

SPINACH SALAD WITH MUSHROOMS, CROUTONS, AND WARM LEMON DRESSING

Serves 4. Published March 1, 1997.

Homemade croutons are better than any you can buy and are a good use for stale bread. Cut a hunk of leftover baguette or country white bread into small cubes and fry them in olive oil until crisp. I prefer slightly woodsy cremini mushrooms in this salad, but regular white mushrooms are fine.

- 1 1/2** pounds flat-leaf spinach , stemmed, washed, dried, and torn into large pieces (about 9 cups, tightly packed)
- 1/2** pound cremini mushrooms or white mushrooms, cleaned, stems trimmed, sliced thin
- 1/2** cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 3** cups stale French or Italian-style bread cut into 3/4-inch cubes
- 2** medium cloves garlic , minced
- 1/4** cup lemon juice from 2 medium lemons

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** 1. Place spinach and mushrooms in large bowl; set aside.
- 2.** 2. Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add bread; fry, turning several times with slotted spoon, until crisp and golden, about 3 minutes. Transfer to paper towel-lined plate. Off heat, let remaining oil cool slightly, about 1 minute. Add garlic; cook until lightly colored, about 2 minutes. Whisk in lemon juice and salt and pepper to taste. Pour warm dressing over salad; toss. Add croutons; toss again. Serve immediately.



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