

Creamed Spinach

Spinach has been included in the human diet for around 2,000 years where it was first eaten in ancient Persia. It took around 1,000 years for it to spread to other parts of the world like East Asia and Europe. It finally appeared in England and France in the 1300s. It was a popular vegetable as it could be harvested in early springtime when other vegetables were not available. Spinach also spread to the New World. With the establishment of “steak house” style restaurants in North America in the 1870s and 1880s, and a rising cost of prime beef, side dishes like potato and creamed spinach were served so patrons would feel full while eating a smaller portion of meat. This could explain the popularity of creamed spinach in times of food shortages, such as the 1910s during WWI.

Recipe: Boil spinach and when tender strain and chop fine. Melt butter and stir in flour to thicken, add a little cold water and soup stock. Add spinach to this and season with pepper, salt and nutmeg. Before serving add 1/2 cup sour cream. Garnish with hard boiled eggs. Can be served on toast.



Recipe credited to: Ladies of St. Mary's Church. *Woodstock Cook Book*, 1917.
Image credited to: Hunt's Brother Packing Company, San Francisco, 1930s.