10 DELICIOUS WAYS TO EAT YOUR GREENS

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Eating all vegetables is important, but the real emphasis should be on the green vegetables. If it’s green, it’s probably (most definitely) good for you. This especially applies to dark, leafy greens. Here’s a handy-dandy list to keep in mind as you scour the farmer’s market or the produce section:

- Spinach
- Kale
- Collard greens
- Swiss chard
- Arugula
- Romaine lettuce
- Chicory
- Leaf lettuce
- Beetroot greens
- Bok choy
- Chinese broccoli

If you go to a restaurant, many establishments’ ideas of a green vegetable is limited to romaine lettuce or – far worse – nutritionally inept iceberg lettuce. Rest assured, none of the most delicious ways to eat your greens include shredding up a head of iceberg.

What’s so great about greens?

- **Fibre** – All vegetables contain fibre, but leafy greens are a potent source. Fibre helps with digestion, feeds the beneficial gut bacteria keeping your microbiome well balanced, and helps you feel satiated after meals. A high-fibre diet lowers your risk of heart disease and helps to manage blood sugar.

- **Antioxidants** – Like most colourful, vibrant produce, leafy greens contain loads of antioxidant powers to help your body function optimally and remove free radicals from the system.

- **Carotenoids** – This compound from the natural pigment of plants is protective. Specifically, carotenoids can help prevent breast, skin, lung, and stomach cancer growth.

- **Folate** – This B-group vitamin can help to prevent pancreatic cancer in addition to treating vitamin B12 deficiency and anaemia.

- **Vitamins C and K** – Vitamin K is great for bone health and blood clotting, and vitamin C is known to help heal wounds, keep immunity high, and aid in the absorption of iron. Speaking of iron – the mighty kale is a fantastic source.
**Convincing enough?** Truly, there is no downside to eating your greens. At least one serving per day is ideal to add to the abundance of non-starchy vegetables you should be eating. If you include plenty of greens, you add volume without adding many calories, which is great for weight loss goals. Moreover, their impressive nutrient profiles can aid in addressing any micronutrient deficiencies you might be experiencing.

**Keep in mind**

The body needs a little dietary fat to absorb the carotenoids and vitamin K (fat-soluble vitamins) present in green leafy vegetables. Adding olive oil or avocado to a salad or cooking your greens in some coconut oil or ghee is a great way to add some healthy fats. Want one better? Add some sardines to your green salad.

**TASTY WAYS TO PREPARE A VARIETY OF GREENS**

**Steamed/boiled**

Sounds quite boring, but it’s simple, time-effective, and can be incredibly tasty. You can even avoid prep work this way as any tough stems will soften up during the process. Simply wash the greens, cut into uniform size if desired, and toss into an inch of hot boiling water. Cover and simmer for a minute or two; or longer if cooking something hearty like kale. You can submerge them in an ice bath after to stop the cooking process, or serve immediately. Let them drain and store them in the fridge for later.

This is a great way to add cooked greens to any meal. Season with salt and pepper or toss with olive oil after cooking. Want to take it up a notch? Sauté some garlic and lemon zest in olive oil or ghee, then stir through the veggies with some lemon juice and sea salt. Steamed greens are also great to add to frittatas and omelettes.
**Sautéed**

If you’re not enthusiastic about eating more greens, just try and toss ‘em in your dinner stir-fry. You can essentially turn anything into a one-pot meal with some protein, healthy fats to fry up in, and any veggies you’ve got on hand. Add in your greens in the last 3-5 minutes of cooking, just to wilt them. Cover the skillet with a lid to speed up the process. Look up [Mushroom, Spinach & Tomato Fry-Up](#) on my blog.

**Roasted**

Kale chips are a tried and tested health food that comes to life with a little time spent in the oven. Collards, chard, and even lettuce can also be roasted. If you’ve got a head of romaine wilting in the back of the fridge, a quick ice bath and some heat can bring it back to life. Sprinkle with delicious spice blends like curry powder or garam masala for a spicy, savoury snack. Look up [Spicy Kale Chips](#) on my blog.

**Salads**

If you’ve never massaged your kale, you’re missing out. Don’t limit yourself to lettuce; the base of a salad is a great way to incorporate multiple greens at once. Naturally, lettuce and spinach are often used for salads as they don’t have any tough stems. They also taste fairly neutral, while collards and Swiss chard have a more bitter flavour that responds well to cooking. Toss your favourite raw leaves with a splash of olive oil and salt to bring them to life easily. Citrus juice will soften the tougher raw leaves like kale.

Another sneaky way to eat raw leafy greens is to use them in rolls, like these [rainbow rolls](#).
Juiced
While juicing isn't ideal because it strips away the fibre in foods, it's a valid way to load up on greens. If you have a masticating juicer, more of the nutrients and fibre will remain intact. Otherwise, you can seek out “cold-pressed” juices in the stores for the most nutrient-dense choice. Make sure to keep the sugar content low with sweet foods like carrot, beetroot, and green apple, whether you're juicing at home or buying from a shop.

Smoothies
Blending up greens can disguise the taste entirely. If you’re having trouble getting on board the savoury breakfast train, smoothies are a simple solution for downing some veggies first thing in the morning. In contrast to juicing, all the nutrients and fibre remain intact since there's no straining process involved. My favourite base formula: 1 serving of fruit, 1 cup of leafy greens, something fatty like coconut milk or avocado, ice and water.

Braised
Braising is a bit like steaming, except the food gets some dry heat first. Toss a bit of oil in a pan to heat up, and then add your greens. Stir around quickly so that they don't burn. Then, add your liquid of choice. To maximize the flavour and truly bring out the braised goodness, try using broth, coconut milk, or red wine vinegar. Cover until tender and then drain. If steamed greens are a bit bland for you, braising is the way to go. Creamed spinach, anyone?

Or add some greens to a batch of mashed potato, like this sweet potato & kale colcannon mash.
Egg dishes

If you’re whipping up an omelette, frittata, or some egg muffins, there’s no good reason not to add a handful of greens. If you’re turned off by the texture of greens spread throughout the scramble, you can opt to blend greens into the egg mixture before cooking. This gives them a lovely, vibrant hue while packing in loads of nutrients. Alternatively, turn your leftover spinach into a lovely pesto.

Soup is a blank canvas. It’s what you make it. A warm cup of bone broth, meats, spices, and veggies is begging for greens. Slice up collards or chard thinly to mimic noodles or just add a few cups of leaves to a big batch near the end of cooking. This will add texture, flavour, and health factor in one fell swoop.

If you’re whipping up a tomato sauce, consider it a perfect opportunity to add in some greens. Spicy arugula or baby spinach will wilt in the last few minutes of simmering, giving the sauce a nutritious and flavourful punch while adding a ton of dimension. This can be also useful if you want to thicken the liquid without the addition of starch.

There you have it! Truthfully, greens make a healthy and welcomed addition to just about any dish. It’s a great idea to experiment with greens and eat a variety. While most greens have similar nutrient profiles, you’ll receive the most benefits by cycling through them. A good rule of thumb is to use two different greens per week and replace one the next week. And of course: broccoli, Brussels sprouts, green beans, snow peas and courgette are also great greens to include on a regular basis.