Spinach Egg Layered Salad Loaf

One two-layer spinach-and-egg salad loaf, about 3¾ cups (900 ml); 8 small luncheon side slices · Active 45 min · Total 11 hr

Ingredients

- 3 large eggs
- 8 oz plain frozen chopped spinach (225 g), yielding 120 g cooked, well-pressed spinach; prepare extra if its drained yield is short
- Water to cook eggs and spinach as directed, not mixed into gel
- Unflavored powdered gelatin, 16 g total, weighed into two separate 8 g portions, of specified setting strength
- ½ cup cold drinking water (120 ml), divided into 60 ml per layer
- ¾ cup clear ready-to-use mild vegetable broth (180 ml), for green layer
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice (10 ml), for green layer
- ½ cup pasteurized whole milk (120 ml), for egg layer
- ¾ cup plus 1 tablespoon thick plain pasteurized Greek-style yogurt (200 g), kept cold
- ⅛ teaspoon fine salt (0.75 g), divided
- ⅛ teaspoon white pepper, divided
- ¼ teaspoon neutral oil (1.25 ml), for wiping mold

Set out

Small covered egg saucepan, Bowl of cold water, Covered saucepan for spinach, Sieve and shallow cooling tray, Small blender suitable for cooled spinach, Two small saucepans or one washed between bases, Two mixing bowls and whisk, Kitchen scale, Metal loaf mold of at least 1¼-liter capacity, Paper towel, Food thermometer, Cold platter, Refrigerator

Allergens

Egg, Milk. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Cover eggs with cold water by 1 inch (2.5 cm), bring to a full boil, cover, take off heat and stand 12 minutes until yolks are firm, extending if needed. Cool promptly in cold water, peel, chop and refrigerate. Cook spinach fully by its packet, drain, cool promptly on a shallow tray in the refrigerator, then press and weigh 120 g. Keep cold. Check mold capacity, dry and oil lightly.

2. For green layer, bloom 8 g gelatin in 60 ml cold water 5–10 minutes. Heat broth to 140–150°F (60–65°C), take off heat and dissolve bloomed gelatin in it. Cool to lukewarm. Blend with cold pressed spinach, lemon, half the salt and pepper, following machine limits. Pour into mold and refrigerate 45–60 minutes until it supports a spoonful but remains tacky.

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3. Then make egg layer: bloom remaining 8 g gelatin in remaining 60 ml cold water 5–10 minutes. Add milk and heat gently until gelatin fully dissolves; do not boil. Take off heat. Whisk 3 tablespoons yogurt into warm base gradually, then whisk into remaining cold yogurt with remaining salt and pepper. Fold in cold chopped firm-yolk eggs.

4. Spoon the lukewarm-to-cool egg mixture carefully over the spinach layer, first over the back of a clean spoon to avoid breaking the surface. Keep at least ½ inch (1.25 cm) below rim; put excess in a separate small covered cup. Cover loaf and refrigerate at 40°F (4°C) or below at least 8 hours after final layer is added, until firm throughout.

5. Allow at least 11 hours total for cooking/cooling, the first set and final chill. For unmolding, set a cold plate beside the refrigerator. Dip only the outside of the metal mold in warm, not hot, water, about 100°F (38°C), for 5–8 seconds without letting water touch food. Dry the outside, loosen just the upper edge with a clean fingertip and invert onto the plate. If stuck, repeat a brief dip rather than shaking violently. Refrigerate again immediately if not serving now. Cut 8 small side slices.

Gelatin starting strength

Use food-grade unflavored powdered gelatin with a manufacturer benchmark of 7 g for about 2 cups (500 ml) plain liquid. Weigh the stated grams: envelope sizes and powder density vary. A flavored dessert packet, collagen peptides, sheet gelatin or agar is not an equal substitute.

Cold service

This is an original retro-inspired recipe, not a recovered 1960s formula. Gelatin is animal-derived; the vegetable ingredients do not make the dish vegetarian. A reliable refrigerator and the stated earlier ingredient deadlines are essential.

Ingredient labels

Broth can add celery, wheat, soy or other ingredients. Track the earliest egg, dairy and spinach deadline.

A useful detail

Green layer: 8 g gelatin with 60 ml water +180 ml broth +10 ml lemon +120 g pressed spinach. Egg layer: 8 g gelatin with 60 ml water +120 ml milk +200 g thick yogurt +about 150 g cooked egg. The roughly 900 ml combined batch fits a 1¼-liter mold with headroom. Do not add reserved spinach cooking liquid.

Keep it well

Keep covered at 40°F (4°C) or below. Use within 2 days of assembly or the earliest ingredient deadline, whichever comes first. Include the overnight setting period in that limit. Keep total unrefrigerated preparation and serving below 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C). Chill slices promptly after service; discard food exceeding those limits. Do not freeze; freezing damages the gel and releases water.