

Julia's Spanakopita



Ingredients

Serves 12-16

- 400g English spinach leaves, trimmed of any thick stems (from two bunches)
- 3 spring onions, finely sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, finely grated
- Handful of dill fronds, finely chopped
- Handful of mint leaves, finely chopped
- 250g Greek feta, crumbled
- 1 egg, lightly whisked
- ½ tsp grated nutmeg
- Salt and pepper
- 14 sheets of filo pastry
- Extra virgin olive oil, for brushing
- 1 tsp each of black and white sesame seeds

Method

Preheat the oven to 180C.

Place the spinach in a large bowl and sprinkle over a really good pinch of salt. Massage the salt into the spinach leaves and allow to sit for 10 minutes. After this time, the leaves should have wilted significantly. Squeeze all of the excess moisture from the spinach. You can do this just with your hands or by wringing them out in a clean tea towel. Roughly chop and transfer to a clean bowl along with the spring onions, garlic, dill, mint, feta, egg and nutmeg. Season to taste and set aside.

Brush a 28cm round baking dish with some extra virgin olive oil. Set aside.

Brush one sheet of filo pastry with extra virgin olive oil and drape it into the base of the dish. Repeat the brushing and draping with six more

sheets so you have seven layers of pastry in the base. As you drape the sheets, rotate the way the sheets are laid into the dish to ensure all the sides are well covered.

Tumble the filling into the dish and smooth out with a spoon.

For the top layers, repeat the process of brushing and draping into the dish, this time in a much looser manner. Crumpled and loose layers will encourage lots of crunch as the pie cooks. Fold any overhanging pastry in towards the centre of the pie in a loose crumpled way, and brush with more extra virgin olive oil. Sprinkle with the sesame seeds and bake in the preheated oven for 40-45 minutes, or until golden.

Serve hot or warm (or cold!) with a simple salad of leafy greens.