

## Fritada (Spinach oven bake)

A traditional Sephardi dish. The Sephardi Jews lived in Spain and Portugal until 1492 when they left to escape Queen Isabella's auto da fé. Many went to Turkey, where my father's family originated, welcomed by the Sultan. Muslims and Jews and Christians had lived happily in Spain and Portugal, under Muslim rule. Others went to Greece (Salonika had so many Jews, the city shut down on the Jewish Sabbath and festivals), Italy, southern France and all across North Africa. Some went to The Netherlands, others to the UK – Bevis Marks, in the City of London, is the oldest synagogue and is modelled on the one in Amsterdam.

This recipe was handed down by my paternal grandmother to my father and mother and they handed it down to us. We've never had a recipe, we just watched and learnt!

### Method

Cook the spinach in a large saucepan until it is dark green and wilted. This takes barely 1-2 minutes. Drain off excess water and cut up roughly with a knife or break up with a fork. Add matzo meal, 1 egg and grated cheese. The mixture should present an even blend of yellow and green, flecked with the white matzo meal. Add pepper to taste. If mixture seems very dry, add more egg. If too wet, add more matzo meal.

Line a shallow baking tray (max 1" deep) with non-stick greaseproof paper, or (easier) pour in some corn oil and spread with kitchen paper or fingers. Spoon mixture into a shallow baking tray and press down with fork or hands so mixture is about 1 cm thick. Sprinkle some grated cheese on top.

Put in medium oven and cook until surface begins to harden, or if for immediate consumption, until cheese is beginning to brown – approx 15-20 mins. Cut into portions and serve.

If for later consumption and freezing, cook for a shorter time (15 mins max), allow to cool, wrap in greaseproof paper and put in freezer. Can be cut into squares before freezing but best left whole. Unfreeze and when defrosted, return to oven for 5 minutes.

**Shopping list (for 5-20 servings, depending on how large or small you cut the pieces and how greedy your guests are – it's very moreish!):**

1 kg spinach, washed and drained

½ lb cheddar, grated

1-2 eggs

Matzo Meal – medium

Black pepper



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Translator of French-English, Italian-English  
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One in a series of recipes contributed by our volunteers

V4



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