

K's Kitchen: Substantive vegetarian cuisine

By Kathryn Reed

There are so many things to love about San Francisco. Food is one of them.

It would be so easy to eat at a different restaurant each day for every meal. But there is one that I always like to return to – Greens.

My mom first took me there years ago. It's at Fort Mason. The views of the Golden Gate Bridge are outstanding, especially on an evening when the fog is rolling in.



It's a restaurant I have since introduced Sue to. She liked it so much that when we had a belated birthday celebration for her in August she opted to go to Greens. This is a true testament to the restaurant – a meat eater chose a vegetarian restaurant.

The food at Greens is off the charts outstanding. The dishes are creative, the flavors incredible.

Fortunately, Executive Chef Annie Somerville has written a few cookbooks so people can feel like they are at Greens – at least with the cooking. It's impossible to duplicate that view.

Below is one of my all-time favorite recipes from her "Fields of Greens" cookbooks. Depending on what you are serving with it and for how many, you may want to increase the ingredients. It's a good hearty meal for fall or winter.

The comments in the recipe are all from Somerville in the cookbook.

Spinach Fettuccine with Shiitake Mushrooms, Spinach, and Sun-Dried Tomatoes

Spinach fettuccine is a good pasta choice for this boldly flavored dish. The deep, earthy taste of the shiitake mushrooms is heightened by the sun-dried tomatoes; the toasted pine nuts add nutty sweetness, and the quickly wilted spinach lightens all the flavors.

$\frac{1}{2}$ pound fresh shiitake mushrooms

3 T extra virgin olive oil

Salt and pepper

3 garlic cloves, finely chopped

$\frac{1}{4}$ C dry white wine

$\frac{1}{2}$ pound spinach fettuccine

1 small bunch of spinach, stems removed and leaves washed, 4 cups packed

3 oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, drained and thinly sliced

1 T pine nuts, toasted

2 T chopped fresh herbs: marjoram, chives, and thyme

Grated Parmesan cheese

Set a large pot on the stove to boil. Remove the mushroom stems and cut the caps into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch slices.

Heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a large sauté pan; add the mushrooms; $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, and a few pinches of pepper. Sauté over medium heat for 3 to 4 minutes, then add the garlic and wine. Cook for a minute or two to reduce the wine, but not completely; leave a little liquid in the pan to keep the mushrooms from sticking.

When the water boils, add 1 teaspoon salt. Add the pasta to the boiling water, and while it's cooking add the spinach to the mushrooms along with $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt and a few pinches of pepper. Sauté over medium heat for 1 minute, until the spinach is just wilted, then reduce the heat and add the sun-dried tomatoes, then remaining tablespoon of olive oil, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the pasta cooking water to loosen the pan juices.

The pasta should be just tender at this point; drain it in a colander and add it to the sauté pan along with the pine nuts and herbs. Toss everything together and season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve with freshly grated Parmesan.

Serves two to four.