

Spanakopita with Kalamata Olives & Fresh Dill

Serves 2 for lunch or more as an appetizer.

We live near an oriental market that sells bountiful bunches of greens. I love the Chinese spinach, also known as amaranth; in Greece the same greens are vlita or horta. The leaves are a little heavier and stems are much thicker than spinach, which give the spanakopita a more toothsome bite and in my opinion make this recipe more delicious.

When rethinking this spanakopita I needed a replacement for the feta. Feta is a tangy, salty cheese. And so, I used chopped Kalamata olives, which offer a similar sharp and briny bite.

Ingredients

- 1 bunch amaranth leaves, stems removed
- Tablespoon fresh chopped dill leaves
- 1 shallot finely chopped
- 8 Kalamata olives, chopped
- 2 tablespoons vegan margarine, like Smart Balance, melted
- 8 phyllo sheets

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°.

Steam amaranth leaves over boiling water until wilted. Remove and place in ice water til cool. Once cooled, remove, squeeze dry and chop. Place in bowl with shallot, dill, Kalamata olives and 1 tablespoon of the vegan margarine.

Place a sheet of phyllo dough in a small (6-inch) pan or can make the spinach pie free form. Brush with melted margarine, fold and mold phyllo to fit pan. Repeat with 3 more sheets. Spoon amaranth onto 4th layer of phyllo; brush, fold and mold remaining 4 phyllo sheets on top of amaranth. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes in center of oven and bake until golden brown. Serve warm or at room temperature.