

## Recipes



October 10, 2023

They're the Yorkshire Terriers of the vegetable world. Herbs may be small, but they make a lot of noise, nutritionally speaking. Indeed, if you want to do one thing to your diet to improve it fast, adding a handful of herbs to meals could really make a difference.

The reason is that herbs are packed full of so-called 'volatiles', essential oils with antioxidant, disease-fighting properties. While we've all heard about blueberries and antioxidant power, a study, published in the Journal of Nutrition in 2000<sup>3</sup>, found that herbs are actually higher in antioxidants than fruit, including berries, and other vegetables. You can tell this by just rubbing a lettuce leaf between your fingers. It goes sticky. Do this to a leaf of basil and you can smell the precious oil on your fingers.



Read more...1 Sift the flour and salt into a mixing bowl and stir in the ground almonds. Add the eggs and milk and beat together to make a smooth batter.

2 Mist a non-stick frying pan with cooking spray and heat over a medium-high heat until hot. Working in batches, pour 3 tablespoons of the batter into the pan to make a crêpe, tilting the pan to make sure the batter evenly covers the base. Cook for 1–2 minutes on each side until golden. Transfer to a plate and repeat with the remaining batter to make 8 crêpes, misting the pan again with cooking spray before cooking each crêpe. Stack the crêpes on the plate and cover with foil to keep warm.

3 To make the tomato sauce, mist a non-stick saucepan with cooking spray. Heat over a medium-high heat and cook the garlic for 1 minute. Add the carrot, parsley and celery and cook for a further 3 minutes, adding 1 tablespoon water to prevent the mixture from sticking to the bottom of the pan, if necessary. Add the chopped tomatoes, basil and 100ml/3½fl oz/ generous  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup water and bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer, covered, for 10 minutes. Remove the lid and simmer for a further 10 minutes until the sauce has reduced and thickened. Remove the pan from the heat and leave to one side.

4 Preheat the oven to 190°C/375°F/Gas 5 and mist a baking dish with cooking spray. Using your hands, squeeze out as much water from the spinach leaves as possible, then finely chop them. Put the ricotta, cream cheese and nutmeg in a bowl and stir until combined.



5 Spoon one-eighth of the ricotta mixture and spinach near the edge of a crêpe, then carefully roll it up into a tube. Repeat with the remaining crêpes and filling. Transfer the crêpes to the prepared dish and top with the tomato sauce, then sprinkle 1 tablespoon of the Parmesan over the top. Bake for 20–30 minutes until golden brown and bubbling. Sprinkle the remaining Parmesan and parsley over the top and divide into 4 equal portions. Serve with grilled courgettes

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