

SPANAKORIZO (GREEK SPANISH-RICE WITH LEMON)

In Greece, braised spinach with rice and lemon belongs to a class of braised vegetable dishes made with an abundant amount of olive oil. These dishes are always main courses and always vegan. The dish is full of antioxidants, iron, fiber, and vitamin C. The oil provides satiety, and the rice provides carbohydrates. Traditionally, this dish is served with plenty of lemon juice, black olives and a wedge of feta cheese.

Yield: 4 main dish servings or 8 side dish servings

Ingredients:

- 3 large bunches **fresh spinach** (not baby spinach)
- ¼ cup **olive oil**
- 1 large yellow or white **onion**, peeled and diced small
- 1 cup **hot water**
- 1-2 tsp. **salt**
- **pepper** to taste
- ½ cup **white rice**
- **lemon wedges** for serving

Instructions:

1. Prepare spinach: Cut off ¼ inch of spinach stems and discard. Chop remaining spinach into large chunks and place in colander to rinse well with cold water. Set aside.
2. Heat oil in a large pot until shimmery. Add onion and sauté until onion softens and starts to brown, about 10 minutes, adjusting heat to avoid burning the onions.
3. Add the chopped spinach and briefly sauté together with the onions until it begins to wilt and give off liquid, about 2-3 minutes.
4. Add hot water, salt and pepper and bring to a boil.
5. Add rice, mix well and bring to a boil again.
6. Reduce heat to very low, cover and simmer about 30 minutes until rice is soft.
7. Offer lemon wedges at the table for squeezing over the spinach rice.
8. As a main course, serve with crusty bread, olives and a wedge of feta cheese.
9. Alternatively, this dish can be a side dish to any roasted meat or fish.