Garden to Table: Preserving Greens

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If you over-wintered greens in your garden, you may have some to harvest now. Kale, spinach, mustard, Swiss chard, collards, arugula, beet greens, really any leafy green that can be cooked can be preserved by freezing or canning. Freezing is by far the easiest, and in my estimation, the tastiest way to preserve greens.

Follow These Steps to Freeze Greens
- Wash thoroughly and remove tough or woody stems.
- Blanch greens for 2 minutes (collards for 3 minutes) in a large pot of boiling water. The greens will turn a brilliant green color – you want to wilt them, not cook them.
- Cool, drain, and fill a freezer bag half-way with greens. Place the bag flat on the counter and press out all the air before you seal the bag. Freeze the bag as flat as possible; this allows you to break off the right amount for your recipe. Once the greens are frozen they can be placed anywhere in the freezer.

Pressure Canning Instructions
Greens are very alkaline and cannot be canned using the water bath method. You will need a pressure canner in order to safely can greens.
- First blanch greens as above.
- Place hot greens in pint or quart-sized jars with a 1-inch head space. You can add ¼ or ½ teaspoon of table salt to the jars if you wish.
- Cover greens in boiling water up to one inch from the top.
- Remove air bubbles and wipe the jar rims clean.
- Process in a dial gauge pressure canner at eleven pounds pressure or in a weighted gauge pressure canner at ten pounds pressure, seventy minutes for pints or ninety minutes for quart-sized jars.

Frozen or canned greens can be used in casseroles, soups and sauces (think curry!) and are a great addition to recipes with lentils, potatoes, and beans. Enjoy!